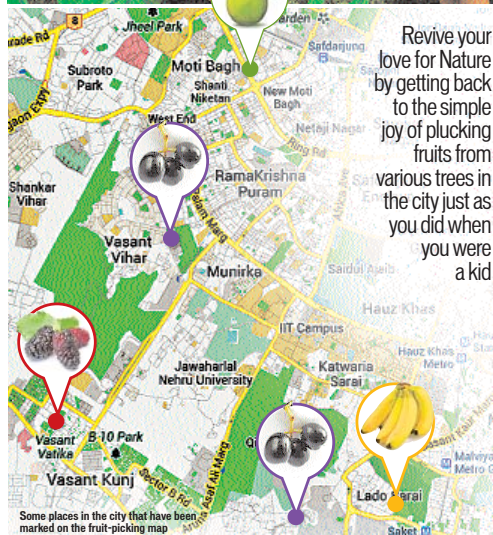


PICK SOME FRUIT WHILE IT POURS

PHOTO: IMAGES/SAZKAN



Revive your love for Nature by getting back to the simple joy of plucking fruits from various trees in the city just as you did when you were a kid

Sahil Magoo

sahil.magoo@hindustantimes.com

Nature has blessed us with various fruit-laden trees in every part of the city. While these trees are yet to be spotted on a large scale, there are plenty of ripe fruits waiting to be picked. To get you started with your search, Ethan Welty and Caleb Phillips of FallingFruit.org — a worldwide organisation that lists locations in neighbourhoods across the world where you can find naturally growing food — have taken up the tough job of marking these trees on a global map. Ask them how the project came into being, and Caleb shares, "I started with a map in 2008 and began to expand it with my own discoveries in Boulder for a research project. We decided to join forces and create the website that exists today."

He adds, "Initially, our aim was to make the most exhaustive map possible of

North America; combining our own data with the data collected by other individuals. Shortly after launching, we received substantial interest from people outside of North America — particularly, in Israel, Poland, and then India. Based on that interest, we decided to make the map global. I'm travelling to India in November, and very much looking forward to the trip."

Apart from helping people reconnect with nature and its resources, the website aims at being an educational resource. "I believe that the simple act of plucking a fruit creates a connection that cannot be undervalued. With today's global food system, it's very easy to be isolated from the source of your food, or ignorant of the process that creates it... I can't think of a better way for people to understand food than to pick or grow it themselves," says Caleb.

The functionality of the site, just like Wikipedia.org, relies on its users who can contribute to it by adding or editing the map without a user account. While thousands of people from around the world have already chipped in, Delhi is still under-represented and they hope that more people will mark out tree locations on their map, which can be accessed by all. "I would encourage everyone in Delhi to take notice of the trees around them. If you know of a fruit-laden tree, please add it to the map so that others can share in the harvest," he says.

The duo hopes that people will use their best judgment about property rights and be kind to the trees they pick.

RITWIK DUTTA, ENVIRONMENTAL LAWYER

There are no problems in plucking fruits from roadside trees. However, plucking from private areas, natural parks and sanctuaries is not permitted. The Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1994, prohibits cutting or felling of trees but is silent on plucking of fruits; which means it is allowed.



Caleb Phillips (above) and Ethan Welty (R)



Freshly-picked fruits