

Helping
Carolinians
Increase Their
Knowledge of
Gardening,
Manage Their
Landscape
Investment &
Protect the
Environment

JC Raulston Arboretum Plant Focus

Reach the Sky with Joe-Pye

Joe-Pye weed, *Eupatorium spp.*, is a conspicuous late summer bloomer that grows naturally in wet or damp meadows, thickets and along roadsides.

Luckily, it's a natural for gardeners. A showy plant, few perennials can compare with Joe-Pye weed's ability to create an imposing presence in the landscape. A member of the aster family, the plant is sometimes called feverweed, queen of the meadow and numerous other common names.

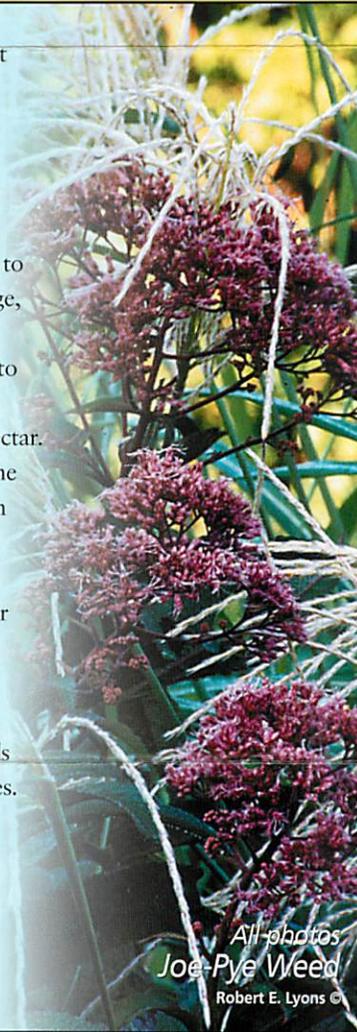
A tall wildflower, the unbranched stems of Joe-Pye weed usually grow 5 to 6 feet, but under good conditions can reach heights of 10 to 12 feet. Its large, rounded clusters of pink-purple fuzzy flower heads, large size and whorled leaves that come out from the stem like the spokes of a wheel make it easy to recognize. The showy flower clusters are invariably covered by a variety of insects including butterflies, bees and various wasps feeding on the sweet nectar.

In the garden, Joe-Pye performs best in full sun and moist soil, though the plant is tolerant of a wide range of soil types and moisture levels and is even considered drought-tolerant once established. Propagate by division.

Several Joe-Pye weed cultivars are available, including *E. purpureum ssp. maculatum* 'Atropurpureum'. At up to 9-feet high, this Joe-Pye stands up for attention. Its purple spotted and mottled stems don't require stakes and it makes a great show at the back of a border with its violet-purple flowers.

Eupatorium purpureum ssp. maculatum 'Gateway', at 4- to 5-feet tall, is more compact and bushy. 'Gateway' has graceful, dusky rose-pink flower heads in summer and fall. The stems are wine-colored and put out large green leaves. 'Alba' produces white flowers.

Joe-Pye weeds are easy to spot at the JC Raulston Arboretum. Stroll the sidewalks that edge the long Perennial Border and the shorter opposing Elizabeth Lawrence Border. Grab a map at the end of the border to help you identify the plants but Joe-Pye will stand out for sure! **Royce Hardin**



All photos
Joe-Pye Weed
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Robert E. Lyons ©

Purple-Leaf Grape

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Purple Sage

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Spicy Globe Basil*Peach Tree*

Landscape with Style and Good Taste

Edible landscaping merges two schools of thought in which the family farm meets the urban gardener. The idea is quite simple in theory: incorporate some edible plants in with the existing home landscape.

Edible plants can take many forms. Many of them such as nuts, fruits and vegetables are familiar. Other types of edible plants include herbs, edible flowers and bulbs. Incorporating them into the home landscape is quite easy. Many of these edible plants have other desirable features besides the fact that they can be eaten. Blueberries, for example, have showy flowers as well as a nice fall color. They make a beautiful hedge while also providing tasty fruit in mid- to late summer. Many of the tree fruits have beautiful flower displays in the early spring.

