



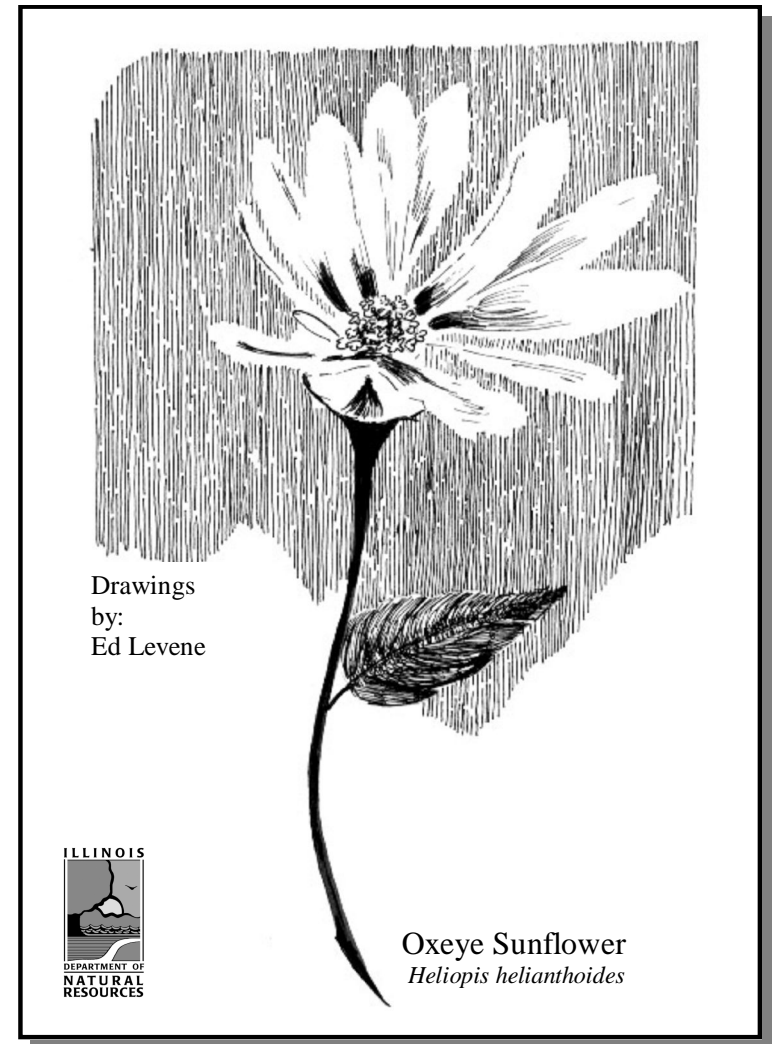
**Wildlife Prairie State Park
wishes to thank the**

**PEORIA
GARDEN CLUB**

For sponsoring this garden.

**And thank you to the countless
hours of devotion provided by
the Wildlife Prairie State Park
volunteers.**

**Your donation towards the cost of
publication is greatly appreciated.**



Welcome
to the



Prairie Species Garden

3826 N. Taylor Rd. Hanna City, IL 61536
309.676.0998 www.wildlifeprairiestatepark.org

Arrowleaf Violet

Viola sagittata

Sandy prairies and moist habitats

Apr.-June

Uses: Long ago it was believed that wearing a garland of violets could treat a headache.



Omaha children used violets in many of their games.

Some violets varieties were used to treat diarrhea and as a source of Vitamin C.

Violet

Less than 6"

Black Eyed Susan

Rudbeckia hirta

Dry prairie soils

June-Sept.

Uses: This plant was once used to treat skin



disorders. Native Americans steeped the leaves into a tea that was used as a stimulant and a diuretic. The roots were used also in tea as a cure for colds. Modern testing has found that this plant contains antibodies effective in treating certain types of infection.

Yellow

2-3'

We hope the information provided in this brochure will help further your knowledge of native species . Following the ID section, we have included helpful information in the event you decide to plant a native species garden of your own!

