

# AMERICAN SURVIVOR

Survival Information For The Prepared Citizen

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**IN THIS ISSUE: Extreme Weather, Edible Wild Plants, Timber Totes, 52  
Pepper Projects (book review),**

## ***EXTREME WEATHER***

*The earth is not going to be as friendly to civilization as it has been in the past centuries. You can expect to put the word “too” before every climate event. It will be too hot, too cold, too wet, too dry, too windy. It is not important who or what caused the climate change, but it is critical to recognize the dangers and take appropriate survival actions before it is too late.*

Recent centuries have exhibited unusually stable weather patterns, but regardless of the causes, the reality of global warming or climate shift is a statistical reality and will continue to destabilize the weather for centuries to come. While some dream of just a gentle warming trend, the reality is that the addition of more energy into the atmosphere will generate highly unstable and violent conditions and extremes. Even though some areas may experience milder winters on average, they also will be vulnerable to periodic extremes of snow, ice and cold. We have just begun to learn terms like “heat domes”, “Polar vortex” and “super storm”. **Extreme weather events have doubled in just the past ten years and are projected to continue to increase in intensity and frequency far into the future.** High population densities combined with our delicate transportation, communication, and power networks will result in much greater loss of life and property. **In some cases the whole economy and infrastructure of regions may collapse.**

The already unstable world economy cannot sustain the constant needs of “recovery” and “rebuilding” much less make progress on protection against the next disaster. These climate related changes will result in greater and greater shortages of food, fuels, and other materials. **Areas ravaged by storms, droughts and temperature extremes are already experiencing civil unrest, famine, and spreading diseases.** All of this is occurring as our economy is already faltering and sources of petroleum and natural gas are nearing their exhaustion point.



While general preparedness for both home (shelter in place) and evacuation (bug out) survival goes a long way towards preparing for a wide variety of natural and man-made disasters, there are some special considerations and actions to take related to the violent and unpredictable weather events that will happen within this ongoing shift in the climate. **Almost everyone reading this will experience one or more serious weather related survival situations within the next five to ten years.** In many cases your survival will require special skills and equipment beyond basic preparedness. **For the purposes of this article we will assume that the reader has already established the basic survival supplies at home and has basic survival evacuation gear and focus on additional needs related to extreme weather events.**

### **Extreme Cold, Snow and Ice**

**What to Expect:** While average temperatures will continue to get warmer, these instabilities can open the door for occasional violent snow storms and cold snaps even in areas that have not previously experience them. Recently the south endured a “heat dome” in summer followed by historic cold and snow in the next winter. These conditions will continue to cause longer power outages, fuel shortages, massive transportation problems, runs on food supplies and deaths of the elderly, homeless and unprepared. Heating fuel has already run low during several storms and power outages have left million without heat in the bitter cold. Those caught outdoors or on the roads unprepared may not survive in the future as emergency services become overwhelmed

**How to Prepare:** Don't be lulled into complacency by mild winters. Be able to keep one or two rooms warm for up to 3-months without further fuel supplies. Be

able to have minimal lighting sources (e.g. candles, oil lamps, solar/battery) for several months if wires go down. Generators are a good thing to have, but you may not be able to get more fuel under these conditions. Use safe heaters designed for indoor use, but be sure to have several good fire extinguishers and working smoke and CO detectors. **Even if you live in the south, you should have sleeping bags and good winter clothing for those surprise cold/snow events.**



### **Extreme Heat, Drought and Fires**

**What to Expect:** Rolling droughts will become more frequent and widespread even as other areas get too much rain. Water rationing and even conflicts over water access may develop. Some areas may just become uninhabitable for lack of water and cropland. **Power grids may be overloaded in urban areas resulting in blackouts.** Many southern and southwestern cities will depopulate due to water shortages and power costs for A/C. Heat waves will take a high toll of the elderly and the unprepared. America's main export is food. As crops areas shrink our trade balance will get further in debt and hungry nations will become more desperate. **Dust storms and forest fires will continue to ravage rural and outer suburban areas**

