

... in June

By Morgan Cooper

June marks a shift in the wildflower season as we begin to see our indigenous trees flowering and bearing young, unripened fruits such as *Crataegus aronia* (Spiny Hawthorne) and *Arbutus andrachne* (Eastern Strawberry Tree). Whereas some trees will still have their flowers early this month, you'll find the fruits toward the end of June.

You will also discover *Chiliadenus iphionoides* (Sharp varthemia), *Echinops adenocaulos* (Globe Thistle), *Opuntia ficus-indica* (Prickly Pear), *Nepeta curviflora* Boiss (Syrian Catnip), *Alcea setosa* (Bristly Hollyhock), *Daucus carota* (Wild Carrot), and *Capparis spinosa* (Capers). I've only found two stories of the caper plant being used in Palestine –though I am certain it was historically used. How can it be that an edible native plant that has healing properties was not utilized by our ancestors? Impossible, though I have yet to find traditional knowledge to the contrary. At our home we pick the caper buds before they flower and pickle them, first curing the buds in water as we do with olives. The plant also makes berries which can be similarly pickled.

And lastly a comment on Prickly Pear. This amazing plant that has become a symbolic reference to Palestinians' ethnically cleansed villages is actually not indigenous. However, because it thrives in our climate and holds such great cultural and culinary value in Palestine, we have come to think of it as native, so I've included it here.



Alcea setosa
Bristly Hollyhock
الخطمي الهلبي، خف الجمل



Arbutus andrachne
Eastern Strawberry Tree
قيتب



Capparis spinosa
Capers
كير



Chiliadenus iphionoides
Sharp varthemia
كتيلة، كتيلة



Crataegus aronia
Spiny Hawthorn
زعرور



Daucus carota
Wild Carrot
لذيقة، يربرزج، جزر بري



Echinops adenocaulos
Globe Thistle
قوص



Nepeta curviflora Boiss
Syrian Catnip
مقرم مقوس الزهر، شيع



Opuntia ficus-indica
Prickly Pear
الصبار