

GASTON GROWER SPOTLIGHT- AUGUST 2021



A Beautiful and Unique Salad

A visit in early July to [Piedmont Homestead](#) led to an interesting taste test. That particular week they had decided to incorporate edible flowers and common edible weeds into their usual salad mix. These editions highlight the multifunctionality of a pollinator garden along with making use of plants that most folks view as a weed. We have highlighted each interesting ingredient individually below.

Nasturtium



Nasturtium is responsible for the orange color you see in the bag pictured above. It is an annual that will bloom in late spring into early fall. This plant is utilized to attract pollinators, beautification and its edibility. The flavor of nasturtium can be described as peppery. They do not require much care and prefer poor soil. Growth habit is dependent upon the variety, as well as flower color. If selecting a vining variety provide a trellis to support the growth. If you are interested in learning more details about Nasturtium [click here](#).

Bee Balm

Bee Balm (red flower in the bag above) is an herbaceous perennial that is native to North Carolina known for its showy red flowers. It flowers during the summer and attracts pollinators. Its edible flowers taste a little sweet, minty, with maybe a hint of citrus flavor. It's a flavor that is hard to describe unless you experience it yourself. If you're interested in learning more about growing this plant and want to experience the flavor for yourself [click here](#). A fair warning before planting is that it can tend to be an aggressive spreader.



Yellow Woodsorrel



Oxalis stricta commonly known as yellow woodsorrel is a common perennial weed found in lawns and gardens. It can sometimes be confused with clovers, but can be distinguished by heart shaped leaves, the cylindrical seed pods, or small yellow flowers when in bloom. It is important to consume this plant in small portions (like in the salad mix) due to oxalic acid content. That being said the entire plant is edible (minus the roots), and has a delicious lemon like citrus flavor. Learn more about yellow woodsorrel by [clicking here](#).

Lambsquarters

Lambsquarters is another edible weed that can be consumed in moderate amounts. Its young leaves and stems are the safest to consume. The plant is probably most recognizable by toothed leaves and a white powdery or waxy undercoating. The plant begins its life with oppositely arranged leaves and as it matures the leaves begin to alternate. While the flavor isn't much to write home about the texture and taste of young leaves are comparable to spinach. As leaves mature they tend to become more bitter. If you are interested in more information on common lambsquarters [click here](#).



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