Survival Challenge: Can a City Girl Live Off Wild Food For a Week in Portland?

Contributed by Culture Change
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From May 24 through May 30, local "Wild Girl" Becky Lerner will be eating an entirely wild diet as she forages from sidewalks, parks, wilderness areas and yards in Portland. There will be no dumpster diving or mooching off gardens -- Lerner will be surviving on wild edibles only.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"I'm interested in foraging as a way to connect with the land and explore a fundamental aspect of what it means to be human," Lerner said. "It's also a valuable survival skill: Should the trappings of modernity become unavailable to us one day, knowing how to find food without grocery stores or even farms will surely come in handy."

Lerner readily admits that her pesco-vegetarianism is in question. She will face the decision of whether to endure a vegetable fast -- or else eat insects, go fishing or even consider dining on roadkill.

Lerner will be blogging for the nonprofit web magazine CultureChange.org on a daily basis during the project, updating readers with photos, video and writings about the foods she finds, how she prepares it, how she is feeling (satisfied? starved? desperate for brownies?) and how it changes her life.

CultureChange.org is a nonprofit web magazine published by Jan Lundberg that explores issues of peak oil and sustainability. Lundberg is a California native and former oil-industry analyst who founded the Sail Transport Network.

"Wild plants, especially weeds, present exciting possibilities for sustainable post-oil living," Lundberg said, "and for those interested in stretching their budget."

A few of the local wild plants Lerner intends to forage are stinging nettles, dandelion, bull thistle, wapato ("duck potato"), cattail, plantain, Japanese knotweed, dock, clover, chickweed, chicory, miner's lettuce and morel mushrooms.

Lerner is a 26-year-old journalist living in northeast Portland who writes about primitive skills, wilderness survival and wild food on her blog, www.FirstWays.com. She began her studies in Ithaca, NY, in September 2007, where she lived in a tipi at the Turtle Dreams organic farm and did a nine-month apprenticeship in wilderness survival with the organization Primitive Pursuits (www.primitivepursuits.net). After moving to Portland in fall 2008, she has been studying with herbalist Emily Porter of TrackersNW and WildHeartsHealing. Lerner was born and raised in New Jersey.

"Before I started foraging, I viewed wild spaces as valuable in terms of beauty, but now I see them as nature's pantries," Lerner said. "It completely changed the way I look at plants -- and especially the sidewalk."

Lerner is available for interviews immediately, as well as during or after the project.

Photos of Becky Lerner are available for use by media outlets in low and high resolution. CultureChange.org will have video footage available for media use during the challenge week as well -- contact Jan or Becky for more information.

Links

www.CultureChange.org

www.FirstWays.com

www.RebeccaLerner.com

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