Information contained is not for use as a medical guide and is not meant to instruct or encourage use or consumption of the plants in this manner. You should always consult an expert before using any plant for food, medicinal or homeopathic reasons.

Notes:

Blue Eyed Grass
Sisyrinchium albidum

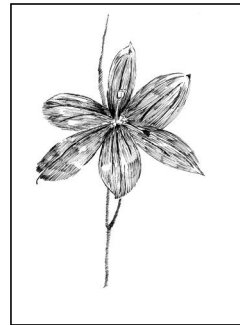
Prairies and sandy soils of open areas

May-June

a.k.a.: When not in bloom, this member of the iris family is commonly mistaken for a grass.

Blue

Uses: A tea for stomach cramps has been made



from this species and a 'strong' tea was used to treat hay fever. The Menomini mixed this grass with oats to make horses fat and vicious. The horse's bite was then supposed to be poisonous, yet it would not bite its owner. Also, medicine men would use this plant on the horse bites.

18"

Bottled Gentian
Gentiana andrewsii

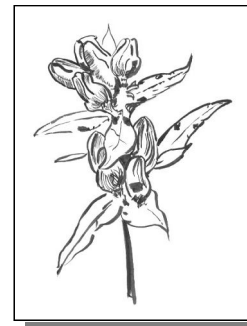
Wet to mesic prairies and woodland edges

Late Aug.- past frost

a.k.a.: barrel gentian, blind gentian, closed gentian, cloistered gentian

Uses: The Meskwaki and the Potawatomi used this plant to treat snakebite. The women of some

Deep blue



tribes ate a piece of root as a treatment for caked breasts. The Catawba boiled roots in water and used the liquid to treat backache. Pioneers used the root to promote appetite. Following a bout with Malaria or infectious diseases, they brewed a tea from the foliage to aid digestion.

1-2'

Canada Wild Rye

Elymus canadensis

a.k.a.: nodding wild rye, rye grass,
Canada lyme grass



Uses: Native Americans used the seeds for food but regarded the effort as low yield. Because the seeds remain throughout the winter, it is an important wildlife food source.

Dry, sandy, rocky soils in tall grass prairies

July-Aug.

Straw

4-5'

Common Blue Violet

Viola papilionacea

a.k.a.: Illinois state flower



Uses: Leaves from this violet are high in vitamins A and C and can be eaten in salads. Used throughout history as a medicinal plant, it has been used as a painkiller, an antiseptic and supposedly to curb the pain and growth of tumors. A tea from the leaves has been used as a gargle for headaches. Cough, insomnia and nervousness were treated with a tea made from violet leaves.

Meadows and moist woods

Mar.-June

Blue to white

3-8"

sential, as many seeds need plenty of water for germination. DO NOT OVERWATER! Over watering may retard germination.

Patience

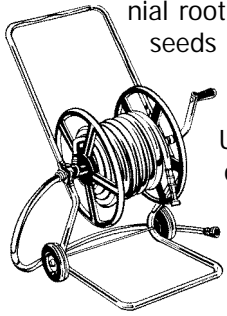
Once the seeds have been planted. The waiting game begins. The garden will not grow overnight, so be patient. Watching a garden grow has been likened to watching paint dry, a very slow process, with spectacular results. Hand weeding is a supplemental task in the prairie garden, and may enhance its appearance, but is not necessary unless the weeds are hindering the growth of the planted species. City ordinances may prohibit you from burning your new prairie garden so check your local ordinances first. If possible your prairie should be burned every year for the first five years after establishment (to assist in weed control), and every two to three years after that. The best time to burn is in the spring, on a dry day, with little wind. With a small, open plot as suggested, burning should be an easy task to undertake. Many perennials (ones that come back year after year) take several years to mature, and may not flower in the first growing season. Don't panic.

Follow Up

Once the prairie garden has been established, it should exhibit many different plants flowering at different times of the year. Some new gardeners have been known to plant some of the seeds in pots separate from the garden plot, to watch the actual growth of the plant. This also assists in identification of prairie species, useful in deciding whether a plant is a non-native weed, or something actually planted. By taking periodic measures such as weeding, watering, and burning, you can ensure the health of your prairie garden for years to come.

