

Native Wildflowers & Grasses Field Guide

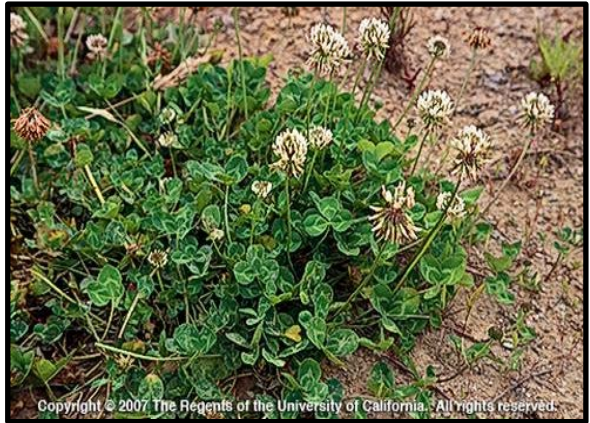


Legumes



White Clover

Trifolium repens



Overview

White clover (*Trifolium repens*) is a perennial legume that originated in Europe. Branching stems grow 4-12 inches long, creep along the ground and root at stem joints (nodes) producing large clumps. Leaves alternate with one another along the stem and consist of three leaflets 1/4-1/2 inch long that are hairless and may have a white crescent in the center. White clover blooms from March through December with tiny white to pale pink flowers clustered into egg-shaped flower heads. Its uses include forage, wildlife food, erosion control, and beautification.



White Clover (Ladino) *Trifolium repens* f. *giganteum*



Overview

Ladino clover (*Trifolium repens* f. *giganteum*) is a white clover legume classified in the large group (three general clover groups = small, intermediate, and large). It is sown with grass for pasture and is also used as hay or silage. Ladino clover has long basal runners that root at the nodes. Leaflets rise from horizontal stems and long stalks and the leaves and stems are smooth without hairs. Flowers arise on single stalks from basal runners and are white or pink (or mixed).



Birdsfoot Trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*



Overview

Birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) is a moderately long-lived perennial legume growing to a height of 2-3 feet. Stems are slender, well branched, and moderately leafy. Leaves are smooth consisting of 5 leaflets. Bloom period (June-August) produces cluster of 3-8 bright yellow flowers arranged in a spiral (whorl) formation at the end of the flowering stems. When ripe, brown seed pods extend outward from stalk and look like a bird's foot.



Red Clover *Trifolium pratense*



Overview

Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*) is a biennial legume that grows as medium (double-cut) or mammoth (single-cut). It is 1/2-2 feet tall, occasionally branching. Hair stems are sprawling or erect. Each flowerhead is 2 inches across and holds multiple flowers, with each flower holding 5 narrow petals that are pink or purplish pink, becoming light pink or white toward the base of flowerhead. Red Clover blooming period occurs from late spring to mid-summer and lasts 1-2 months. Flowers have mild honey-like fragrance. It is primarily used for hay, pasture, silage, and soil improvement.



Alsike Clover *Trifolium hybridum*



Overview

Alsike clover (*Trifolium hybridum*) is an introduced, short-lived, non-creeping perennial with a similar growth habit to red clover. It is distinguished from red clover by the absence of crescent-shaped marks on each leaflet. Leaves are smooth and stipules (outgrowths borne on either side of the base of a leafstalk) are long with a tapering point. Stems are semi-erect, long, thin, smooth and usually hollow with short racemes holding 30-50 white or pale pink flowers. Flowers bend downward after pollination and turn brown at maturity.



Difference Between Red Clover & Alsike Clover

Characteristics	Red Clover	Alsike Clover
Life cycle	Biennial	Perennial
Flower color	Rose - purple	Whitish pink
Flower position	Terminal	Axillary
Plant height (full length)	12 - 15"	15 - 30"
Leaf surface	White "V" on the leaves	No white "V" on the leaves
Leaf edge	No serration	Serrated
Hair on the leaves and stems	Yes	No

Alfalfa

Medicago sativa



Alfalfa

Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*) is a long-lived perennial legume, with flowers varying from purple to yellow borne in loose clusters. Alfalfa pods range from sickle type to twisted spirals, with each pod containing several small kidney-shaped seeds. Stems are erect, growing 2-3 feet tall. Leaves are alternately arranged on stem and are normally trifoliate (three leaves).



Cool Season Grasses



Timothy *Phleum pretense*

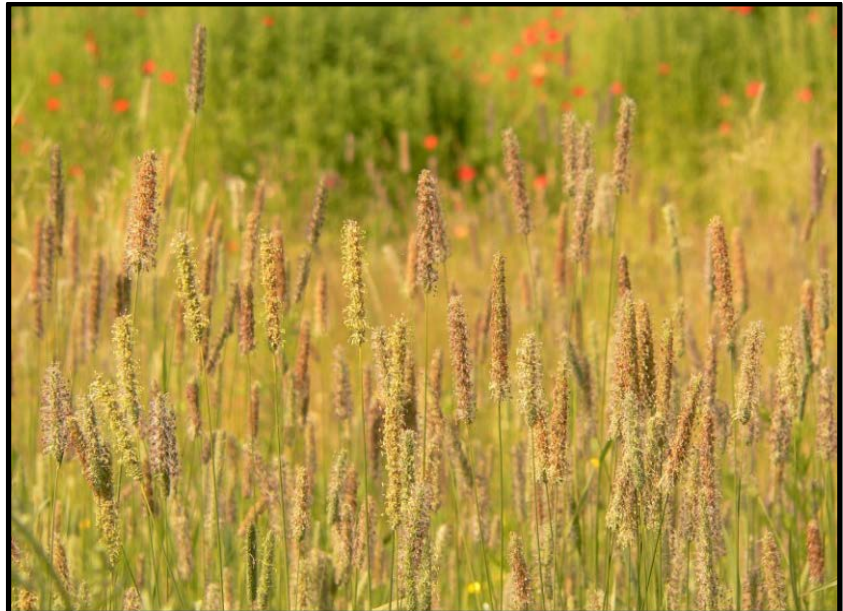


Overview

Timothy grass (*Phleum pretense*) is a fast growing cool-season perennial grass from temperate regions. It is 2-3 ½ feet tall and short-lived. Culms are light green, terete (circular in cross-section), unbranched, and erect. Timothy has 3-6 hairless grayish blue alternate leaves along the entire length of each culm. These leaves are rolled when young and become flat and pointed with maturity. Timothy inflorescence is produced late spring to early summer. Uses include livestock forage (premium feed for horses), erosion control, and wildlife habitat.



Timothy inflorescence



Prairie Junegrass

Koeleria macrantha



Overview

Prairie junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*) is a native, perennial, cool season bunchgrass. It grows 0.5-2 feet tall with narrow leaves forming basal clusters that produce several seedheads. Leaves are basal, flat to in-rolled and sharply pointed. Seedheads are narrow with the appearance of dense spikes (one per stem). Spikelets are normally pale green to purplish. Fine hairs are found on the reproductive stem below seedhead, and glumes are sharp and shiny. Prairie junegrass is one of the first grasses to green up in early spring.



Orchardgrass *Dactylis glomerata* L.



Overview

Orchardgrass (*Dactylis glomerata* L.), commonly known as Cocksfoot, is a long-lived cool season bunchgrass that develops flower culms 15-18 inches tall with leaves less than 12 inches in height. Its deep roots allow strong summer growth with favorable conditions (i.e. somewhat cool). It can be used for grazing/hayland, erosion control, and wildlife forage.



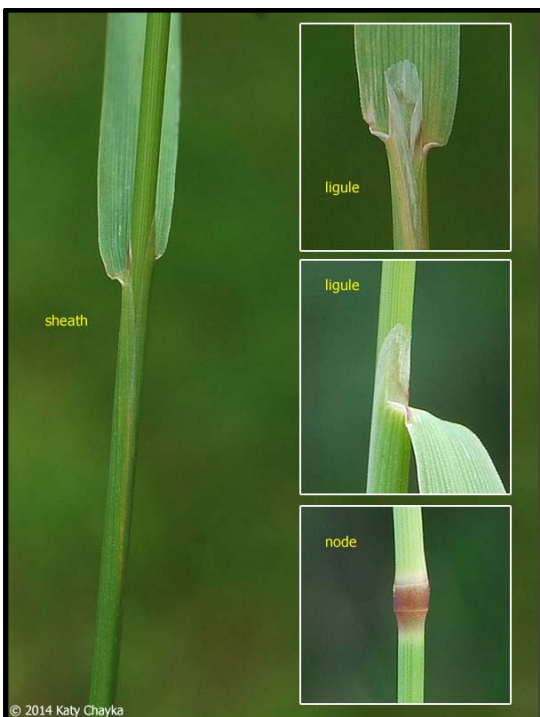
Redtop

Agrostis gigantea



Overview

Redtop (*Agrostis gigantea*) is a native cool-season perennial grass 2-3 feet tall and unbranched. Leaves are alternate, 2-8 inches long, wide, flat, hairless and mostly smooth. Sheaths are green, mostly smooth, with edges overlapping near the tip to form a long “V” at the front. The ligule is white-membranous and longer than wide, while the nodes are smooth and typically reddish.



Warm Season Grasses



Aspen Workman

Prairie Cordgrass *Spartina pectinata*

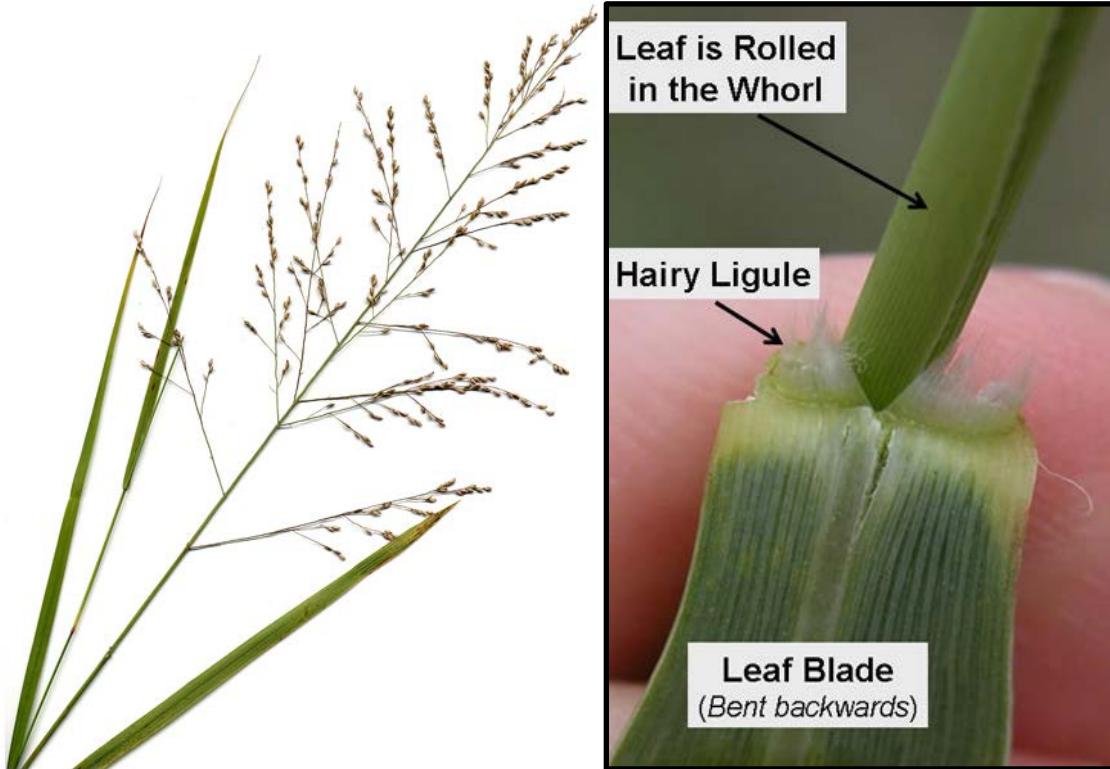


Overview

Prairie cordgrass (*Spartina pectinata*) is a tall (6-8 feet) native warm season grass often recognized by its sharp, serrated edges of the leaf blade. Seedheads have 10-20 spikes attached to a main stem, with each spike having up to 40 spikelets.



