

Queen Anne's Lace

Family – Acanthaceae (Acanthus)

Genus/Species – *Daucus pucillus*/*Daucus carota*



Common Names – American wild carrot, bird's nest, bishop's lace, rattlesnake-weed, bees nest, devil's plague, fools parsley

Plant Type – Biennial.

Height – 2 - 4' tall.

Width – 2 - 6 in. flower head.

Soil Type – Sandy, gravelly soil and wet areas, prefers well-drained, neutral to alkaline soil

Light – Sunny location.

Dormant – in winter.

Moisture – low

Growth – Seeds persist in the soil for two to five years and require a second year growth to produce blooms.

Bloom – From March to June. Seed head (umbrel) is made up of numerous individual flowers. Each flower produces two seeds.

Colors – White umbrels, with a purplish/black floret at the center of the cluster.

Form – Upright.

Pollination Source – The single darkly colored floret was believed by botanists to be a genetic oddity; but, some now think that it tricks flying insects into thinking a bug is already on the flower in order to attract predatory wasps which signals others that something on this flower is worth having and thereby enhancing pollination of the plant.

Additional Description – References differ in that some say the plant is often mistaken for wild carrot which blooms in flat clusters and has pedicels that turn upward into a “bird’s nest” when flowers pass. Others state *Daucus carota* as the true family name. Its range is throughout the U.S. and may be found in the South Texas Plains and Edwards Plateau region. It is native to Europe and considered a pernicious weed in some areas.

Leaves/Petal – Shaped like an umbrella made up of many small flowers in a lace-like pattern. Pinnately divided leaves up to 7” long resemble the domestic carrot, poison hemlock and fool’s parsley. The root is thick and resembles a carrot.

Maintenance – Low to none required.



“Birds nest” phase

Propagation – Seeds turn brown when mature. Fruits are covered in hooked spines that cling to fur of passing animals. Gather a handful of seeds from a plant dying down in the fall. Store in a dry location and distribute over area where desired in the spring.

(Seeds are maintained in the Ladybird Johnson Wildlife Center seed bank.)

Wildlife value – Leaves are consumed by whitetailed deer.

Diseases – None noted.

Pests – Deer eat the leaves.

Additional Information – Some cultural uses: Tea made from the root which is used as a diuretic to prevent and treat kidney stones. Seeds have been used as a contraceptive, working as an abortifacient or “morning after” pill. Seeds also used as a remedy for hangovers, while both leaves and seeds are used to settle the gastrointestinal system. Grated wild carrot has been used to heal external wounds and internal ulcers. Also, its thick sap has been used as a cough and congestion treatment. The root may

be consumed as a vegetable. One must be very certain the plant is wild carrot as it closely resembles poison hemlock! Both hemlock and fool’s parsley smell nasty versus a carrot like aroma from the root of the Queen Anne’s Lace

Grown in the vicinity of tomato plants it is said to boost tomato production.

Legends & Folklore – To cure epileptic seizures, you should eat the dark colored middle flower. The flower has also been used in ancient rituals in spells; to increase fertility in women, and potency and sexual desire in men. It is fabled that the name, Queen Anne’s Lace, came from an occasion of Queen Anne pricking her finger while making lace, and thus staining the lace with blood (i.e. the dark central flower). Another fable tells that Queen Anne, upon arriving from Denmark, challenged the ladies in waiting to a contest to see who could produce a pattern of lace as fine and lovely as the flower. Also known as “Mother Die” because it was thought if you brought it into your house your mother would die.

Wildflower Resource Section

Websites:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daucus_carota Daucus Carota

http://www.woodrow.org/teachers/bj/2000/Ethnobotany/queen_anne_s_lace.html The Woodrow Wilson Foundation Leadership Program for Teachers: 2000 Summer Biology Institute Biodiversity. Medicinal Plants in Your Backyard: Exploring Biodiversity Through Ethnobotany

<http://uvalde.tamu.edu/herbarium/forbs-common-name-index/southwestern-carrot/> Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Uvalde: Southwestern Carrot

http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=DAPU3 Daucus pusillus (American wild carrot): Native Plant Database

<http://www.carrotmuseum.co.uk/queen.html> World Carrot Museum: The Wild Carrot – Queen Annes Lace