Nurseries

When shopping for seed, check the prices among several different nurseries or stores, you may potentially save hundreds of dollars. To find a nursery near you, simply type Native Illinois Plant Nurseries into a search engine on the Internet.



nial roots. Follow-up measures include encouraging weed seeds to germinate by frequent light watering (up to 3 weeks). Once the weeds begin to grow, treat them with a short-term herbicide such as Round Up. This procedure may be repeated more than once depending on existing weed conditions. After the last herbicide treatment has been applied, allow the garden plot to sit at least ten days before leveling the soil. Once the soil is leveled, it is ready to be planted.

Species Selection

Choosing the right plants for your prairie garden is sometimes overwhelming. There are so many types to choose from, in so many different colors and sizes. Many nurseries sell mixed bags of seeds suited for particular soil types. This will help to eliminate the confusion of choosing the select few that make it into the garden.



Cost wise, gardens are best started from seed rather than from transplants, although the results are much quicker with the transplants. Transplanting living plants from other native prairie gardens to yours, is illegal, so if transplanting is your preferred method of planting, please acquire the necessary plants from nurseries or other plant producers. If you decide to mix the seed yourself, be sure to pick seeds that bloom at different times of the year, and at different heights. Usually the desired ratio of wildflowers to grasses highly favors the wildflowers; it's entirely your choice of what to plant at what ratio.



Once seed has been acquired, it should spread evenly over the plat. If the plat is laid out to have a core and a periphery, plant the core seeds first, lightly spreading the seeds over the soil, then gently working them under. Then follow up by planting the periphery in the same way. Some prefer to mix their seeds in with a bit of top soil, and spread the entire mix over the designated area, but no fertilizer needs to be added to enhance the growth potential.

Watering the garden frequently for the first growing season is es-

Common Milkweed

Asclepias syriaca

Fields, pastures, road sides, thickets, and woods

Uses: Native American tribes used the root to provide temporary sterility, and also to "expel worms in an hour." This plant was also used

June-Sept.

as food in soups, and to make jelly and preserves.

Pink



During WWI I, the milky sap was tried as a rubber substitute and the plumes were tried in life preservers.

2-3'

Common Mountain Mint

Pycnanthemum virginianum

Wet to dry prairies and open spaces

a.k.a.: basil, mountain thyme, Virginia mountain mint, pennyroyal

July-Sept.

Uses: The Meskwaki used this plant for baiting mink traps. The Potawatomi used a mountain mint tonic to treat a run down condition. Early settlers served a tea as a general tonic to care for mild indigestion and for the chills and fever of ague. They made a poultice to treat dog and other animal bites as a rabies preventative.

White

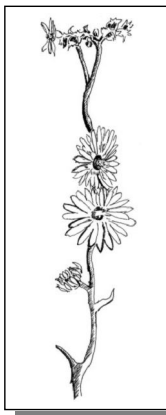


1-3'

Compass Plant

Silphium laciniatum

a.k.a.: rosin weed, turpentine plant



Uses: As a tonic, this plant treated many ailments such as dry cough, chronic rheumatism, arthritis, glandular enlargement, and intermittent fevers. Roots were used in a medicinal drink to induce vomiting. This plant was used to increase urine flow and increase milk flow in new mothers. A strong tea was used as a laxative. This plant was also used to worm horses. It was an important in the bison's diet and is now eaten by cattle and deer.

Wet or dry prairies

July-Aug.

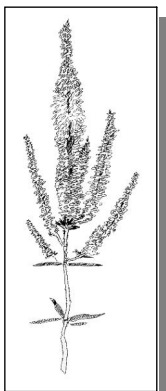
Yellow

5-10'

Culver's Root

Veronicastrum virginicum

a.k.a.: tall speedwell, blackroot, Bowman's root



Uses: Settlers made an infusion from the dried root and used it cautiously for a sluggish liver. The fresh root was a drastic purge and abortifacient, but its action was uncertain and severe. It's been used to treat many ailments, including dyspepsia, debilitated conditions of the digestive tract, typhoid, and diarrhea. The Meskwaki used the root to treat constipation, dissolve kidney stones, and to treat women who were weak from labor.

