

Weedy, Seedy Types

Written by Laura Lee Rose

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Weeds are very successful strategists. They have developed ways to grow in poor soil, low light and varying amounts of moisture. I respect any plant that comes up through the cracks in the sidewalk.

Weeds are usually spread by seeds or roots. Seeds are produced after a plant flowers and stored in pods, fruits or capsules. By design light-weight seeds can fly or float; stickers and burs literally spread by the “Velcro” principle as their tiny hooks hitchhike on the fur of animals and humans’ socks. Some cosmopolitan species reproduce by making a lot of seeds. *Plantago spp.*, broad leaved and narrow leaved plantains, were brought by European settlers to the new world. Native Americans called them “White Man’s Weed” as they appeared near cabins and forts, and quickly naturalized across Eastern North America. Plantain leaves were used by Europeans for its medicinal and antiseptic qualities. One plant may produce hundreds of seeds. Another weed that is noted for oodles of seeds is pigweed, *Amaranthus spp*

. This annual weed has several species and has been grown for thousands of years for its leaves and grain. One plant can produce 100,000 small dark seeds.

Annual weeds live one season, and biennial weeds live two seasons. Annuals can grow in summer

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