

## QUEEN ANNE'S LACE

*Daucus carota*



*Daucus carota*, whose common names include wild carrot, bird's nest, bishop's lace, and Queen Anne's lace (North America), is a flowering plant in the family Apiaceae, native to temperate regions of Europe and southwest Asia, and naturalized to North America and Australia. *D. carota* was introduced and naturalised in North America, where it is often known as "Queen Anne's lace". Both Anne, Queen of Great Britain, and her great grandmother Anne of Denmark are taken to be the Queen Anne for which the plant is named. It is so called because the flower resembles lace; the red flower in the center is thought to represent a blood droplet where Queen Anne pricked herself with a needle when she was making the lace.

Extra caution should be used when collecting *D. carota* because it bears a close resemblance to poison hemlock. In addition, the leaves of the wild carrot can cause phytophotodermatitis, so caution should also be used when handling the plant. It has also been used as a method of contraception and an abortifacient for centuries.

If used as a dyestuff, the flowers give a creamy, off-white color. *D. carota*, when freshly cut, will draw or change color depending on the color of the water in which it is held. This effect is only visible on the "head" or flower of the plant. Carnations also exhibit this effect. This occurrence is a popular science demonstration in primary grade school.

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