Rich, moist prairie soils

June

White

2-3'

Prairie Species Gardening

Native Prairie Gardening is a beautiful way to enhance natural landscape without the complications of hard to grow exotics. Restoring a

site to its original prairie state may be done in several different ways to represent many types of wildflowers and grasses. This booklet will present popular and trusted ways of starting your own prairie species garden that hopefully will be an asset to your property.

When starting a prairie species garden, a few things must be taken into account before planting begins: Location, Soil Preparation, Species Selection, and Patience.



Location

Location is one of the most important steps in creating a successful prairie garden. An open area away from trees or buildings with as much sun as possible is ideal for planting your new garden. Size is also an important factor. Starting small is the easiest way to go (usually about 10 ft across), and an easy layout to follow is usually circular. A circular layout is popular because it can be easily added to in the future. Most circular layouts consist initially of a core and a periphery. The core houses the taller wildflowers and grasses, while the periphery houses the shorter wildflowers and grasses. Both areas are intensively planted to ensure at least satisfactory growth.

Preparation of Soil

In order to prevent weed overgrowth, the prairie garden site must be properly prepared. Once a good location has been selected, the soil must be dug up or tilled to rid the soil of unwanted plants and grasses. Fall is usually the best time to do this, so that frost kills many of the peren-



Wild Petunia

Ruellia humilis

Open woodlands, and moist to sand prairies

June - Aug.

Aka: hairy ruellia

Pink

3"-2'



Uses: Even though it is a fairly common sight on the prairie, this perennial was probably not used medicinally by Native Americans. Able to withstand a variety of growing conditions, including drought, this hardy plant will rarely even drop a leaf.

Wild Quinine

Parthenium integrifolium

Dry prairies and open woodlands

May - Sept.

a.k.a.: American Feverfew

White

1-5'



Uses: The leaves of this plant were made into tea to treat fevers. The Catawba also used the leaves to treat burns. In WWI, the plants healing properties caused a brief commercial trade. The plant may help to stimulate the immune system.

Downy Sunflower

Helianthus mollis

Wet or dry prairies and open woods

Sept.

a.k.a.: hairy sunflower, ashy sunflower

Yellow

2-4'



Uses: The seeds of wild sunflowers are smaller and hard to shell, but taste as good as the domesticated varieties. They can be eaten raw, boiled or roasted and many times were ground up and used as a type of flour. The flowers were used to make yellow dye. This a highly nutritious and palatable grazing plant.

Drooping Coneflower

Ratibida pinnata

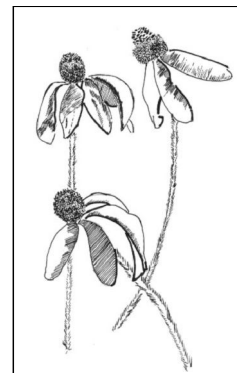
Tallgrass prairies and along roadsides

June

a.k.a.: yellow coneflower, prairie coneflower

Yellow

2-4'



Uses: The Meskwaki used the root of this plant to cure toothaches. Leaves and flower cones were utilized in making a tea. Livestock often feed on the young plants. When the center disk is crushed, it releases an anise scent.

Evening Primrose

Oenothera biennis

Dry open areas, prairies, roadsides, old fields and waste areas

a.k.a.: tree primrose

July-Sept.



Uses: The common evening primrose is a biennial herb that grows from a tap root. It was used for medicinal purposes as a poultice, for whooping cough, hiccoughs, and asthma. The Mohave ate the seeds. The roots and young shoots were also used for salads.

