



What are wildflower mixes?

Wildflower mixes come in many forms. Most mixes are sold in packets. These packets contain a variety of easily germinated seeds. Wildflower mixes are also sold as greeting cards which have incorporated seeds into the card paper. Either way, they are sold with the intended purpose of beautifying a garden by simply tossing seeds in and letting them grow with minimum care. They are often sold at nurseries and souvenir shops.



Some examples of what wildflower seed mixes can look like

How are they harmful?



Ox-eye daisy, *Leucanthemum vulgare* (top) and dame's rocket, *Hesperis matronalis*; two invasive species commonly found in wildflower seed mixes

Wildflower seed mixes often contain invasive species. Gardeners are usually unaware of this because, even if they happen to read the information provided on the outside of the seed packet, the package usually contains very little information about what plants species are actually inside. And when information *is* provided, it is often not accurate and generally not very specific. For instance, common names may be provided on a packet. However, as an example, the name “daisy” may refer to any number of “daisy-like” flowers; one being Ox-eye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), which is a highly invasive weed.

Another problem with wildflower seed mixes is that the term “wildflower” may imply to some gardeners that the plants in the packet are native to their area, when in reality they are not. In addition, some packets are actually marked as “native” or “regional”. This can create problems because plants that are native to the area where the packets were manufactured may not be the same as the plants

that are native to the area where the packets are being sold. And the manufacturing location is sometimes not included on the packet.

Try this instead:

Instead of purchasing wildflower seed mixes for your garden, try buying individual packets that are labeled properly, with common names as well as scientific names. That way you can ensure you know exactly what you are getting and you can determine whether the plants are native and non-invasive. Also, you could try trading seeds with a friend or neighbor. This ensures that you are receiving plants that they are familiar with and know are non-invasive.

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de:

