

Berry Picking



SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST

HEADQUARTERS

DULUTH, MN

Gathering wild berries was a necessity in the past and continues to be enjoyed as a recreational activity today. Berry production may vary from year to year, but different types of berries can be found throughout the Superior National Forest all summer long if you have a little knowledge. Since not all wild berries are edible to humans, it is wise to know your berries before you start picking. Wild raspberry, wild strawberry, and low bush blueberry are the three shrubs that provide the most commonly harvested berries on the Superior.

Wild Raspberry

- Plants grow in individual, woody stalks which branch out and develop thorns
- Starts budding as a five petal white flower
- Fruit begins ripening in mid July and continues through August

Also known as the “red raspberry”, wild raspberry plants can typically be found in sunny areas with recently disturbed soil. Land that has been burned or logged in previous years is a good place to begin looking, or along the edges of trails and roads. Wild raspberries will flower during June of their second year and begin producing berries in their third.



Wild Strawberry



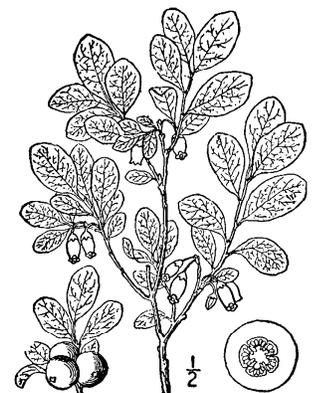
- Each strawberry plant is two to six inches tall and spreads above the ground on “runners”
- Blooms in late May and into June with a five petal white flower
- Berries will ripen in mid June through most of July
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Wild strawberries grow best in open areas with well drained soil and lots of sun. They often grown on trails at the edge of campsites. Spying strawberries is slightly more difficult than other wild berries as they are small and grow very low to the ground. They are often screened by other plants growing in the area.

Blueberry

- A low, branching shrub six inches to two feet tall
- Bell shaped white or pinkish flowers bloom in late May or early June
- Berries begin as white, pale blue, or green and mature to blue or black in late July or early August

Sunny, open areas, like those that have been recently burned or logged areas are excellent places for blueberries to grow. There are two types of low bush blueberry growing in this area. The upland variety grows in rocky, well drained areas. This sweet variety is often found surrounded by coniferous trees such as jack and red pines. The lowland variety grows in wet areas, such as the transition zones in to bogs. It tends to be slightly more sour than those growing in drier areas.



Superior National Forest - Berry Picking

Remember . . .

- **Think First**
Only eat what you are sure you can identify.
- **Taste Second**
Taste one berry before eating a handful.
This is especially important for children as they do not tolerate poisons as well as adults do.
- **Watch Where You Walk**
Stepping on plants could damage berries and the plants themselves.
- **Don't Be Greedy**
Don't strip the plants of all of their fruit.
Leaving a few berries will leave seeds for reproduction.
- **Keep It Cool**
Fruits often deteriorate or soften in summer heat. If you have a long drive ahead of you, bring along a container that will keep your berries cool.

Watching For Wildlife



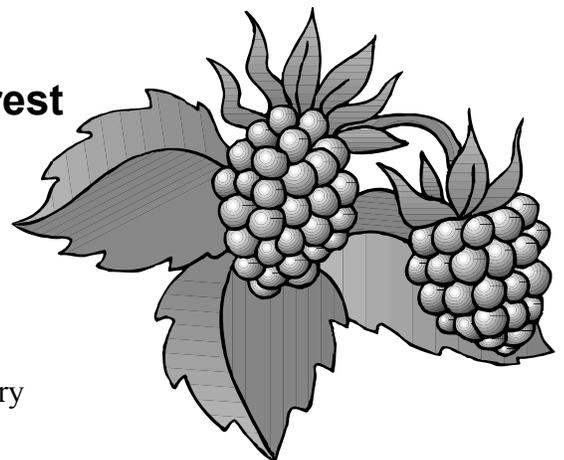
Gathering wild berries is still a necessity for animals living in the Superior National Forest. Leaving a few berries on each bush will not only ensure seed stock for reproduction, it will also provide food for animals living in the area. Deer, bear, fox, chipmunks, birds, and mice are just some of the animals which feed on berries. Berry picking is a good opportunity to watch for wildlife that frequent patches.

It is also a good time to watch out for moose cows and calves, and berry pickers should stay aware of bears that may be in the area feeding.

Edible Berries of the Superior National Forest

Blueberry
Wild Strawberry
Wild Raspberry
Black Cherry
Currant or Gooseberry
Red Elderberry

Rosehip
Thimbleberry
Choke Cherry
Juneberry
High Bush Cranberry
Pin Cherry or Fire Cherry



For more information, go to www.fs.usda.gov/superior on the web or contact:

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