**How to Prepare:** In these areas you need to store a lot more water. I would recommend at least two gallons per

person per day for at least three months. You will need a lot more if you are growing food plants. Cisterns and rain barrels can help, but they will run dry quickly in a prolonged drought. If you live in an urban area you may not be able to store enough water or you may have to defend what you have. Bodies that are accustomed to air-conditioning do not handle heat very well. **Don't use A/C below 80 to 85 degrees now. Have a few fans that can be run on solar charged batteries.** Small camping refrigerators that run on solar power can supply limited cold drinks. I once spent a week at 95-degree temperatures with no cool water fans or other comforts. I used wet towels around my neck and under my hat, I adapted in a few days till I didn't even notice the heat. That said, hard work can be dangerous and concentration difficult. Many occupations will be effected during prolonged heat without A/C. **If you live in a fire prone area you should assume that a fire will happen.** When it happens you may already be short of water. Do all you can to get flammables away from your home, but be ready to evacuate. It may be advisable to have stored survival and recovery supplies outside the fire zone. Remember that as time goes on emergency services and recovery help will be less and less able to function.



Dust storms like this one in the 1920s are becoming more frequent once again.

## Extreme Winds, Tornadoes and Hurricanes

**What to Expect:** More heat energy means more wind! Hurricanes will be more severe and reach further inland. In 2008 remnants of two hurricanes reached northern Indiana and dumped 13-inches of rain in 48-hours that caused massive flooding and property damage. Indiana now has hurricane disaster plans. There are more F-4 and F-5 tornadoes every year and the tornado season starts in March and ends in late November. No area is immune from the massive destruction. Large urban areas like New York and Oklahoma City are no longer immune to destruction. Areas near oceanfront are particularly vulnerable as sea levels continue to rise.

**How to Prepare:** These kinds of storms tend to obliterate everything in their path. Almost every area of the United States is vulnerable to them. Options for protecting property are limited and life saving shelter is your main priority. You may be able to evacuate in the path of a hurricane, but recent disasters indicate hazards in this option as well. **“Microburst” winds and tornadoes strike fast (trust me on this one!) so everyone should have a weather radio and a shelter available at home.** Every family member should know what to do regardless of where they are and have minimal survival gear (see coat pocket survival) with them. You in home survival supplies and your survival pack are eggs in one basket that will be gone unless you secure them in bunker-like lockers or have backup supplies in another location. Again: emergency services and recovery help will dwindle as time goes on.



## Extreme Storms and Floods

**What to Expect:** Heavy and consistent rain events and “super storms” consisting of high linier winds and overwhelming rain are becoming more common even when not classified as hurricanes. Areas previously not prone to flooding may be caught off guard. Communities seldom prepare for what has never happened before.

### How to Prepare:

If you store your survival stuff in the basement, keep it in waterproof containers that can be quickly move upstairs or out to your vehicle as needed. If you cannot move out of a flood prone area get involved with your community in flood control and flood emergency plans. **Have a boat or a rubber inflatable boat for use in evacuation and in removal of your supplies as the water rises.** Turn off your gas and electrical power BEFORE the water reaches your property. Not doing so may result in electrocutions, fires and explosions. I saw the fire department trying to reach burning homes half underwater in 2008 and saw one home that was otherwise salvageable blowup and take four other with it because the gas was left on. Having a backup pump (as I did) can reduce basement flooding and sandbags can help prevent low level flooding, but you need a lot of sand. It is far better to work with your community to improve flood control.



Photo: The shallow end of a flooded community in Indiana caused by a hurricane. Damage to foundations often made the houses unsalvageable.



Turn off your gas and electricity before evacuation in a flood or other disaster. This house blew up and took four adjoining home with it during a flood.