Switchgrass *Panicum virgatum*



Overview

Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) is a native warm-season perennial grass that grows 3 to 5 feet tall and can be distinguished from other warm-season grasses (even when young) by the white patch of hair at the point where the leaf attaches to the stem. Stem is round with a reddish tint and the seed head is an open, spreading panicle. Its uses include livestock forage, erosion control, wildlife habitat, and a source of biofuel.



Sideoats Grama *Bouteloua curtipendula*



Overview

Sideoats Grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*) is a deep rooted, perennial bunchgrass that gets between 15 and 30 inches tall. It is a Missouri native noted for having a distinctive arrangement of oat-like seed spikes hanging from only one side of its flowering stems. It has a bluish green color and cures (late autumn after frost) to a reddish brown or straw color. It is useful for grazing, wildlife, & erosion control.



Little Bluestem *Schizachyrium scoparium*



Overview

Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) is a warm-season perennial grass broadly distributed and native to the U.S. and Canada. It begins growth in late spring after cool-season species have developed. Plants vary in height, growing 1 to 3 feet tall with culms slightly flattened. Blades are folded, often rolled inward, and smooth to hairy. Common uses include pasture/rangeland/prairie restoration, erosion control, wildlife habitat (one of the best for nesting and roosting), etc.



Indiangrass *Sorghastrum nutans*



Overview

Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) is a native, warm season perennial grass with short scaly rhizomes. It grows 3 to 8 feet and has seed stalks that are smooth with hairy nodes. Foliage color varies from blue-green to green. A prominent characteristic is the dense golden bronze to yellow plume like inflorescence. Indiangrass is highly palatable for livestock forage and provides good cover for gamebirds and songbirds.



Big Bluestem

Andropogon gerardii



Overview

Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) is a perennial warm season native prairie species. As a warm season grass, Big Bluestem is often referred to as a “bunch grass” because of its tendency to grow in clumps. It develops fastest in the summer with warm nights followed by hot days. Big Bluestem stems can reach a height of eight feet, with its primary area of utilization being in the southern Great Lakes region. They are useful in the restoration and diversification of native habitats as well as aiding in conservation practices such as filter strips, early successional habitat, contour buffer strips, etc.



Canada Wildrye *Elymus canadensis*



Overview

Canada Wildrye (*Elymus canadensis*) is a native perennial bunchgrass that grows up to 4 feet with flat, wide, waxy green, pointed leaves that grow from the base of the stem to the spike. The auricles are claw-like and arise from a broad, yellowish/light green collar. It is a short-lived, cool-season grass with growth occurring in late spring and lasting long into the summer. It is moderately drought tolerant and winter hardy. Some common uses include habitat restoration, livestock forage, wildlife habitat and food, erosion control, etc.



Native Wildflowers



Prairie Cinquefoil (*Potentilla arguta*)

Bloom Period: Mid-Summer

Family: Rose

Description: Perennial plant that gets up to 3' tall defined by a stout central stem covered with white hairs, pinnate compound leaves covered with white hairs and 3-11 leaflets up to 3" long and 2" across. The entire plant appears light or whitish green. Flowers have 5 white petals, 5 light green sepals, 20 or more golden stamens, and a small golden reproductive structure in the center.

Establishment: Preference is full sun, not particular to any soil type as long as site is well-drained. Plant is easy to grow if these two conditions are met.