This trend in edible landscaping is growing for many reasons. For one, nothing beats eating fresh fruits and vegetables harvested directly from the plant. With today's growing concern for pesticides used on many of the foods we eat, growing your own food lets you limit the amount of chemicals that are applied to a particular plant. The overriding reason many gardeners are moving toward the edible landscape is the desire to be self-reliant. To be able to live off the land and provide for yourself may be the most rewarding aspect in edible landscaping.

Edible landscaping doesn't stray from your basic gardener's rules of thumb. A well-drained soil with lots of compost and organic matter is needed. Addressing the soil before planting will be integral to the success of your garden. A soil test may be needed to get you started off on the right foot. Lastly, allowing your landscape to receive at least six hours of light is ideal.

Edible plants vary in shape and size. Some may be trees, while another may be a groundcover. The beauty of these plants is that they can perform many of the same functions other ornamental plants can. Simply substituting the edible plant for the ornamental plant will put you on your way to creating an edible landscape.

Instead of planting begonias and marigolds in your containers, take an edible slant and plant some herbs in pots. Many herbs are drought-tolerant and make excellent potted plants.

Instead of planting begonias and marigolds in your containers, take an edible slant and plant some herbs in pots. Many herbs are drought-tolerant and make excellent potted plants. Vines such as Carolina jessamine, climbing roses and clematis are popular in the landscape. However, grapes and kiwis are great edible vine alternatives. Fruit trees planted in lieu of shade trees are another option. There are also many edible flowers such as nasturtiums, violas, scented geraniums and pansies that can be planted and incorporated into the mix as well.

Edible landscaping allows you to incorporate some of the local food plants or the hard-to-find varieties that can't be purchased in the stores anymore. Many of our heirloom seeds that have been passed down from generation to generation survive well only in our climate. Since these seeds are hard to find, it gives you a chance to provide a local flavor to your landscape.

Time and care are required in an edible landscape. The difference between an ornamental landscape and an edible landscape is that a final product is produced in the edible landscape. The challenge is to get that final product before the wildlife in your area get it first. Edible plants may require a little more pruning, watering and fertilizing than an ornamental landscape would require.

Overall, though, edible landscaping is for the hobbyist gardener. For those of you who don't mind standard garden chores, edible landscaping may be for you. Just remember to start small. You wouldn't want to work so hard that you are too tired to harvest your rewards. *Ben Dungan*

Extension's Successful Gardener
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**2003 Garden
Globe Award of
Achievement**

by the
Garden Writers Association

Q&A Why is this huge wasp in my lawn?

A wasp that is 1 1/4 inches long puts just about anybody into a state of panic but there is no need to fear this insect. The cicada killer wasp is a large but docile creature that feeds on the nectar of flowers and will also catch and sting adult cicadas to serve as food for their young.

You may notice the wasps flying around several mounds of soil in the lawn area. This is the excess soil thrown out of a burrow the insect is building. The burrow hole

can be 6 to 9 inches deep and 1/2 inches in diameter. The adult female feeds, mates and digs burrows for several weeks before preying on cicadas. Once the burrows are complete, the adult provides each egg cell with one or two cicadas they have killed.

The wasps prefer soil that has only sparse vegetation so the best control for this insect is a thick stand of turf. Since the wasp is contributing to the control of the cicada population, they are considered beneficial insects.

Carl Matyac

Powdery Mildew Control Methods

Gray to white powdery spots that appear on the upper surfaces of leaves and stems of many plants is a good indication of powdery mildew. This fungus thrives in both humid and dry weather conditions. It is spread by the wind and can quickly move from plant to plant.

Powdery mildew is most severe in the late summer but can occur anytime that humid conditions are present. There are several fungicides that can be sprayed to protect new plant growth. Check to make sure that the fungicide is listed for your particular plant before using.

Apply fungicides at 10- to 12-day intervals. Good sanitary practices also are important. Clean up and destroy fallen debris and, whenever possible, pick off infected leaves.

Remove severely infected plants and replace with resistant varieties. To reduce the possibility of future outbreaks of powdery mildew, plant in sites that have good light conditions and adequate air movement.

Donna Teasley

ENVIRO-TIP

Plan Your Landscape for Energy Savings

Proper landscaping is a cost-effective way to lower your energy bills. Reduce heat gain in summer and heat loss in winter by planning your landscape to modify the climate around your home. Plants can protect your home from winter winds and shade it from summer sun. Windbreaks can save up to 25 percent on heating costs. Shading and evapotranspiration from trees can reduce surrounding air temperatures as much as 9 degrees. Turf and groundcovers reduce ground temperature by as much as 15 degrees lower than concrete surfaces.