Yellow

3-6'

Golden Alexander

Zizia aptera

Moist soils and open areas

a.k.a.: yucca-leaf eryngo

Apr.-June



Uses: Early European settlers used this plant to treat syphilis, as a diaphoretic and to heal wounds. Native Americans used it to reduce fever and headaches. Note: The basal (lowest) leaves are heart-shaped. This distinguishes heart-leaf alexanders from golden alexanders, which have divided basal leaves.

Yellow

1-3'

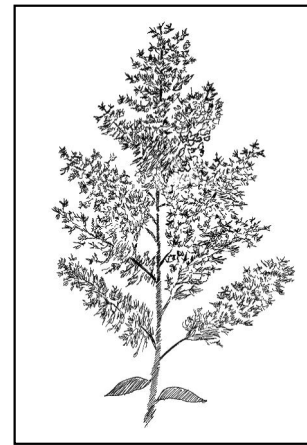
Showy Goldenrod

Solidago speciosa

Open woods, prairies, and thickets

Aug.-Sept.

Uses: Used to treat those with lung trouble,



also to alleviate a difficult labor.

Yellow

Misc: Goldenrods are attractive prairie and roadside plants. They are best known because of the false belief they cause hay fever. However, hay fever is caused by windblown pollen, while goldenrods are primarily insect pollinated. Ragweed, the culprit with it's less than impressive flowers, blooms at the same time.

2-6'

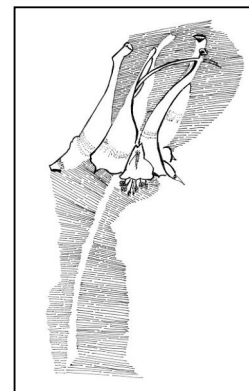
Wild Columbine

Aquilegia canadensis

Rocky or sandy woods and ledges, or along roadsides

Uses: Flowers are edible and said to be sweet and delightful. The root is chewed or made

May - July



into a weak tea to treat diarrhea and stomach aches.

Scarlet

The tea is also used for uterine bleeding. The seed is rubbed into the scalp to rid the hair of lice. An infusion can be made from the seed and used to treat headache and fever. The crushed seed is crushed and used as a perfume, as it's pleasant odor endures. Boiled, the plant is used as a hair wash.

1-3'

Royal Catchfly

Silene regia

Dry woods and prairies

May - Aug.

Uses: A hummingbird favorite.

Misc: With its sticky stems and short stalked flowers, this plant 'catches' small insects, hence the common name 'catchfly'.



Scarlet

2-4'

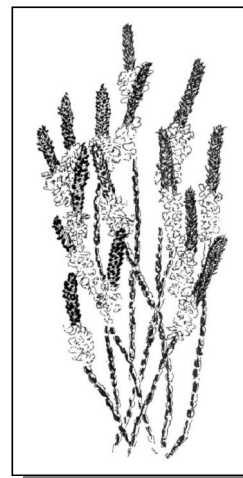
ENDANGERED in Illinois. Endangered or threatened in several states.

Hoary Vervain

Verbena stricta

Prairies, roadsides and open areas

June-Sept.



a.k.a.: woolly verbena, mullein-leaved verbena

Uses: Native Americans gathered and roasted the seeds that they then ground into flour or meal. The Omaha prepared a tea from the leaves. The Teton Dakota used the tea as an upset stomach remedy.

Blue-violet

2-4'

Sea Oats

Chasmanthium latifolium

Moist soils

July-Oct.

a.k.a.: Northern Sea Oats, Wild Oats, Spangle Grass



Uses: The flowers are small and lack petals. It is planted as an ornamental grass and collected for dried bouquets. Common in the southern 1/2 of the state.

Formerly *Uniola latifolia* it is no longer included in the *Uniola* species.

