





# Learning in the Leaves

## Natural Fire Tinder – Page 1







Tinder	Where Found	Use
<p data-bbox="260 421 427 450"><b>DRY GRASS</b></p> 	<p data-bbox="608 421 1189 801">Probably the most abundant natural tinder found in the majority of environments. To get the most from this tinder the grass needs to be dead, and bone dry and will benefit with some roughing up to loosen the fibres. If, when collected the grass is damp then sprinkle it over some prickly shrubbery on a warm day, such as bramble where it will be held in place even if windy and it will dry nicely in the warmth of the sun. Long dead grass is best found around other vegetation where it loses out in its search for light, so is best collected from the edges of larger plants or trees where it grows to a large size before being starved of light and or water, leaving it dead, brown and if you're luck, dry too.</p>	<p data-bbox="1230 421 1476 772">Dry grass is one of the least effective types of tinder if being used purely with a spark. – but if you have a red hot ember ready to add to a good sized bundle then it can be one of the best for keeping a flame burning larger and longer if it's prepared correctly.</p>
<p data-bbox="180 853 507 882"><b>KING ALFRED'S CAKES</b></p> 	<p data-bbox="608 853 1189 1176">An almost charcoal-like fungi are most frequently found on dead or dying Ash trees. They almost look like dogs noses, but once removed from their resting place they act as a fantastic fire lighting tool. To prepare them you may not need to do anything if they are very dry, but they usually benefit from drying in the open air once removed. However, please only ever take when you need. Sadly, they are being over collected in the British Countryside resulting in them disappearing from certain areas. Taking care of the environment is the number one priority for any bushcrafter.</p>	<p data-bbox="1230 853 1476 1205">Referred to as a tool because once they are burning they will remain smouldering for a long time and may be used like a primitive portable lighter. Once dry they will happily take a spark or an ember and are one of the most convenient forms of tinder.</p>
<p data-bbox="209 1285 477 1314"><b>BRACKET FUNGUS</b></p> 	<p data-bbox="608 1285 1189 1429">There are several bracket funguses that are useable with primitive firesteels. The tinder produced by bracket fungi is commonly known as 'amadou'. As the name suggests, a 'bracket' fungus is found growing from a tree trunk, they look much like natural shelves.</p>	<p data-bbox="1230 1285 1476 1489">Experiment with these and see how you find them to work. It's the fleecy layer between the pore tubes and the cuticle that you're looking for.</p>
<p data-bbox="252 1718 434 1747"><b>BIRCH BARK</b></p> 	<p data-bbox="608 1718 1189 1948">Possibly the favourite tinder for most bushcrafters. Birch naturally sheds its flaky bark to keep the trunks white and able to reflect the light from the sun. Peel the already shedding bark and keep some inside your pocket. Only ever take the bark that is already falling away. If you remove the bark that is not ready to come off you will harm the tree and also be left with a worthless chunk of tinder as it will be too thick and slightly damp.</p>	<p data-bbox="1230 1718 1476 2011">Birch bark is fantastic for use with firesteels and will work when wet due to the high content of naturally occurring oils. It's also a fantastic material to make a tinder pot from – you can even make birch bark tar from it.</p>

# Learning in the Leaves

## Natural Fire Tinder – Page 2



Tinder	Where Found	Use
<p><b>CLEMATIS</b></p> 	<p>There is no preparation of the fluffy seed heads as such, just ensure that they are dry.</p>	<p>Also known as Old Man's Beard, this is excellent tinder, but it will burn quickly – so be ready! The bark once removed from the stems is however an excellent addition to the fluffy seed heads as it burns longer. This tinder is excellent for use with firesteels.</p>
<p><b>THISTLE</b></p> 	<p>It's once again the fluffy tops that you want to collect. They burn very quickly, but can be collected in bulk and stored for use later.</p>	<p>As with all tinder, just make sure it's dry and I find it works better if mixed with slower burning tinder to give you more working time.</p>
<p><b>DEAD BRACKEN</b></p> 	<p>This is usually very abundant in woodlands and woodland edges. Once it's dead and bronzy in colour strip the leaves from the stems.</p>	<p>Use when lighting fires using friction.</p>
<p><b>WOOD SHAVINGS</b></p> 	<p>Dry wood found on the ground can be collected and with a sharp knife whittled into wood shavings.</p>	<p>With the right tools, you can cut almost any wood down into thin, dry pieces that can light if your persistent enough. When whittling wood, often the scraps will make good tinder.</p>