### About Sandbags

*A lot of survival supply companies sell sandbags. Theoretically they are great for flood control, defensive measures and even fallout shelters. The problem is that in urban and suburban areas you probably cannot access or store enough sand to fill many bags. Sand bags are slow to fill and heavy and require time and manpower to use effectively. Finally: building a stable sandbag wall more than one or two bags high requires using a pyramid construction. A two bag high wall requires three bags per bag length and a three bag high wall requires six bags, etc.*



Photo: Community dropped off sandbags to keep water out of basements at the edge of the flood zone, but it is unlikely this poorly laid wall did much good.

## Conclusions

Extremes are the new normal. Eventual economic crumbling and population reduction through famine, drought, unrest, and epidemics. The survivor must be prepared to survive all this while also coping with the frequent weather extremes that will impact all other survival preparedness efforts. Emergency services, recovery programs and even insurance providers are already stretched by the constant flow of disasters. Budget cuts and bankruptcies will leave citizens more and more on their own as the climate becomes more hostile. Denial or dependency will lead to more serious losses of life and property for many citizens. While nothing can prevent these events or guarantee survival, accepting responsibility and taking appropriate preparedness and survival measures now can significantly improve the odds of survival and recovery of you and your family. **If you have been lucky enough to avoid serious damages from past/recent weather disasters you may not be so lucky next time and there is going to be a lot of next times.**

## TimberTote™ A Self Consuming Rocket Stove

By James C. Jones, EMT/CHCM

I have reviewed a lot of different rocket stoves recently, including the BioLite™ and the Kelly Kettle™. The principle for all of these is that by creating a draft up a central stack you can achieve a great deal of heat with just a few hands full of twigs and debris. The TimberTote™ is unique in that it *is* the fuel and the stove then burns down into a campfire. These

“stoves” consist of a kiln dried log section approximately 12 inches high and 8 to 10 inches in diameter stood on end. A 1 3/4 inch hole is bored down the center to about 2 inches short of the bottom and then another hole of the same size is bored to intersect this hole at right angles at the lower end. This forms an “L” shaped duct. Finally a few one-quarter inch wide crosscuts are cut across the top to form a stove burner. A bit of fuel placed in the side hole gets the “stove” going. A bit more fuel in the top and you can place a pot or pan on the “burner” and continue adding fuel from the bottom. After a short while the inside of the log becomes the only fuel needed and you have about one-hour of cooking time before the log becomes unstable. Eventually the log burns through and can be the base for your campfire. TimberTotes™ come with a rope carrying handle for carrying but are hardly a survival pack item, but these are great for getting a fast fire and an immediate stove going at camp, retreat or backyard. These items sold like crazy at a recent Live Free USA gathering. They are reasonably priced at from \$5.00 to \$8.00 each. While they are “patent pending” anyone with the right tools could make them for home and family use. Go to [www.TIMBERTOTE.COM](http://www.TIMBERTOTE.COM).



TimberTote ready to go. Note the rope handle and grass starting fuel





TiberTote after about 10-minutes the free flame provides good warmth and will surround a cooking pot through the burner like crosscuts on top.

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### Book Review

## 52 Prepper Projects

By David Nash

While survival preparations can be hard work and some of the tasks are hardly exciting, but others can be fun and interesting as well. David Nash has approached the preparedness job as a kind of hobby project. Some of the “projects” are the rather pedestrian tasks of food storage, canning and gardening, but many are novel and require some skill and equipment.. There are chapters on how to make a “One Brick Forge”, a “Parabolic Solar Heater” , a Lawnmower Motor Generator and even a small steam engine. There are recipes for soaps, antibiotics, breads, cheeses and other products. There are also some of the old standards like building a tin can stove, a squirrel snare and making jerky.

