

COOKING WITH ALDERS



2024



WHAT IS COMMUNITY ROOTS?

Community Roots: Local Food for Climate Action is a project of the Western Environment Centre that highlights the vital connections between ecosystems, food, and people. Through workshops and community programs, Community Roots brings people together to gain knowledge and skills to build a more regenerative, nature-based local food system for the sustainability of our communities and our planet.



Regenerative growing is about creating self-sufficient natural gardens that work with the ecosystem rather than against it. A regenerative garden aims to actively restore the health of the soil and the ecosystem, support diversity, and restore habitat through nature-based growing practices. A regenerative food system produces food on land and at sea in ways that work in partnership with the world around us.

Through hands-on food skills workshops led by local knowledge holders, and interactive neighbourhood programs, the Community Roots project highlights the vital connections between our ecosystems, our food, and our people.

ABOUT WEC

Western Environment Centre is dedicated to engaging our community in food and climate action through impactful, educational initiatives. Since 1998, we've grown from a small citizens' group to a thriving environmental organization in western Newfoundland.

What we do:

- Create and run hands-on, interactive community programs; and
- Engage in public dialogue and policy

Our two main areas of focus are:

- Sustainable local food systems; and
- Climate action

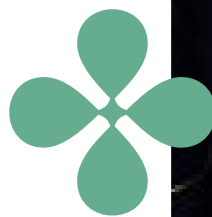
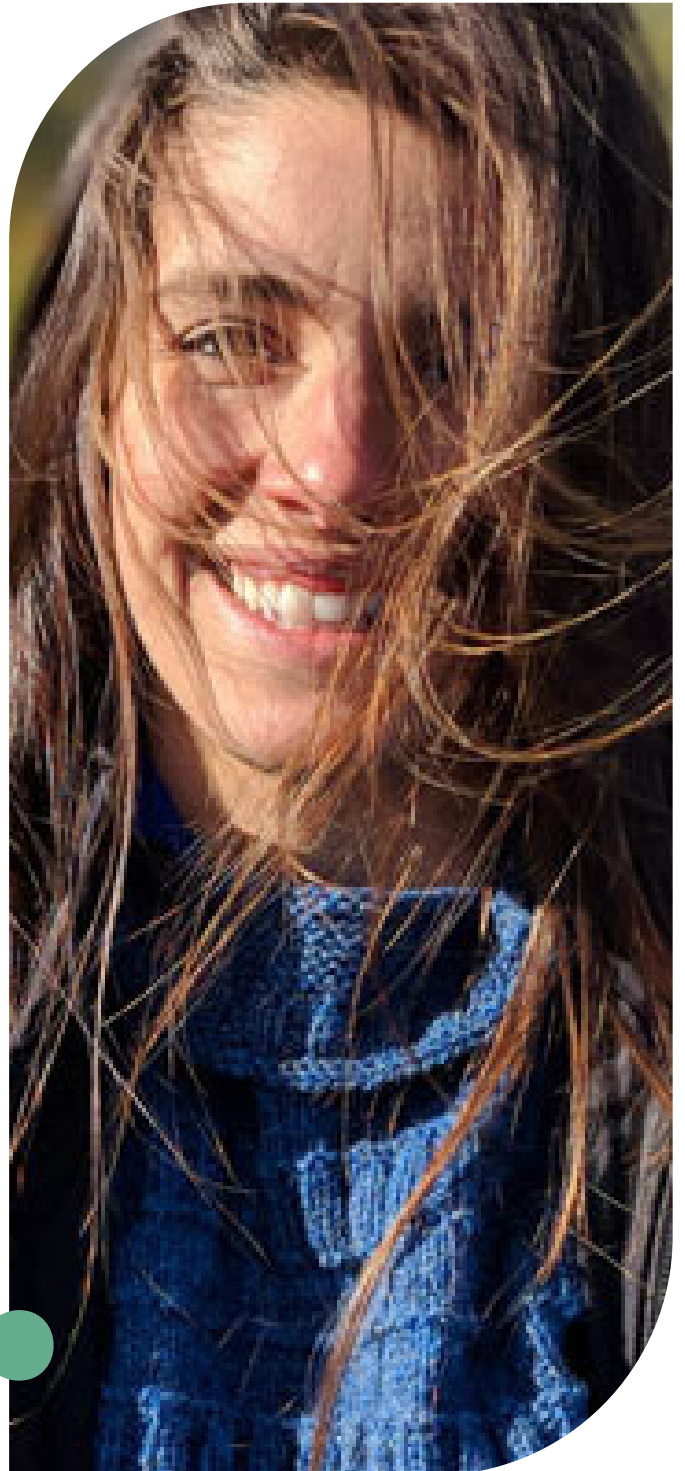


