

A Dandy Way To Stop Weeds

This vegetarian burger recipe will suit your palate and clean-up the environment.

By [Susan Newquist](#), BACKPACKER Associate Editor, August 14, 2000

Dandelion

Whether at home or in the backcountry, there's one weed everyone can recognize from 40 paces: dandelion. Land mangers across the country are trying to stem this little yellow monster that spreads like wildfire, due in part because it's so darn cute. You just can't help but pick the wiry white heads that look like a perm gone bad and blow the puffy parachute seeds.

One Pennsylvania man may have found a way to slow down the yellow scourge in the backcountry, one flower at a time. Frank Cetera, of Slippery Rock, makes dandelion burgers on his backpacking trips.

Admittedly, he isn't trying to clean up the environment. "I saw it as using a wild resource common to everyone's environment," says the 28-year-old Cetera. "I like to try new and different things and I like to cook." He saw the dandelion burger recipe in a newsletter and adapted it to backpacking by using lightweight ingredients. The recipe calls for a cup of dandelion blossoms. No blossoms, no seeds, no weeds.

While dandelion burgers may not be the entire answer to the noxious weed problem organizations like Student Conservation Association, The Nature Conservancy, and the Bureau of Land Management are trying to fight, it does answer the grumbling in your stomach.

While Cetera has never served his culinary delight to friends for which he often organizes backpacking trips, the burgers did take top prize in a cooking contest. The nutritionally sound recipes receive first place last National Trails Day at a backcountry cooking event sponsored by the Pennsylvania chapter of the North Country Trail Association. All the more fitting, since the 28-year-old frequents southwestern Pennsylvania's trails and names the Laurel Highlands among his favorites.

So next time you're in dandelion country, think about chewing down on weeds and whip up a dandelion burger:

Dandy Burgers:

- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup wheat flour
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 cup wheat germ
- 1/4 cup powdered milk
- 1 1/2 tablespoons powdered egg or 1 fresh egg
- 1 cup fresh-picked dandelion blossoms
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh onion
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh green onion

At home: Combine dry ingredients in a zipper lock plastic bag. In camp: Add onions, dandelion blossoms and egg, if using fresh to the zipper lock bag. Knead well, into a stiff batter. Using clean hands, shape into patties and fry on each side. Yield: 4 patties.

Calories: 110
Carbohydrates: 16 g
Protein: 6 g
Fat: 2 g
Cholesterol: 54 mg