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How to Grow Queen Anne's Lace



Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*) is also known as wild carrot.

Photo Credit: Olko1975

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Planting, Growing, and Caring

By Andy Wilcox**Last Updated:** October 11, 2024

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A long-lasting filler for floral bouquets, this flower—with its umbrella-shaped flower clusters—can add interest to your garden and invite pollinators. It's an ancestor of the garden carrot! Learn how to plant, grow, and care for Queen Anne's lace.

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About Queen Anne's Lace

Queen Anne's lace is often called “wild carrot,” and if you've ever let a carrot in the garden stay over winter to flower the next year, you'll see why. The foliage looks similar, and the plant has a taproot like our garden carrots. Our tasty orange vegetables had their roots, so to speak, in

love are actually a subspecies, *D. carota*

var. *sativus*.

Gardeners grow this biennial for its lacy flower heads, not the roots.

- During the first year, it makes a basal rosette of leaves and focuses on storing energy.
- During the second year, the flowers bloom in late spring and early summer. They begin as a round, goblet-shaped gathering of stems before opening to an umbel, with hundreds of florets on each.
- After pollination, the flower closes again to resemble a bird's nest.



Queen's Anne Lace is an excellent choice for cut flower. It's long-lasting and adds contrast.

poison hemlock, false Queen Anne's lace,
giant hogweed, angelica, or cow parsnip.

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Note: Queen Anne's lace is considered an invasive or noxious weed in some areas of the country. Check with your local agricultural office and your state's invasive species list. If *Daucus carota* is a no-go in your area, consider False Queen Anne's lace, *Ammi visagna* or *Ammi majus*, which are less weedy and invasive.

Read Next

- [How to Grow Anemones: The Complete Anemone Flower Guide](#)
- [How to Grow Baby's Breath: The](#)

- [How to Grow Fennel: The Complete Guide](#)

PLANTING

Select a site with good drainage and full sun for the best blooms. This plant doesn't mind poor, less fertile soils (part of the reason it's invasive in many areas) and will tolerate most conditions.

The mature plants are susceptible to windthrow. Avoid unsheltered locations or local wind tunnel effects, such as between a shed and the garage.

When to Plant Queen Anne's Lace

Direct seed Queen Anne's lace in spring after the last frosts or start them indoors 4-6 weeks prior to transplanting.

Southern gardeners can also sow them in autumn. The seedlings establish more quickly in cooler temperatures.

How to Plant Queen Anne's Lace

- Cold treat the seeds for 2 weeks at 35–40°F.
- Prepare the bed or seed tray. If planting outdoors, removing the weeds and raking the surface smooth is sufficient.
- Sow seeds shallowly. Instead of making trenches or holes, sprinkle the seeds in rows or into cells and lightly cover them.
- Keep moist until germination.
- Thin seedlings when the first true leaves begin to appear.
- If transplanting, harden off and then use a final plant spacing of 6-12" between plants.



Queen Anne's lace in the garden beds.
Credit: Shutterstock

Queen Anne's lace won't need much help from you to grow. After seedlings are established, they prefer slightly drier conditions and often won't need watering. No fertilizer is necessary. Depending on soil conditions, the stems can flop over after a heavy rain or storm. A little preemptive staking goes a long way toward keeping these tall plants upright and out of garden aisles.

To prevent Queen Anne's lace from escaping the garden, snip the flower heads as soon as the blooms fade to prevent them from forming mature seeds. For cut flower use, harvest umbels when they have almost fully opened. If they're cut early, they often wilt.

Types

Queen Anne's Lace is generally white, which provides an outstanding contrast in most bouquets. However, there are some color varieties.

- 'Chocolate Lace' is a unique heirloom

white. Even after the blooming phase concludes, the seed heads transform into enchanting, whimsically curled structures resembling a miniature perch for a traveling fairy.



Chocolate Lace. Credit: [Buy at Eden Brothers Nursery](#).

- ‘Purple Kisses’ is another variation on the regular white Queen Anne’s Lace. It comes in beautiful shades of pink, dark purple, and white. And it’s another outstanding cut flower that’s long-lasting.



Dianthus barbatus ‘Purple Kisses’ at

HARVESTING

The lacy flower heads and crisp green-white color provide an invaluable filler for bouquets.

Queen Anne's lace is also very productive. The more you pick, the more it flowers!

Please note: Be careful as the sap in the stems can cause contact dermatitis in sensitive individuals. Wear gloves while harvesting.

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PESTS/DISEASES

- Queen Anne's lace rarely has serious pest or disease problems.

WIT AND WISDOM

- Many stories claim the common name for this plant comes in some fashion from Queen Anne II of England, who was skilled at lacework. The drop of red in the center of the flower is symbolic of her pricked finger while she was tatting.
- Foragers harvest and eat the taproot, which is edible, claiming it has a carrot-like flavor.
- Keep up with deadheading before the plant sets seed. Trying to root out an escaped patch can be a lot of work.
- This plant is potentially poisonous to livestock.

Andy Wilcox



Andy Wilcox is a flower farmer and master gardener with a passion for soil health, small producers, forestry, and horticulture.

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COMMENTS

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Chris Smith (not verified) 6 months 1 week

ago

I consider Queen Anne's lace an invasive but beautiful weed. Once you have it, it spreads everywhere. It is also the bane of dogs with medium to long fur. I have spent many hours combing the burr-like seeds out of my Brussels Griffons and Lhasa apso. The seeds cling to everything. I don't know how many socks I have had to throw away after walking through some

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were knit clothing of any kind. You definitely don't want them to go to seed.

REPLY

Linda (not verified) 6 months 1 week ago

In the 60s on my grandparents farm, my Nana showed me how to dye Queen Anne's Lace by adding food coloring to the water in a cup. As a tiny girl, I thought that was the greatest project, and through my life it was always a special memory of my grandmother and me together. I've been doing it most every summer since. I adore the simple pleasures of life! And now I do the same project with my little grandchildren!

REPLY

Pat Baker (not verified) 6 months 1 week ago

Where can Queen Anne lace seeds or plants be purchased?

REPLY

Norene Bertsch (not verified) 6

months 1 week ago

I live in San Joaquin county where
can I buy the seeds for Queen Ann's
Lace? Retired floral designer and
would like it in my yard

REPLY

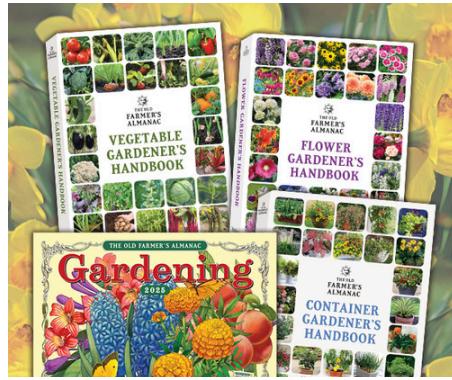
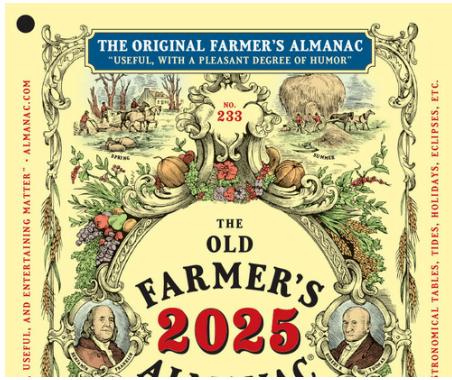
Brian S (not verified) 6 months 1

week ago

It's an invasive weed. I hate the stuff!

REPLY

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