LOCAL KNOWLEDGE HOLDER

Alexandra Blagdon

Chef Alexandra Blagdon is the friendly face behind The Alder Cottage Cookery School. Food for Alex is so much more than sitting down to eat. It's an opportunity to share a memory, create a connection, explore a community or culture. It's a gateway to telling stories, meeting strangers, making new memories or even being brought back to our past. And for Alex, pairing each course with a story that brings you on the road with her feels right. Welcoming you into the kitchen, into her family, feels right. Her passion is contagious and her excitement is undeniable.

This manual was authored by Alexandra and Western Environment Centre and formatted by Western Environment Centre.



FORAGING ALDERS

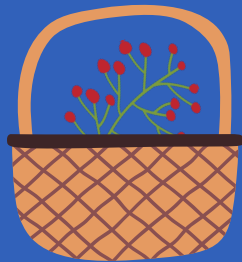
Foraging Guidelines

- Eat only if you are 100% certain of the plant ID
- Use field guides and foraging books
- Learn from experts
- Start close to home
- Consider seasonality
- Harvest responsibly

Male catkin vs Female cone



Harvest catkins/cones or sticks with catkins/cones only



Take only what you need



In season all year

ALDER BISCOTTI INGREDIENTS

200g all purpose flour
200g icing sugar
150g almond flour
2 tsp baking powder
1/2-1 tsp ground alder (male catkins)
1/2 tsp salt
150g eggs
1 tsp vanilla
200g whole almonds



HOW TO DRY AND GRIND ALDER

Toast the catkins in the oven for 2 hours at 170°F

Once cooled, grind with a mortar and pestle or electric grinder

ALDER BISCOTTI BAKING INSTRUCTIONS



Watch the full workshop here: www.wecnl.ca/community-roots-3/workshops

1

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix dry ingredients together in large bowl. Whisk wet ingredients together in a small bowl.

2

Add wet ingredients to dry and mix until a sticky dough forms, then mix in almonds.

3

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Dollop dough into two lines on the baking sheet. Dampen hands with water and form two tall 1-inch wide logs. Bake for 18 min at 350°F.

4

Remove biscotti logs from oven and cool for 5 minutes. Reduce oven to 300°F.

5

Using a serrated knife, cut 1/4 inch slices across the logs to create the final biscotti cookie shape.

6

Put the biscotti cookies back on the baking sheet. Bake for 20-30 minutes at 300°F flipping halfway. Ensure cookies are completely dry upon removal. If any softness remains, put oven on warm and return to oven for another 30 minutes.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

EMAIL

Chef Alex welcomes any questions to: thealdercottage@gmail.com

LOCAL BUSINESS

[Food Culture Place](#) (Lori McCarthy)

BOOKS

- Forager's Dinner by Shawn Dawson
- Edible Plants of Newfoundland and Labrador by Peter J. Scott
- Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants by Bradford Angier
- A Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants: Eastern and Central North America by Lee Allen Peterson
- Edible Garden Weeds of Canada by Adam F. Szczawinski and Nancy J. Turner
- Edible and Medicinal Plants of Canada by MacKinnon et. al.
- Eating Wild in Eastern Canada: A Guide to Foraging the Forests, Fields, and Shorelines by Jamie Simpson
- Peterson Field Guides: Edible Wild Plants - Eastern/Central North America by Lee Allen Peterson
- Trees and Shrubs of Newfoundland and Labrador by Todd Boland

WEBSITES

[Floral of NL](#)
[Western Newfoundland Foraging](#)

APP

[iNaturalist](#)



Get in touch!

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