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## Ramp, Wild Leek (*Allium tricocca*)



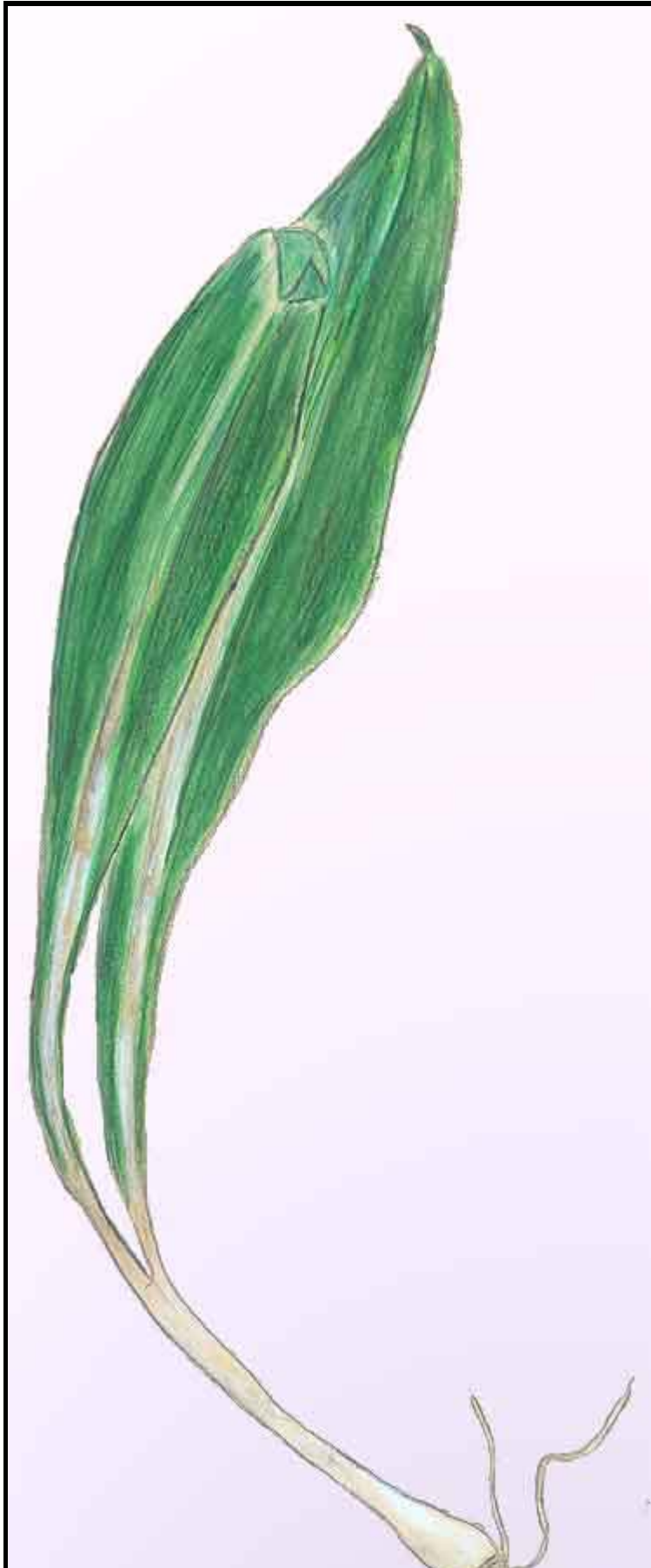
From [THE WILD VEGETARIAN COOKBOOK](#)



### **Ramps Seeds and Flowers**

Tiny, hard, round, black seeds appear on umbrella-like clusters on a slender stalk in late summer and fall. In late fall, you can locate the bulb by looking for the remnants of the seed head.

You recognize this premier member of the onion/garlic family by its elongated-oval smooth-edged, stalked leaves, 4-12 inches long and 1 to 2-1/2 inches wide, emerging in dense stands from the floor of moist, open woodlands throughout Eastern North America [every spring](#).



### **Ramps Leaves and Bulb**

The bulbs are at their smallest in early spring, when the growing leaves absorb the nutrients for rapid growth.

Crush any part of the plant, and its familial affinity will hit you right in the nose.



### **Young Ramps in Early Spring**

Lily-of-the-valley, beautiful but deadly (it reminds me of my ex-girlfriend) has similar leaves, but no odor.

Ramp leaves die back when tree leaves block the sunlight from reaching them in late spring, but a slender, smooth, erect flower stalk, 6 inches to 1-1/2 feet tall, supports a small, umbrella-like cluster of 6-petaled white to cream-colored flowers in early summer.



### **Ramp Flowers**

The 6-petaled flowers are typical of the lily family, to which ramps and onions belong.

The flowers are followed by three-lobed, green fruit.

**Ramp Fruit**

Note the 3 lobes of each fruit.

The fruits open in the fall to expose tiny, globular, shiny, black seeds in sets of threes.



### **Ramp Seeds**

Before falling to the ground, the seeds grow in sets of 3.



### **Ramp Seeds Close-up**

Note the 3 chambers in the opened fruit.

Underground, you'll find white bulbs, usually clustered, which are edible spring (when I usually collect just the leaves, since the bulbs are small then), summer, and fall (plus mild winters, if you can find them).



**Ramp Bulb in Summer**

The bulb looks like an oblong onion, but packs way more punch!

When there are no leaves, look for the flower- or seedstalk to locate the bulbs.



**Ramp Skeleton**

Locate this in the fall and you'll know where to dig for the bulbs.

There are no two ways about it: Whether you use the leaves or the bulbs, this is simply the best-tasting member of the entire onion family, wild or commercial. You can use the leaves or bulbs raw or cooked. Any cooking method works, taking 5-15 minutes. You'll find that ramps are terrific, and so is the resulting bad breath.

If you can't find ramps in the wild, you may purchase them in gourmet stores. Otherwise, substitute shallots.

### **[Ramp Recipes](#)**

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