



It's easy to grow pickerelweed in a water-filled pot on a deck or patio.

PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

FLORA  
FROM PAGE I

The individual flowers have a superficial resemblance to orchids; and each day I take that “closer look,” I just want to pull up a stool and gaze at them until they begin to close in the early afternoon!

You'll find it in the wild, growing along edges of rivers and ponds throughout the eastern U.S. The common name, pickerelweed, refers to the pickerel fish, which feed along the

edges of such emergent aquatic vegetation.

I've recently learned that pickerelweed is a tasty edible. The young unfurled leaves can be chopped to add to salads or boiled and served with butter. Peterson's *Edible Wild Plants* guide also describes that the ripe nut-like seed is nutritious eaten raw or dried and added to granola or roasted and ground into flour. Plan on getting mighty wet wading around in swampland to collect enough seed for

making flour. I'm not going for the flour, but with the few plants I have close at hand I think I'll pay closer attention to the maturing seed and make my own taste test.

If you're keen to have a pot or two of your own, ask your favorite garden center to get some. Nurseries that stock water lilies usually also stock some of the other interesting emergent aquatics that are suitable for home water gardens.



Everybody's a Critic

As he lurched past Chapel Hill Cleaners on West Franklin Street with an unsteady gait, the streetperson spied a lone man out painting the side of the building. “Why don't they just paint over the whole #%\*! thing!?” he demanded of a passerby, “cause it sure ain't art!” he said with finality. The passerby explained, it's a mural. “A MURAL!” the bleary-eyed sidewalk critic blurted. “WHAT'S THE POINT?” And off he went, grumbling something about “art!” That exchange brought a merry twinkle to the eye of the painter, none other than Chapel Hill's own Michael J. Brown, out this early morning painting over graffiti on the “hands” mural, now 19 years old. Brown, whose public art graces so many walls around our towns, finds himself working 12-hour days, in spite of the recession. He's just finishing up a re-do of the iconic mural behind Spanky's depicting the University Methodist Church steeple balanced by a full moon floating in a deep-blue night sky. What's the point, indeed?



A THOUSAND WORDS  
BY JOCK LAUTERER

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Duke Energy wants to raise your electric bill by eighteen percent.\*

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North Carolina is ready to move ahead with clean power and with energy efficiency—the fastest way to help in the urgent fight to slow global warming. If Duke Energy builds more coal and nuclear plants, we'll have more pollution, more climate disruption, and power bills will keep rising for decades.

**Tell the Utilities Commission not to let Duke Energy waste your money. Tell them to deny unnecessary rate hikes. And cancel Duke Energy's global warming machine at Cliffside!**

**1. Attend public hearings to speak or show your face:**

**Durham Hearing**  
Thurs., Sept. 10, 7pm  
Durham City Hall  
Council Chambers  
101 City Hall Plaza

**Charlotte** Sept. 9  
**High Point** Sept. 15  
**Marion** Sept. 17  
**Franklin** Sept. 22  
See [stopcliffside.org](http://stopcliffside.org) for details.

**2. Send comments, short or long, to NC Utilities Commission**

**Chair Ed Finley:**  
[finley@ncuc.net](mailto:finley@ncuc.net)

**Duke Energy spends millions to influence politicians and civic leaders. Your voice helps offset Duke's control over our democracy.**

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See [ncwarn.org](http://ncwarn.org) regarding a Sept. 8 training session.

\*Over 13.5% would cover costs such as the Cliffside coal-burning power plant. Another 4.5% increase has recently been approved for rising costs of coal.

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**Artisan:**  
*Michael Brown*  
restoring the blue mural

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