



## The Wildbiome® Project

The Wildbiome Project is a series of measured dietary intervention studies. Unlike most nutrition research, it investigates the impact of a fully wild food diet and its effects on human health, gut microbiome, and our wild spaces. It is far-reaching - bringing archaeology, biomedicine, microbiome science, food biosecurity, agricultural policy, social and environmental issues together, in collaboration with the University of Bradford.

In each study, we recruit a cohort of experienced forager citizen scientists, who have volunteered to eat only wild food. 2023 – 24 participants; 2025 – 102 participants; September 2026 – 80 submissions.

Before the foraging period begins, and when it ends, participants do the following:

- Measure their weight, BMI, waist-to-height ratio and blood pressure at regular intervals
- Do home blood tests with markers for cholesterol, glycaemic control, inflammation and micronutrients
- Donate stool samples for gut microbiome sequencing via high-depth metagenomics
- Donate hair and fingernail clipping samples for stable isotope analysis by the forensic archaeologists
- Record their daily food intake using the EatWild wild food tracking app, built for this project
- Fill in qualitative questionnaires which often identify new health parameters to investigate

During the intervention phase (either one or three months), participants rely entirely on wild foods - plants, fungi, seaweeds, fish, shellfish, wild meat and insects. In previous studies this has included hundreds of species across seasons. Importantly, they remain within their normal western lifestyle: they are not relocated to the wilderness, and physical activity is not artificially altered. This allows us to isolate the effect of food rather than lifestyle overhaul. It also records what they eat, and in what volume, which informs on ecological impact.

Early results are striking. Participants in previous Wildbiome cohorts experienced improvements in key markers of modern disease: including weight, BMI, blood pressure, glycaemic control and vitamin D status. These are not speculative claims, they are measured physiological shifts. The gut microbiome results from a pre-study in 2021 and the 2023 cohort demonstrated a substantial increase in gut microbiome diversity and overall microbiome score compared to controls. These results were peer-reviewed and published in Wilde, Rooney & Webb (2025). However, the stool samples for the 2025 cohort are frozen in storage while we raise the £8,500 needed for laboratory sequencing, so these results are not yet known.

There has only been one other study of this sort, on a single participant published in *Nature*. Rampelli et al. (2025) found that a wild food diet altered gut microbiome composition, and “the magnitude of the changes is larger than in other diet interventions” with a clear successional shift before, during and after the diet.

The Wildbiome Project is not a diet trend. It is a living laboratory. At a time when ultra-processed foods dominate over half of British calorie intake, and modern diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease continue to rise, The Wildbiome Project asks a simple but radical question: What happens when western, modern humans return, even temporarily, to a fully wild, unprocessed food system?

Working with a cross-disciplinary team, studying volunteers consuming only wild foods for defined periods, we are creating a unique open-source dataset that bridges ancient diets and future health. It measures what happens when modern humans temporarily step outside the industrial food system, and it captures that shift at molecular, microbial and metabolic levels, linking ancient diets and contemporary health science.

However, the importance of The Wildbiome Project extends far beyond individual health.

### **Food Biosecurity**

Globally, 70% of the world's poor are directly dependent on wild species with over 10,000 species used as food – according to the the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. This dependence increases in war, natural disaster and economic poverty. Historically, wild foods have also sustained western communities through famine and war. As climate instability, crop failure and geopolitical conflict threaten industrial food chains, rediscovering wild food knowledge is not nostalgia - it is resilience. The Wildbiome Project quantifies the nutritional reality of this resilience.

### **Sustainable Farming and Rewilding**

If wild foods demonstrate measurable health benefits, this challenges monocultural, chemically intensive agriculture. It opens pathways for diversified agroecological systems, edible landscapes, and the integration of wild species into farming models. Our findings could influence agricultural policy and encourage the cultivation and protection of wild food ecosystems that also benefit other species and the soil.

### **Nature Conservation**

When people value ecosystems as sources of nourishment, conservation and care for local environments become a personal matter. The Wildbiome Project reconnects citizens to landscapes not just as scenery, but as food webs. It creates a scientifically grounded argument for biodiversity protection - not only for carbon accounting, but for human health. A diverse diet and a diverse microbiome mirror a diverse ecosystem. Ecological loss and metabolic disease may be two sides of the same story.

Above all, The Wildbiome Project demonstrates the power of interdisciplinary, citizen-led science. It uses the present to understand the past, and the past to inform a healthier, more secure future. This is not about returning to the Mesolithic. It is about remembering the biome that human biology evolved within, and asking how much of that wisdom we can restore.

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We are actively seeking financial sponsors and academic collaborators. To learn more, speak to our project lead, Monica Wilde [wildbiome@circadio.co.uk](mailto:wildbiome@circadio.co.uk) 07876683591

Watch the project evolve at [www.instagram.com/wildbiomeproject](https://www.instagram.com/wildbiomeproject)

Rampelli, S., Pomstra, D., Barone, M., Fabbrini, M., Turrone, S., Candela, M., & Henry, A. G. (2025). Consumption of only wild foods induces large scale, partially persistent alterations to the gut microbiome. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1), 16593. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-00319-5>

Wilde, M., Rooney, M., & Webb, M. (2025). The availability of wild food in Central Scotland and the human health impact of its exclusive consumption in two British studies. In S. Dhyani & E. Katz (Eds.), *Wild Edibles and Sustainable Development Goals*. (pp. 187–209). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-95-3624-5\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-95-3624-5_8)