Each chapter is clearly illustrated and includes step-by-step instructions and list of materials. A few of the projects are more fun than practical, but most of them are good step towards greater self-reliance. The beginning “prepper” could set out to do these projects and end up well prepared and with much greater skills than one who just fills a bugout bag and

buys some books. There certainly are worthwhile projects here for even the most experienced prepper. I rarely find a book worth adding to my 45-year survival library, but this one earned a place.

52 Prepper Projects By David Nash, 199 pages, 6 x 9 paperback, Skyhorse Publications, NY, \$16.95 US

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## EDIBLE WILD PLANTS

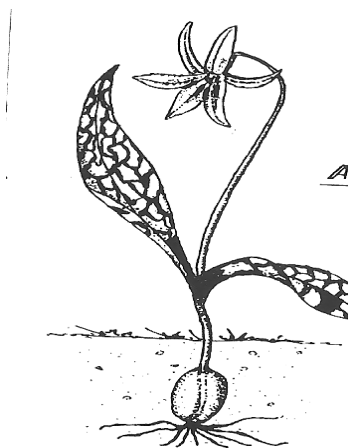
There are plenty of great books on edible and medicinal wild plants. Every survival library should include at least one of these books. Our newsletter is limited by space and the lack of colored illustrations. Therefore we will limit this article to the most common edible plants that are easy to identify by shape and location. Many of the plants covered are common in urban and suburban lots and parks. I would recommend washing all wild plants before consumption to remove contamination. In an extreme survival situation you may be forced to try unidentified plants for edibility. In a survival situation you need nourishment, but you cannot afford to become ill, so pass up any plant that seems questionable. I would pass on any kind of mushrooms period. It may be better to spend a few hours testing available plants for edibility than. Spending time and energy searching for known edibles. Don't wait until you are out of food and hungry to start foraging for edible plants. A rapid shift from prepared food to wild edibles (even safe ones) will result in cramps, nausea and diarrhea. These conditions result in the los of nutrition and dehydration. Consider having salt, bullion cubes and other seasoning in your survival pack to make these unfamiliar plants more appetizing.

Here is the standard way to safely test for the edibility of a plant.

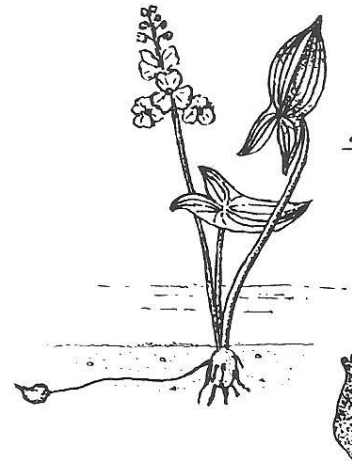
1. Rub a small amount of the plant juice from leaves roots on the back of your hand. If no irritation or rash develops after 30-minutes
2. Chew a small quantity and spit it out. Do not swallow any! If there are no ill effects after one-hour
3. Chew and swallow a very small amount. If you are not ill in the next 4-6 hours
4. Repeat the process
5. If there are still no ill effects you can assume the plant is safe to eat
6. If there is any indication of poisoning induce vomiting immediately

Spend some time looking for these plants in your local area. You are sure to find some of them. Try them in a salad or cooked.

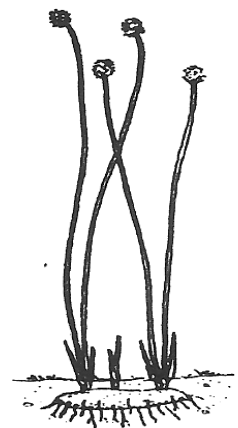
**Adderstonge-** a low plant 5-10 inches tall consisting of pairs of mottled oblong-elliptic leaves with a 6 petaled yellow, violet or white flower on a separated short stalk. Found throughout the US in moist woods in early spring and late fall. The bulb is edible when cooked but eat sparingly. Spring leaves can be used as greens