Figure 17 Prairie Cinquefoil Seeds



Figure 18 Prairie Cinquefoil plant



Figure 19 Prairie Cinquefoil Mature

Purple Prairie Clover (*Dalea purpurea*)

Bloom Period: April-June

Family: Legume

Description: A native, warm-season, perennial legume with purple flowers and golden flecks. Stems grow up to 2.5 feet, leaves are one inch long and narrow with an average of 5 alternating leaflets.

Establishment: Not particular about any soil type, easily grown in any sunny location with average to dry soils.



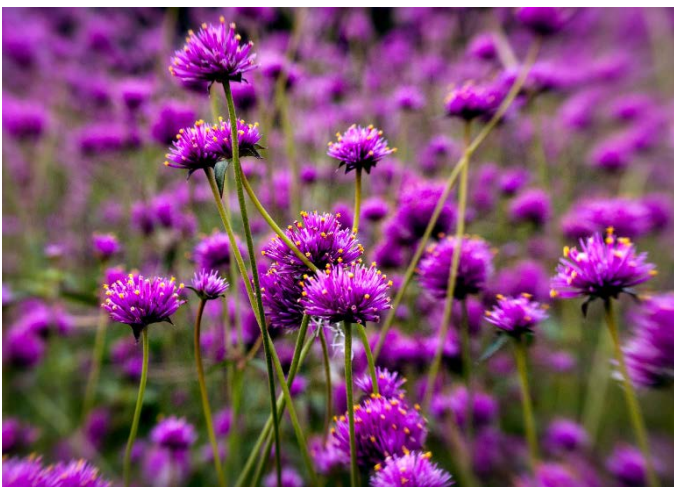
Figure 20 Purple Prairie Clover Seeds



Figure 22 Purple Prairie Clover Mature



Figure 21 Purple Prairie Clover Seedling



Western Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium* var. *occidentalis*)

Bloom Period: May-September

Family: Aster

Description: A native herbaceous perennial (common wildflower) growing to a height of 10-36 inches tall. Leaves are densely hairy and fern-like in appearance. The flower heads of western yarrow are white to cream-colored.

Establishment: New seedlings may need protection from tramping and some weed control during establishment. It is recommended to allow properly timed grazing or defoliation for good stand persistence.



Figure 23 Western Yarrow Seeds



Figure 24 Western Yarrow Juvenile



Figure 25 Western Yarrow Mature



Figure 26 Western Yarrow Mature

Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)

Bloom Period: May-August

Family: Milkweed

Description: Perennial herb grown from a deep rhizome. Hairy stems are 1.9-6.5 feet tall, leaves are opposite and are 3.9-7.9 inches long and 1.9-4.3 inches wide. Inflorescence occurs in upper leaf axils, with 20-130 small (0.4-0.7 inch) green to purple-tinged flowers petals topped with a crown of five lobes rose to purple (and rarely white). Fruits are spindle-shaped follicles covered in soft hairs 0.2-0.3 inches in diameter.

Establishment: Common milkweed grows in sandy, clayey, or rocky calcareous soils and is easily propagated by seed and rhizome cuttings. Seedlings and cutting usually bloom in second year.



Figure 29 Common Milkweed Mature



Figure 28 Common Milkweed Seedlings



Figure 27 Common Milkweed Seeds

Foxglove Beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*)

Bloom Period: Late Spring/Early Summer

Family: Snapdragon (Scrophulariaceae)

Description: This perennial plant consists of one or more ovate shaped medium green (sometimes with reddish tints) rosettes of basal leaves clustered together. During spring, a hairless and light green flowering stalk of about 3' rise from the clustered rosettes.

Establishment: Preference of full or partial sun, average moisture level, and loamy soil. Adapts well to cultivation, not bothered by disease, and is easy to grow. Leaves may turn yellow and plant will wilt during severe drought conditions.

