



## Cabbage Leaf Coneflower

*Rudbeckia maxima*

(rud-BEK-ee-a MAKShih-muh)

**Left:** Early July, in bloom

**Below:** By mid November Goldfinches have eaten half of this seed head

Photo by and grown by John Brandauer



**Description:** This is one of the taller flowers we grow here. Despite the towering height, it rarely needs staking. The leaves have a bluish tint a texture similar to a cabbage leaves. Excellent garden presence! If bigger is better, this plant may be the best.

**Other Names:** Great Coneflower, Giant Coneflower, Great Rudbeckia, Dumbo's Ears, Giant Brown-eyed Susan, Swamp coneflower, and those really tall ones that the birds eat the seed from.

**Type:** Forb/herb

**Family:** Asteraceae

**Life Cycle:** Perennial

**Native Status:** USA (AR, LA, OK, SC, TX)

**Light Requirements:** Full sun, may tolerate part sun

**Soil Preference:** Prefers rich, moist, also grows in normal, clay, sandy, and acidic soil.

**Care:** Easy, drought tolerant, thrives in hot humid NJ summers. Deadheading prolongs blooming. We do not. Feed the birds!

**Growth Rate:** Moderate for us, fast by some accounts. Perhaps faster with more moisture.

**Blooms:** Yellow, drooping petals, in mid summer

**Size:** Four to six feet tall, about a foot and a half, to two feet wide wide. YEE-HAH!

**Natural habitat:** Open moist, swampy areas.

**Wildlife Benefits:** A nectar source for bees and butterflies. Goldfinches (NJ state bird) will enjoy the seeds for months.

**Propagation Methods:** Best by root ball division. Seed may be difficult to start. Direct sow after last frost, lightly covering seeds. Light and stratification may improve germination.

**Commercial availability:** Available mail order, seed or plant.

Information compiled from the web, supplemented by our experiences.

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