**Arrowhead-** a small plant found throughout the US in wet ground and shallow water. Arrow-shaped leaves appear at the end of individual stems. Flowers appear on separated stems. Boiled or baked bulb tastes like potatoes. Follow the threadlike root down to find the bulb. \*



**Bulrushes-** A small marsh grass-like plant, consisting of a long stem with small seeds at the upper end. Light green in color. Found in slow streams, marshes and at the edge of lakes. The base of the stalk and young shoots are edible raw or cooked. Young roots are edible. Roots may be dried and pounded into flour. \*

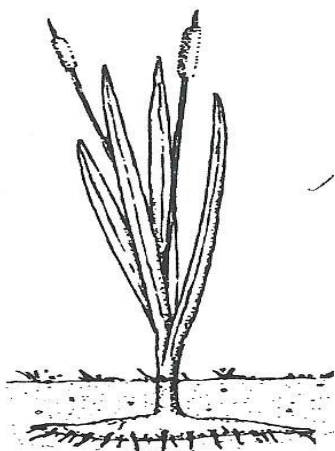


**Burdock-** A large plant which may grow as high as 9-feet., but averages somewhat less. Coarse leaves, purplish flowers compressed in bur-like head. Found throughout the northern US in

open wastelands, roadsides and along streams. Tender stalks can be peeled and eaten raw or cooked. Roots may also be cleaned and cooked. Use two changes of water in all cooking.



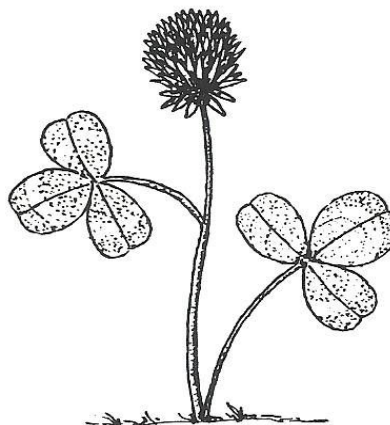
**Cattail**-Tall stalks with flat leaves. Average height about 4-feet.. but may reach over 6-feet. Flowers appear at top of stalks. After the flow a dens brown spike remains. Found throughout the US in wet and swampy areas year-round. The leaves lie-down in winter but the bulbous spike remains. Roots may be roasted or boiled, chew out the starch. Young shoots may be eaten. Roots may be dried and pounded into meal or cooked to form a thick soup. Young spikes are edible or cooked before the flower. \*



**Chicory**-Light-blue flowers grow close along stiff branching stems averaging 3-feet high. Flowers wither rapidly in direct sun. Found throughout most of the United States along roadsides, in pastures and wastelands. Dried roots make a good coffee substitute. Young spring greens boiled in two changes of water resemble spinach.

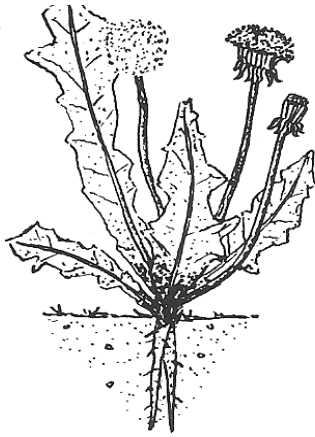


**Clover**-The blossoms, stems and seeds are all edible. Clean and dip in salt water if possible. Found throughout the United States in fields and open lands.

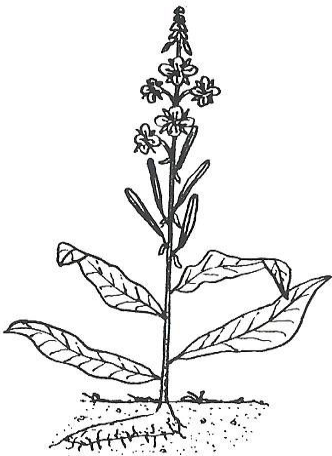


**Dandelion**- Found worldwide. Roots may be eaten raw. Cook the leaves as you would spinach. Make a tea by boiling the leaves. This is a good cold remedy.