Green

Up to 3'

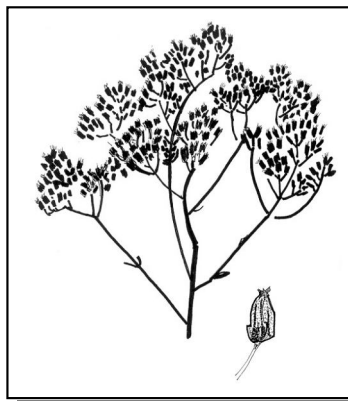
Indian Plantain

Cacalia atriplicifolia

Wet prairies and woodlands, marshes

June-Aug.

a.k.a.: prairie Indian plantain, tuberous Indian plantain, pale Indian plantain



Uses: Unknown though it is believed that this plant may have been used for food. Freely self-seeds in optimum growing conditions. Naturalizes well in wet woodland areas.

White

2-6'

June Grass

Koeleria cristata

Throughout prairies

June



Uses: When June grass is green it is a good place for deer, elk and livestock to forage. Though it can be used for ornamental purposes, it is believed to cause hay fever in the summer, so this should be considered before planting.

Green

1-2'

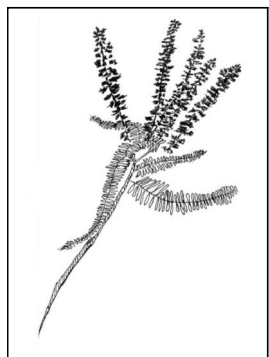
Leadplant

Amorpha canescens

Dry, sandy soils in tallgrass prairies and rocky, open woodlands

a.k.a.: wild tea

Uses: American Indians smoked the dried leaves and used them for tea for pinworms, a wash to treat eczema and a moxa wash was prepared for rheumatism and neuralgia. The Omaha and Ponca called it "buffalo bellow plant" most likely because it blooms during the bison rut which is late May to August. A highly nutritious grazing plant.



May-Aug.

Purple

Up to 3'

Rigid Goldenrod

Solidago rigida

Dry soils of prairies, open woods, roadsides and disturbed areas

a.k.a.: stiff goldenrod

June-Sept.



Uses: The genus name, *Solidago* is from the Greek meaning "to make whole." The name was given because goldenrods were used as astringents, and were supposed to cause plants to heal rapidly. This plant was once used on swollen throats and bee stings were treated with a lotion made from the blooms.

Green

2-6'

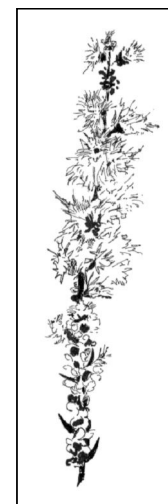
Rough Blazing Star

Liatris aspera

Dry, sandy soils of prairies and savannahs

a.k.a.: lacerate, tall or prairie blazing star

Aug. -Sept.



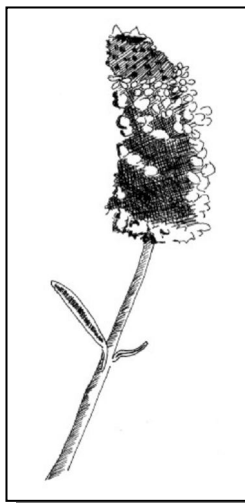
Uses: This attractive plant attracts butterflies and hummingbirds. While good for them, for humans the leaves have been used to make an infusion to induce vomiting. A decoction made from this plant is said to cure gonorrhea.

Purple

2-4'

Purple Prairie Clover

Petalostemum purpureum



Aka: thimbleweed, red-tassel flower

Uses: This plant is tasty, nutritious and commonly grazed. The Pawnee chewed the roots for the pleasant taste. Although this plant tastes good, tea made from the leaves can cause constipation. Bruised, steeped leaves were applied to open wounds. Native Americans made brooms from the elastic stems.

Sand, hill, & gravel hill prairies

June-Sept.