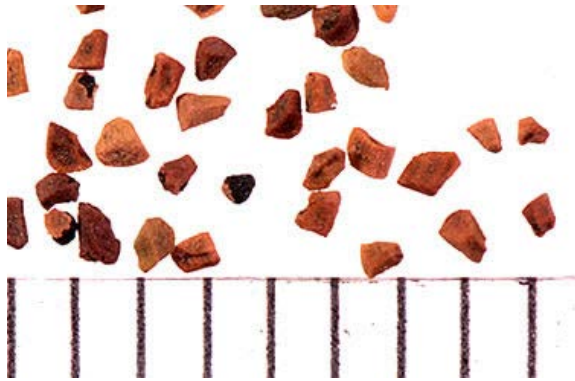


Figure 30 Foxglove Beardtongue Seeds



Figure 31 Foxglove Beardtongue Seedling



Figure 32 Foxglove Beardtongue Mature



Figure 33 Foxglove Beardtongue Mature



Lance-Leaved/Sand Coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*)

Bloom Period: April-June

Family: Aster

Description: Lance-leaved coreopsis grows in small clumps and forms colonies. It sits 1-2.5 feet tall with leaves 3-4 inches long, opposite and often alternating near the top. Flower heads are yellow, 1-1.5 inches across.

Establishment: Lance-leaved coreopsis is the most common coreopsis and is easy to grow. It is drought tolerant but can become weedy. Plant seeds in early spring, propagation possible by division of basal rosettes or by seed. Can be selectively thinned to improve appearance by removing clumps from interior of planting. Mulching helps conserve moisture and control weeds. Light requirements are full sun to part shade.



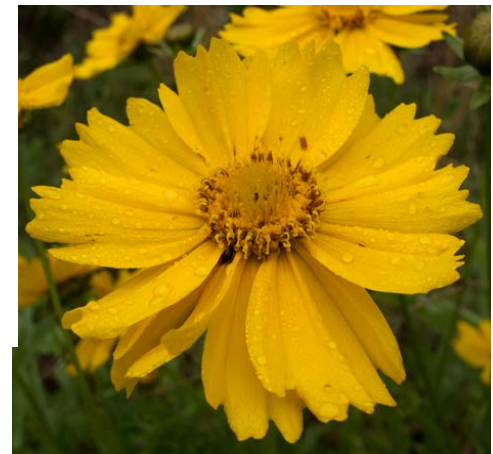
Figure 35 Lance-Leaved Coreopsis Seedling



Figure 36 (above) & 37 (below)
Lance-Leaved Coreopsis Mature



Figure 34 Lance-Leaved Coreopsis Seeds



New England Aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*)

Bloom Time: August-October

Family: Aster

Description: Large perennial growing to 6 or more feet in height with hairy leaves arranged densely on its stout stems. During bloom, showy, bright purple flowers with orange-yellow centers are displayed at the tips of leafy branches. It prefers part shade and a moist soil with a pH less than 6.8.

Establishment: Sow seeds, 5/8 deep in fall. Can also be propagated by softwood cuttings in late spring. To collect seeds, shake nutlets loose or pluck from head in weeks following first frost. For best seed treatment, allow for a three-month period of cold-moist stratification in refrigerator.



Figure 38 New England Aster Seeds



Figure 39 New England Aster Seedling



Figure 40 New England Aster Mature

Lupine (*Lupinus perennis*)

Bloom Time: May-June

Family: Fabaceae (Pea)

Description: Clusters of purple pea-like flowers top 1-2-foot light green to reddish green stems of this perennial lupine. *Lupinus perennis* enhances soil fertility by fixing nitrogen.

Establishment: Best propagated from dry, treated seed in spring. Fresh-sown seed doesn't need treatment. Do not plant more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " deep and do not transplant. Collect seed from hairy pod in late June to early



Figure 42 Lupine Seedlings



Figure 43 Lupine Mature



Figure 27 Lupine Seedling



Figure 44 Lupine Mature



Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea pupurea*)

Bloom Time: April-September

Family: Aster

Description: Perennial with smooth 2-5-foot stems and lavender flowers. Rough, scattered leaves become small toward top of stem. Flower pedals are purple (rarely white) with drooping rays surrounding spiny, brownish center.

