



Metzelia nuda (White-flowered Blazing Star)

Photo by Pam Schulz

August 2024

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Plant ID Apps

By Karen Vanderwall

Probably like many of you, I regularly have the desire to identify plants. Sure, I do know how to key out plants. I have a multitude of plant guides and gardening books. But I often enjoy taking a few moments in my own garden to quickly identify a plant. Other times I am busy multitasking — walking or hiking near home or even traveling, having a conversation at the same time, and, unable to resist my curiosity, snapping a photo of a plant I see.

My enthusiasm for using technology to ID plants began with PlantSnap a few years ago. Since getting a more updated version of an iPhone, instead of using a separate app, I now just take a photo of a plant with my iPhone and can instantly have the identification. [Read the full blog post of this article linked below for how to do this.]



WOFR member Peggy Hanson snapping a photo on a WOFR Denver Garden Crawl in 2023. Photo by Pam Shultz.

I have found that having some knowledge of plant families, leaf patterns, regions/zones or, in the garden, narrowing down the possibilities based on your seed mix (or maybe what your neighbor has growing in their garden) can give you a much more accurate identification.

In addition to simply using the photo app on your phone, there are many many other apps out there for IOS (iPhone) and Android, including FlowerChecker, LeafSnap, PlantID, PlantNet, PictureThis, Plant Story, PlantIn, PlantSnap, and Seek, to name a few. Wondering if other plant enthusiasts found any of the other apps useful, I did some research.

Want to learn more about different Plant ID apps?

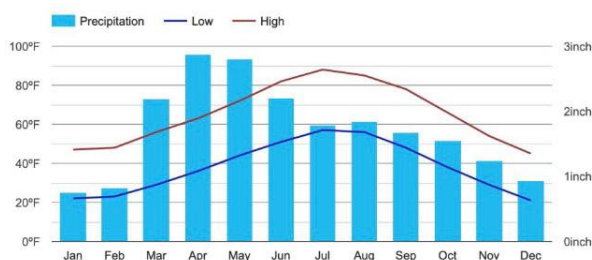
[Read the full blog post here](#)

Rainwater Harvesting

By Kristine Johnson

The Front Range is the dry boundary of the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains. In Boulder, Colorado, where I live, we receive about 20 inches (51 cm) of precipitation per year, peaking in late Spring. One problem with gardening in this relatively arid environment is that many Colorado residents moved here from somewhere else, usually somewhere wetter and greener. Because culture and sentiment drive landscape choices, they often want to replicate that here, whether it's appropriate in terms of our resources or not. (I grew up in western Colorado, with half the precipitation of Boulder, so my view is that this place is absolutely lush.) As a result, a lot of Colorado urban landscapes do not reflect our water realities, and it can be hard to find support for choices in tune with nature and regeneration, though climate change and our increasingly severe droughts are changing that.

q Boulder Climate Graph - Colorado Climate Chart



Graphic of Boulder, Colorado monthly precipitation from <https://www.usclimatedata.com/climate/boulder/colorado/united-states/usco0456>

When my family made a lot of our landscaping choices twenty years ago, we were smart enough to know that lawns are for playing on, and we kept our lawn to the backyard only, where the kids were.

Curious about Kristine's watering and rainwater harvesting choices for her landscape?

[Read the full blog post here](#)

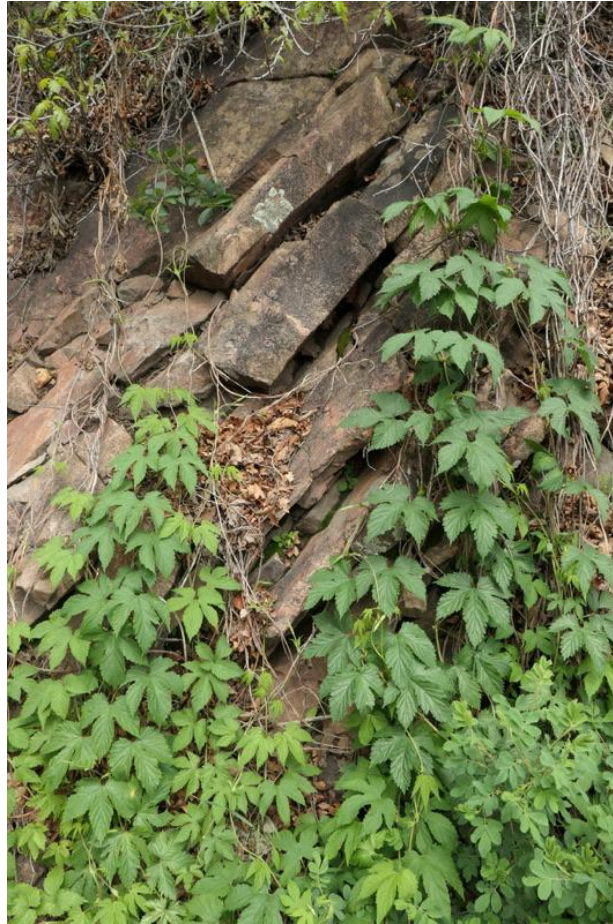
Ask CSU Extension Anything (About Native Plants)

QUESTION:
What native vines could help cover a chain link fence?

ANSWER: Colorado has few native vines — *Humulus neomexicanus* (hops), *Parthenocissus vitacea* (woodbine; thicket creeper) and *Vitis* (grapes — *Vitis acerifolia* and *Vitis riparia*) are the most widely distributed. Unlike Virginia Creeper, these vines, including the native *Parthenocissus*, *P. vitacea*, do not produce adhesive discs on tendrils and would require support for climbing a wall, though would twine up a chain link fence without problem. Both grape species, as well as woodbine, are potential hosts for Japanese Beetle, though, so you'd be back to square one there.



Hops is not typically attacked by Japanese Beetles and could be a good option for you, though it dies to the ground each winter so would leave you exposed through the colder months. Hops is very drought tolerant and could be aggressive in the right growing conditions, too.



Tumulus lupulus var. neomexicanus - photo ©Denver Botanic Gardens

A North American native plant, *Lonicera sempervirens* (trumpet honeysuckle), is also not attacked by Japanese Beetles and would be more present through the dormant season. *Campsis radicans*, another North American plant, is another option, though it is attacked by JB, it seems not to be as preferred as *Parthenocissus* or *Vitis* species.

You could also consider spraying your susceptible vines with the natural control *Bacillus thuringiensis var. galleriae*. This bacterium infects members of the scarab beetle family (like Japanese Beetles) but is safe for bees and most other insects as well as birds and mammals. It is available in products like BeetleJUS and BeetleGONE!.

[Blog post of this Q&A here](#)

Answer developed by: John Murgel, Extension County Specialist, Horticulture and Natural Resources, Douglas County, Colorado State University Extension

Upcoming Events

Check out our website's [Events](#) section for registration links and full event details!

Northern Region August Member Social

Sunday, August 11

Members only

Northern Region August Member Social

Sunday, August 18

Members only

"Combating the Biodiversity Crisis with Native Plants" with Sarah Gray & Coralie Palmer

Thursday, August 22

Online/virtual (hosted by Wild Ones National)

Pikes Peak Region August Meeting & Social

Saturday, August 24

Members only

Fall Member Social & Potluck

Sunday, September 15

Members only

We love hearing from you!

If you would like to comment on anything in this newsletter or write an article, please [email us](#) your comments or ideas.

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