

Tea Tuesday Digest

March 16, 2021 at 3 pm



1. Welcome & Land acknowledgment – Suggested resource: native-land.ca
2. Social time, 10 minutes – Break out groups for introductions & sharing
3. How to volunteer
 - See a summary of volunteer activities: peskyplants.umn.edu/volunteer
 - Access training: peskyplants.umn.edu/scheduled-training
 - Email Abbie any time: peskyplants@umn.edu
4. Abbie described Pesky Plants experiments
 - This research project gathers plant observations in 3 ways: with citizen scientists, in growth chambers, and at field sites.
 - There are 5 field sites in Minnesota, located at University-operated research facilities.
 - Growth chambers are being used to run germination and phenology trails.
5. Q & A
 - **Q:** How long do wild parsnip seeds remain viable? **A:** Seeds can remain viable in the soil for four years. (per Hennepin County Master Gardeners, <https://hennepinmastergardeners.org/dont-eat-this-type-of-parsnip/>) Some sources say 5 years.
 - **Q:** Should I move leaf litter to check for initial growth? Or is it better to leave that in place and wait for shoots and leaves to poke up through debris? **A:** If possible, gently lift and then *replace* debris that could obstruct your view of shoots or early leaves. Materials such as dead leaves and other debris can play an important role for newly emerging plants by regulating their microclimate. Every site is slightly different so find a balance between detecting early signs of growth and leaving site conditions unchanged.

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What do you see here?

Photo by Abbie Anderson, March 14, 2021, Golden Valley, MN



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There appear to be **three wild parsnip plants** in this photo. (That is, the circled leaves are *probably not* coming up from a single underground root or seed. It is possible that some of these individuals will not survive.)

If this were your site, collect data on just one plant, not all three. (Why? Selected plants should not be closer than two or three times the width of one full grown plant. For wild parsnip, use a distance of at least 6 feet.)

Depending on which plant you select, the following observations could be made:

- **Upper left corner:** Yes to “Initial growth.” (The first leaf is not fully unfolded.) No to all other phenophases.
- **Middle:** Yes to “Leaves.” No to all other phenophases. (Comment: This plant may have germinated last year, in late summer or fall, and managed to survive the winter.)
- **Right:** Yes to “Initial growth.” (The first leaf is not fully unfolded.) No to all other phenophases.
- **How will you keep track of which plant you observe?** As you see, this is challenging. Do your best. Here are some tips:
 - If possible, select a plant that is less “crowded” than what you see in this photo.
 - Carefully place a stake in the ground to mark the selected plant. Do your best to avoid damaging plants or altering site conditions.
 - Take photos or make a few sketches. Include details that help you get oriented in the space.



What do you
see here?

Photo by Elizabeth Heeren, March 4, 2021, St. Paul, MN



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Notice dead **knotweed** stems from last year's growth. They indicate where to look for this year's new shoots.

What observations would you make here?

- Yes to "Initial growth." (New shoots are circled.)
- In addition to checking for initial growth, inspect the entire knotweed patch, which may include dead parts from last year's growth. Why? **Make it your goal to answer all 7 phenophase questions.** For example:
 - Do you see ripe fruits? If ripe fruits are still attached to the dead plant, report "yes" for this phenophase. (However, if fruits appear decayed and losing their contents, report "no" to this phenophase.)
 - Do you see recent fruit or seed drop? If ripe fruits have dropped since your last visit, answer "yes" for this phenophase.

Note: Knotweed plants live to flower over multiple years. In contrast, wild parsnip plants die after they flower. Delete dead wild parsnip plants from *Nature's Notebook*.