Zízía aurea (Common) Golden-alexanders

Tried and True Native Plant Selections for the Mid-Atlantic

Although tiny, the flowers of Golden-alexanders serve an out-sized role in spring and early summer as a nectar source for short-tongued beneficial insects when other flowers may be in short supply. Named North Carolina Wildflower of the Year in 2012, this dainty, carefree native* creates colonies in moist fields, floodplain forests, and riversides but can range into drier habitats.



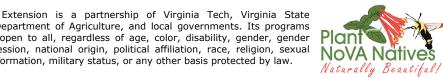
Perennial En Masse, Flowers, Foliage, Fruit Height: 1½-3 feet Spread: 1½-2 feet Bloom Color: Yellow **Characteristics** Short-lived, herbaceous <u>perennial</u> with outwardly angled or erect stems & semi-evergreen basal leaves Alternate, toothed, ovate to lanceolate leaves, 2x/3x compound in groups of 3, become smaller with fewer teeth/lobes or shorter petioles climbing hairless stem Groups of \sim 10–21 flowers—with 5 each of sepals, incurved yellow <u>petals</u>, & <u>stamens</u>—in each of \sim 10-20 <u>umbellets</u> (the central flower nearly <u>sessile</u>) of a flat-topped, compound umbel; bloom April-May Green ovoid schizocarp turns light purple and splits into two mericarps each containing a seed Can reseed heavily in optimum conditions **Attributes** Tolerates dry soil, light shade under trees; no serious pests or diseases; deer seldom severely damage Good cut flowers; ethnobotanic medicinal uses Attracts bees, wasps, flies, beetles, butterflies; larval host to ~3 lepidopterans including Black Swallowtail **Growing and Maintenance Tips Excellent Replacement for** Soil Requirements: Average, well-drained Daucus carota - Queen Anne's Lace Light Requirements: Sun, Partial Shade Foeniculum vulgare - Fennel Melilotus officinalis - Yellow Clover Water Requirements: Moist, Wet *In the Mid-Atlantic, it is native to DC and rare in the DE Foliage may wane as summer advances Piedmont and absent in its Coastal Plain. It is observed mostly in MD's Howard and Montgomery counties and is Use in naturalized areas and cutting & rain gardens

developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria

Images by Mary Free, Green Spring and Glencarlyn Library Community Gardens and by Elaine Mills (foliage and fruit), private garden, Arlington, VA



Hardiness: USDA Zones 3a-8b



present throughout PA. In VA, it is frequent in the mountains; infrequent in the Piedmont; and rare in the Coastal Plain.