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Dipsacus in Iowa¹

RICHARD W. POHL and E. P. SYLWESTER²

Abstract. *Dipsacus* has not been previously reported in Iowa. *D. laciniatus* is established in a cemetery, apparently as the result of using the dried inflorescences for ornament.

The European teasel, *Dipsacus sylvestris* Huds., is a common biennial weed in pastures and on roadsides in the eastern United States, extending westward to Ontario, Wisconsin, and Missouri; but it has never appeared in Iowa. *D. laciniatus* L., with laciniately pinnatifid leaves (Figure 1), is much rarer and is reported by Fernald¹ as extending from Massachusetts to Michigan. It was not reported from Iowa by Cratty², and there are no previous specimens in the Iowa State Herbarium. Our collection from Clarion, Wright County, is cited below.

D. laciniatus was reported growing as a weed in the Clarion cemetery and was brought to Mr. Aaron Bowman, the County Extension Director, by the cemetery custodian. Mr. Bowman tentatively identified the plant and brought it to the attention of E. P. Sylwester.

In September of 1962, the dense teasel patch in the Clarion cemetery occupied an area of about two square rods. It was near an area where old funeral bouquets had been burned, and it seems probable that the plants became established from old dried heads which had been used in ornamental bouquets. When the area was seen, the plants were 2-3m tall and were mature and shedding great quantities of seed. They were growing in dense native prairie sod along a railroad track adjacent to the cemetery. Remains of old plants indicate that the patch was not new. Some of the seed heads were missing from mature plants and may have been taken from ornament or as curiosities. Blackbirds were feeding in the area, and a small stream was nearby. Seed spread by people, birds or water may have occurred.

On September 11, the teasel patch was cut and burned to reduce seed spread, and surviving plants were sprayed with a mixture of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T in fuel oil, with apparent complete kill of established plants. We will watch the area for possible establishment of seedlings.

Dipsacus laciniatus L. IOWA: Wright Co.: In a cemetery, east edge of Clarion. E. P. Sylwester. Sept. 6, 1962. No. 234099 (ISU).

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2. Cratty, R. I. 1933. I.S.C. Journ. of Sci. 7:177-252.

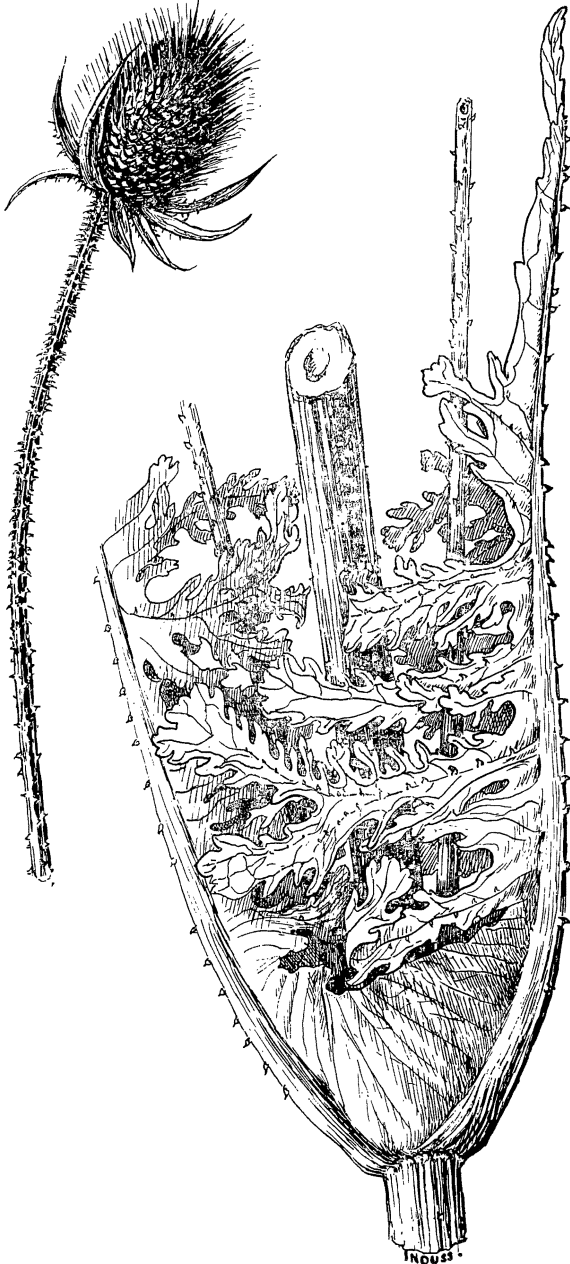


Figure 1. *Dipsacus laciniatus* L., from a specimen collected at Clarion