

Find And Eat Insects and Small Creatures

If you are faced with a survival situation that is going to be extended for any length of time, one of the key issues you're going to be faced with is how you're going to forage for food and this would include eating animals, small mammals and other edible insects.

Once you know where to look and what is safe to eat, you'd be amazed at the abundance of animals and insects you'll have access to if you're stranded in a wilderness area in addition to the plants and vegetation all around you, much of which will be edible.

Eating Insects For Survival

The biggest hurdle you're going to have to conquer is your attitude to eating insects in a survival situation but once you've overcome these fears, you'll truly begin to understand the nutritional value of eating edible insects. They are actually higher in protein and fat content than most meats and come packed full of vitamins and minerals. Insects should not be too difficult to locate simply by looking all around you, especially on the ground, and by carrying some form of container, you should be able to gather a significant amount. However, to be even more successful, you need to understand the insects' habits. That means, searching out rotting wood and looking within it and underneath it. Rocks also provide shelter for edible insects so look underneath them and try to look for other sheltered spots such as nests on the ground where insects may choose to lay eggs or spin cocoons.



Ways To Eat Insects

Once you are adept at understanding what insects are safe to eat, you'll get to learn that many insects can actually be eaten raw but, if in doubt, it's always safer to cook them first and they'll also be a little more palatable if cooked. They can be added to food such as stews and soups, eaten with some vegetation or even roasted.

Common Edible Insects And Those To Avoid

Common edible insects which can give you with vital nutritional value in a survival situation might include the following although with some, you should do your research first as to what you need to cook and what can be eaten raw as some of them can carry parasites which could be dangerous to you if eaten raw. However, people have been known to survive on:

- Ants and termites
- Grasshoppers, crickets and locusts
- Caterpillars and grubs
- Beetles and beetle larvae

Before eating any insect, you should remove any barbed legs and also the wings. Insects that should be avoided should include any that give off a bad odour. Brightly coloured and hairy insects should also be left alone as well as any insect that stings or bites. There are no hard and fast rules, however, so you should do your homework first.

Eating Small Animals

There is another article contained on this website which will give you information about trapping small animals but other creatures that you might also wish to forage for would be amphibians and reptiles. Frogs offer up an ideal protein source and can often be found around any area of fresh water. You shouldn't confuse them with toads, however, many species of which can be poisonous. Avoid any brightly coloured frogs however, as these can also be poisonous. Certain reptiles are also edible and many are relatively easy to catch. That said, it goes without saying that you should steer clear of trying to catch and kill any poisonous snakes. Whilst it's always best to cook reptiles first, because they are cold-blooded they don't carry the same blood diseases of their warm-blooded counterparts. However, when eaten raw they can transmit parasites.

Other Edible Creatures

Apart from other animals you can go trapping for meat and the fish you can catch, other sources of nutrition can come from worms, certain crustaceans and mollusks and so if you're near a water source, you're going to have far more options.

For those of you who enjoy wilderness camping or have an interest in survival, the best advice is to get yourself a good book from which you can learn all about the different animals and insects which are safe to eat (and those which aren't) which could mean the difference between life and death in a survival situation.

Eating Berries and Plants to Survive

Many people believe that they will never find themselves in a survival situation, but it can happen to anyone and the importance of knowing the plants and berries that you can safely eat to sustain you, cannot be emphasised enough.

Whilst there is an abundance of food to be found in the natural environment, there are also plants and berries which if eaten, can cause you severe stomach upsets at best and at worst, can kill you.

The 'look' of a particular plant or berry is simply not enough and if you can't identify it, then the advice is to leave it alone and not to risk eating it. Therefore, if you're out in the woods, it's useful to have a basic knowledge of the vegetation that grows in a specific area you're visiting and know how to identify which plants are safe and which are toxic.

Avoiding Temptation

Hunger pangs are highly likely to 'kick in' if you are stranded for some time without food but it's important to remember that you can actually survive for a few weeks without food as long as you have enough water to sustain you. Therefore, no matter how abundant and tempting plants and berries might be, you should never eat any wild vegetation unless you are 100% sure you can identify it.



What You Can Eat in the Wild

There is a vast range of things which grow in the wild, which are safe to eat and will help to keep you nourished when faced with a survival situation. Dandelion leaves can be eaten raw or cooked, the roots make a welcoming hot drink (if you're not in a survival situation and want a natural snack, the flower itself can be dipped in batter and made into a fritter). Nettles can be steamed or boiled and make a useful substitute for your 'greens' and of course, there's nettle tea! The roots of the burdock plant can be boiled and then eaten like potatoes and pitted rose hips are packed with vitamin C. You may also find more common foods like blackberries, blueberries and strawberries. However, be absolutely sure you know what you are eating before putting it in your mouth and also remember that some wild plants need to be cooked before they are safe to eat.

What Not to Eat in the Wild

In brief, you shouldn't eat anything that you can't identify. However, there are a few clues as to the kinds of things you should definitely steer clear of.

Anything that has thorns or spines you should treat with suspicion and unless you are highly knowledgeable about mushrooms and fungi, you should keep away from as, although you can eat many fungi, some of them are deadly.

Plants with shiny leaves or with umbrella flowers or which have yellow or white berries or a milky sap (except dandelions) are also highly 'suspicious' and should be avoided. And if a plant gives off a pungent odour, you're better off leaving it alone.

Other Food Survival Tips

Many people fall ill because they assume that if an animal is eating a particular plant or berry, then it must be safe for humans. This is not the case. Also, make sure that if you've found what you know is a patch of plants that are edible that all the plants you gather are the same species, as there may be similar looking plants growing in the same area but which are highly dangerous. You also need to know which plants need cooking first to make them safe as some plants are still harmful if you eat them raw.

Some survival books will show you how to do an edibility test on a particular plant if you cannot identify it. This is a quite lengthy process beginning with testing a small portion of the plant on your skin to see if it causes an allergic reaction, then on your lips and tongue etc. but it is a painstaking, lengthy process and doesn't offer a 100% guarantee as to the plant's safety and should only ever be used in an absolute emergency. There are plenty of resources on the internet to show you how to conduct a plant edibility test but you should treat these with some caution. The only way is to be sure that you have identified the plant in question is by doing your research in order to be confident about what is edible and what isn't.

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