

GREEN-HEADED CONEFLOWER

Rudbeckia laciniata

By Helen Hamilton, *President of the John Clayton Chapter, VNPS*

A valuable addition to the wild garden, Green-headed Coneflower typically grows 5-8 feet tall with bright yellow flowers which can be five inches across. The green centers are unusual in this genus of the Black-eyed and Brown-eyed Susans; the plant is also known as Tall Coneflower or Cutleaf Coneflower. The species name “laciniata” means “torn”, referring to the deeply divided and toothed leaves.

This native plant was first described centuries ago and can be found in abandoned gardens; its typical native habitats are in moist places such as creek banks. Coneflowers are field flowers and nonstop summer-to-fall bloomers. They are tough, drought-resistant plants that love full sun and seem to bloom forever, never needing deadheading. In fact, no one deadheads coneflowers until very late in the fall when the stems and seedheads are black and the birds have eaten all the seeds long ago.

Green-headed Coneflower is found throughout Virginia, and ranges from Quebec to Florida, and west to Montana and Arizona. Cultivars are available in the nursery trade. Traditionally the plant has been used to treat indigestion, burns and other ailments. ❖



Photo: Green-Headed Coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*) taken by Rick Gardner.
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