Establishment: Water use is medium, light requirements are part shade to full sun, soil moisture preference dry, and most desired soil is well-drained, sandy or richer soils.



Figure 45 Purple Coneflower Seeds

Figure 46 Purple Coneflower Seedling

Figure 47 Purple Coneflower Mature

Stiff Goldenrod (*Oligoneuron rigidum*)

Bloom Time: July-October

Family: Aster

Description: Stiff goldenrod has stout unbranched stems reaching 1-5 feet tall, often growing in clumps. They have thick, leathery stem leaves with each stem end in a flat-topped inflorescence of yellow flower heads.

Establishment: Water use medium, light requirements range from shade to full sun, no soil moisture preference, does best in sandy soils. Goldenrod is very aggressive and will need competition (it is a heavy self-seeder).



Figure 48 Stiff Goldenrod Seeds



Figure 49 Stiff Goldenrod Seedling



Figure 50 Stiff Goldenrod Mature

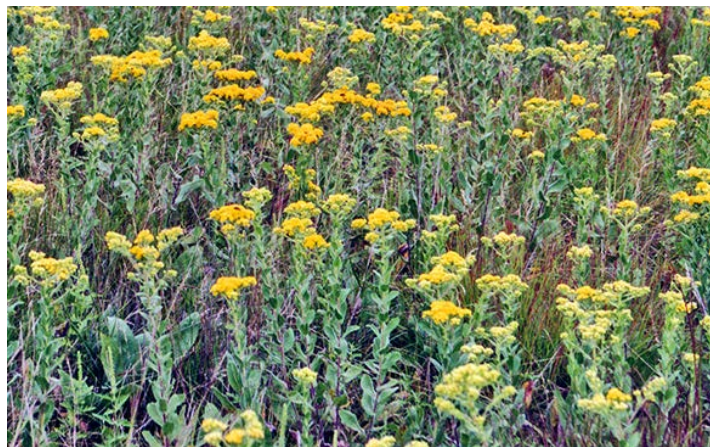


Figure 51 Stiff Goldenrod Mature

Wild Bergamot/Bee Balm (*Monarda fistulosa*)

Bloom Time: May-September

Family: Mint

Description: Wild bergamot is a popular perennial with clusters of lavender, pink or white flowers bloomed atop 2-5' open-branched stems. This perennial has aromatic leaves used to make mint tea and oils used for respiratory ailments.

Establishment: Very easy to start from seed, seeds ripen 2 months after plant looms, and seeds don't need to be cold stratified. Does well in both moist and dry soil and can handle part-shade to full sun.



Figure 54 Wild Bergamot Mature



Figure 55 Wild Bergamot Mature



Figure 52 Wild Bergamot Seeds



Figure 53 Wild Bergamot Seedling



Wild Senna (*Senna hebecarpa*)

Bloom Time: July-August

Family: Fabaceae

Description: This perennial plant is unbranched and up to 6' tall. The stout stem is light green and slightly hairy at the upper stem near the base of the upper compound leaves. The compound leaves contain 5-10 pairs of gray-green to medium green leaflets, with each leaflet around 2.5" long and $\frac{3}{4}$ " across. Atop the stem is a panicle of flowers $\frac{3}{4}$ " across with 5 pale yellow sepals, 5 yellow petals, 10 stamens with dark brown anthers, and a pistil with white hairs.

Establishment: Preference is partial to full sun and moist to mesic conditions. Loamy soil is preferred but it can also tolerate sandy and rocky soil.



Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

Bloom Time: May-September

Family: Milkweed

Description: A bushy 1.5-2 ft. perennial with large, flat-topped clusters of bright-orange flowers. Leaves mostly alternate, 1.5-2.25 inches long, pointed, and smooth on edge. The flower clusters are 2-5 inches across with a dark green backdrop provided by lance-shaped foliage.

Establishment: Frequently grown from seed in home gardens with its bright flowers attracting butterflies. It doesn't need much water, prefers full sun, and can do well in dry or moist soil, but does best in well-drained sandy soils. It is recommended to plant among other mid-sized perennials.



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