

Living Earth School of Herbalism: Herbal Field Studies, Introductory Class
Guidelines for Ethical Wild Harvesting

1. Only wild harvest a species of herb that is common in the region that you are harvesting, and is common in general (i.e. don't pick an herb that is common in a specific region if there are only a few regions where it is common).
2. Only wild harvest a species of herb that is plentiful in the immediate area that you are harvesting it.
3. Only wild harvest individual herbs that are healthy and from a strong, healthy, local population.
4. Never wild harvest more than 10% of the plants of a particular species in any specific area if harvesting roots or rhizomes, or from 20% of the population of the species if you are harvesting the aerial parts, as long as in the latter case you are harvesting them early enough for them to produce more flowers and reproduce.
5. Never wild harvest any species of herb from any specific area if there is evidence that someone else has been harvesting the same species in the same area.
6. Whenever possible, always wild harvest individual herbs at a time and in a way that allows the particular plants that you are harvesting to reproduce (i.e. early enough in the season that they can produce more flowers and there is time for their seeds to mature if you are harvesting the aerial parts, and late enough in the season that they have finished producing their seeds if harvesting roots or rhizomes).
7. Always locate *at least* three different areas from which you can obtain each species of herb that you need to wild harvest in accordance with the above guidelines so that you never wild harvest any particular species from any specific area more than once every three years.
8. Never harvest any more than you need. 100-250 ml of tincture is enough per year for personal use. You might possibly need 500 ml of a very few herbs that you use a lot. Double these amounts if it is being used by a family rather than a single individual.
9. Herbs should not be wild harvested in urban areas. They should be harvested in healthy wilderness areas of a significant size that are free of any obvious sources of pollution. Don't harvest herbs near major roads or near areas of intense agricultural activity. The herbs should be growing at least 50 m from any minor roads (100 m if they are dirt or gravel roads) and 200 m from any small scale farming unless it is an organic farm. If a species of herb that you are harvesting is growing in or along the edge of water, there should not be any major sources of urban, industrial or agricultural pollution upstream or adjacent to any body of water where the herbs are being harvested.