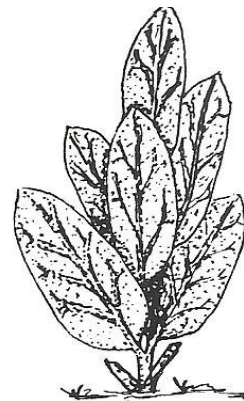
**Fireweed-** Found throughout the northern and western United States. Often grows in burned out areas (hence "fireweed") open woods and along roads. A tall plant growing from 2 to 6 feet high with purple and pink flowers. Young shoots and leaves are good raw or cooked. Add salt if possible.



**Curly Dock-**A tall plant growing from 2 to 4 feet tall. Found throughout the United States in cultivated or waste ground. It has deep taproots and many smooth marginal leaves with long stemmed, small greenish flowers that fade to a reddish brown. Tender leaves may be cooked. Parboil to remove a slight bitter taste. Seeds can be ground up to make a cake or gruel.



**Pokeweed-** A tall plant from 4 to 8 feet high. The young, pale green leaves come up in bunches at the base of last-years stalks. Mature plants have red stems. The flowers are small, grow in clusters and may be tinged with purple. Dark blue berries follow the flowers. They are common throughout the United States in fallow fields, forest clearings and along roads. **CAUTION! Roots and Berries are poisonous.** Cut stems well above ground level when they are 4 to 6 inches high. Boil, rinse and boil again. Use as asparagus substitute.

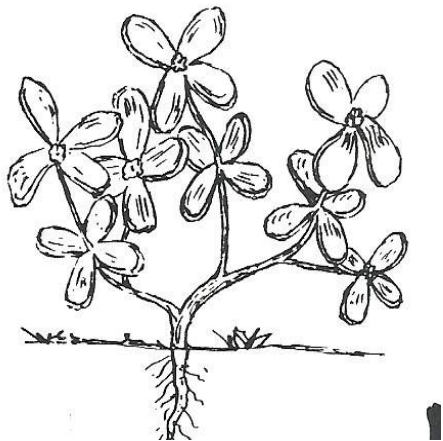


**Plantain-** Long spear-shaped leaves spring from the ground on a rather coarse stem. Small flowers grow compacted on a separated stalk. Found throughout the northeastern and north central United

States in lawns fields and woods. Boil early shoots as greens.

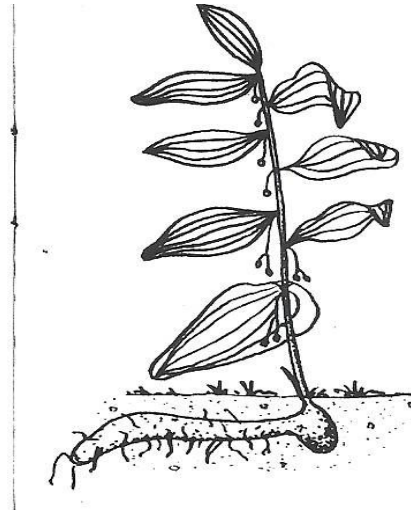


**Purslane-** A low ground plant often found growing from cracks in rocks or sidewalk, in fields and along streams. The leaves are juicy, soft and oval in shape. Normally light green, but may have a red tinge. The flowers are small, yellow and five-petaled. Leaves and stems may be eaten raw. Although a bit sour, they are a good source of water. Leaves and stems may also be steamed and eaten like spinach.



**Salmon Seal** – Found throughout most of the United States in moist areas and along streams. A slender stalk with lacy-shaped or ovate leaves growing alternately. Flowers grow singly or in

twos or threes from the leaf axel and are light green turning into dark blue berries. The fleshy roots may be boiled or roasted and eaten like parsnips. The young shoots are also edible.



**Additional edible plant descriptions and illustrations will be included in future issues of America Survivor.**



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