

Tea Tuesday Digest

November 17, 2020



- 1. Icebreaker** – Attendees visited in breakout groups. An icebreaker was distributed for fun, themed around “Praiseworthy Plants”. Link to icebreaker: [Bit.ly/nov-tea](https://bit.ly/nov-tea)
Challenge answers: Corn (maize) and 1=C, 3=A, 3=B
- 2. How to Volunteer with Pesky Plant Trackers** – Short presentation outlined what volunteers do and why.
Resources shared:
 - Self-paced online course: bit.ly/peskycourse
 - Tips for finding plants in the winter: peskyplants.umn.edu/fallwinter
 - Contact Abbie for support at any stage: peskyplants@umn.edu
- 3. [Erin Posthumus](#)** presented on *Nature’s Notebook* campaigns, data visualization tools, and stories of select research findings. Related resources:
 - YouTube playlist of videos explaining Visualization Tool: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLInHLGw8kUFaiNuuJfvPv-tf0WUW_6cRI
- 4. Q&A** – see next page.

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Q&A – Questions from the group included:

- **Q:** What should volunteers do with pesky plants after monitoring? That is, should volunteers destroy them?
- **A:** Great question! The short answer is no. Pesky Plant Trackers volunteer activities do not involve touching or interfering with plants. Our project is all about observing the plants where they already grow. Therefore, you are not expected to remove plants. (This complies with Minnesota law, which prohibits transport or propagation of these plants, but does not require removal.) This said, Pesky Plants staff understands that individual volunteers will sometimes choose to remove plants from their own land. If you need information on safe and effective removal, please reach out to peskyplants.umn.edu.
- **Q:** Should I monitor wild parsnip basal rosettes (that is, first year plants) or not?
- **A:** From a research perspective, it is more valuable to monitor second-year plants, the plants that form flowers, fruits, and seeds. However, from the perspective of a volunteer outdoors in early spring, you may not be able to tell the age of a plant. This is okay. We recommend marking several plants, at least 3, if several plants are available at your site. Collecting data while plants are in early stages is quite easy because all you will need to do is report on the presence or absence of leaves. It takes very little time. As plants grow and you can distinguish first-year from mature plants, you may choose to continue monitoring all plants, or you may focus on only the mature plants, depending on your time availability.
- **Q:** How should I mark individual plants?
- **A:** https://www.usanpn.org/nn/faq#plant_marking
- **Q:** When I use *Nature's Notebook's* Visualization Tool to explore data on Japanese knotweed, are we looking at data for both dwarf varieties and non-dwarf varieties?
- **A:** Yes, dwarf Japanese knotweed is a variant, or cultivar, of Japanese knotweed. Because it is not a separate species, the data for non-dwarf and dwarf varieties are stored together in *Nature's Notebook*. However, if you monitor a dwarf plant, please edit your plant (within your Observation Deck on the *Nature's Notebook* website) to indicate in the Comments field that it is a dwarf variety. This is important because researchers will be able to tell apart dwarf plants using your comments.