Plant windbreaks to reduce wind velocity and air infiltration into your home. In winter, air infiltration causes up to half of the total heat lost on windy, cold days. An evergreen screen can divert cold winds away from the home. Locate the windbreak upwind, protecting the north and northwest sides. The optimum distance to reduce wind velocity is about one to three times mature tree height from the home. If a doorway is exposed to wind, an evergreen planting can shelter it.

Solar radiation is beneficial in winter, but not in summer. Deciduous shrubs and trees can help in both sea-

sons, cutting air conditioning and heating costs by 15 percent to 50 percent. Locating plants along the sunny borders of the home, attaching structures and vines to walls and utilizing the shade of overhanging limbs provides summer shade. Shade south-facing roof and wall surfaces that receive the most direct sunlight during midday when the sun is higher in the sky. Also shade walls that face east or west, because they receive direct sunlight in the morning and afternoon.

Good landscaping practices offer practical methods of reducing energy consumption in homes. When you consider the added benefits of increased real estate value and more attractive homes and communities, the investment becomes an even greater bargain. To determine the best species of trees, shrubs or vines for your particular conditions and needs, consult your county Cooperative Extension agent or visit www.ncstate-plants.net.

Mike Wilder

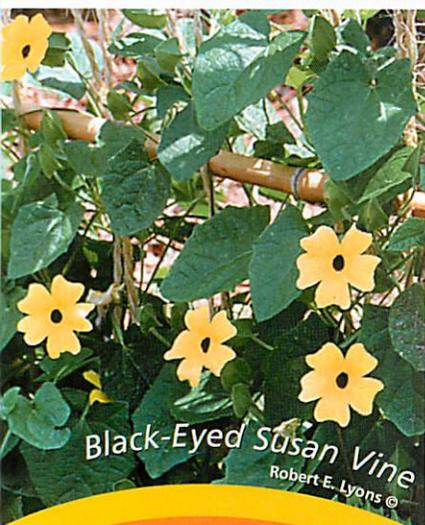


gardentalk

"May all of your weeds be wildflowers"

– Author Unknown





Flora Macdonald Gardens in Red Springs are on the campus of Flora Macdonald College, which was founded as a women's college in 1896.

Dr. Charles G. Vardell, the founder of the college, started the gardens which span 10 acres. The entire campus has been designated a National Historic Site and offers seasonal beauty, especially when the azaleas are in bloom in the spring.

Though the gardens suffered a severe setback from a tornado in 1984, restoration has brought them back to a point where one can still walk the meandering paths.

Flora Macdonald College is located at 100 South College Street in Red Springs, North Carolina. The gardens are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Nov. 1 to March 31, and from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., April 1 to Oct. 31. There is no admission fee to the gardens. Visit www.capefearscots.com to learn more about the college, its gardens and the cultural heritage of the Scottish people who settled here.

David Barkley

Gardening in August

Lawns

- Be on the lookout for grubs and apply proper control methods.
- Check sharpness of mower blades and repair.
- Mow turf as needed depending on summer growth.
- Destroy unwanted zoysia and Bermuda for fall reseeding of fescue.
- Most grasses need a soil pH of 6.5 in order to utilize fertilizer.
- Fertilize your zoysia and Bermudagrass lawns for the last time this season.

Ornamentals

- Divide irises and daylilies during this dormant period.
 - Make last application of fertilizer to roses by mid month.
- Control black spot and other rose diseases.
 - Deadhead annuals to encourage late-season blossoms.
 - Sow seeds for hollyhocks, poppies and larkspurs for spring blooms.
 - Avoid fertilizing ornamentals now so they harden off before winter.
 - Check plants for insects such as scales, aphids and spider mites.
 - Do not prune after August 15.

Edibles

- Harvest crops on a regular basis for season-long production.
- Add a net over ripening fruit to protect from hungry birds.
- Fertilize strawberry bed for added flower bud development.
- Spray fall vegetables if there is insect damage.
 - Peach, nectarine and plum trees need a trunk spray for peach tree borers.
- Plant the following fall vegetables this month: beets, Chinese cabbage, cucumber, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, spinach, squash, collards and broccoli. *Karen Neill*



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