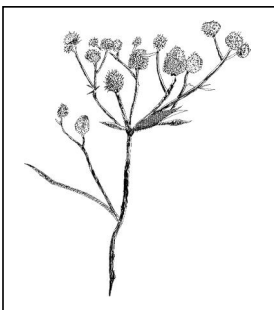
Violet

Up to 3'

Rattlesnake Master

Eryngium yuccifolium

a.k.a.: yucca-leaf eryngo



Uses: The root of this plant has been used for various medicinal purposes, such as diaphoretic,

expectorant and emetic. It was used to treat liver trouble and muscle pains. Another of its early uses was to treat "exhaustion from sexual depletion." The Mask-waki used it as a diuretic, as a medicine for bladder problems and for poisons other than rattlesnake venom.

Wet or dry prairies

June-Sept.

Green

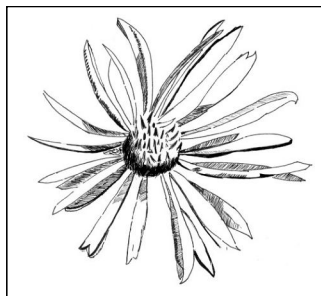
2-6'

New England Aster

Aster novae-angliae

a.k.a.: Aster is Greek for "star", describing the petal pattern

Uses: The Native Americans believed the smoke from burning an aster plant would awaken a person who had fainted, and others drank this flower's tea for headaches. Fresh leaves are eaten as greens.



Marsh, woodlands and prairies

Aug.-Oct.

Lavender - deep purple

4'

New Jersey Tea

Ceanothus americanus

a.k.a.: wild pepper, red pepper

Uses: Because of the English tea tax, New Jersey Tea was considered the best tea substitute, even though it contains no caffeine. This plant has many medicinal purposes, including the treatment of bowels and high blood pressure. It was also used to tan hides and dye wool. The Cherokee used it to make a lather to wash infected areas.



Dry open woodlands, rocky slopes and prairie borders

July

White

2-3'

Obedient Plant

Physostegia virginiana

Damp thickets,
swamps and prairies

a.k.a.: obedience plant, false dragonhead

June-Sept.



Uses: Attracts butterflies, hummingbirds, and the occasional deer.
Misc: If you move the tubular flower, it will temporarily stay where you put it, hence the common name. This plant is sometimes subject to spreading.

White
or
Pink

1-4'

Ohio Spiderwort

Tradescantia ohiensis

Tall grass prairies

a.k.a.: widow tears, cow slobbers

April-May

Uses: The common name of "spiderwort" refers to it once being thought to cure spider bites.

Blue-
purple



Flowers of some of the plants change color when exposed to nuclear or radioactive radiation, so the spiderwort has been used by several environmental groups as an indicator of radiation in areas around nuclear plants.

2-3'

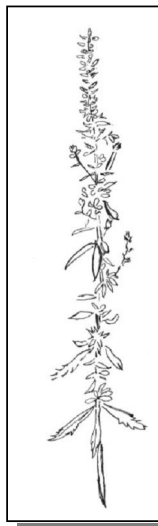
Prairie Sage

Artemisia ludoviciana

Rocky, sandy, gravelly, soils of prairies, and roadsides

a.k.a.: mugwort, sagebrush, sawewort

Aug.-Sept.



Uses: This is an important medicinal and ceremonial plant in the Native American culture. Burning the sage removes evil spirits and drives away mosquitoes and other insects.

Green

40"

It is used to treat stomach and genital troubles, tonsillitis and sore throat, and as a poultice for chronic sores.

Prairie Sunflower

Helianthus rigidus

Sand, hill, & gravel hill prairies

a.k.a.: stiff sunflower

June-Sept.



a.k.a.: stiff sunflower

Uses: The Latin name, "Helianthus" comes from the Greek "helios" meaning sun and "anthos" meaning flower because the flower heads turn with the sun each day. Also, eaten by grazing animals, rodents, song birds, and game birds.

Red or
purple

1-3'

Prairie Coreopsis

Coreopsis palmata

Dry open prairies
and open wood-

June-July

Yellow

Up
to
3'

a.k.a.: stiff coreopsis,
stiff tickseed

Uses: The deep yellow
flower is used to dye wool
and wood.

The Meskwaki boiled the
seeds and drank the result-
ing brew. Some tribes used
this plant in a poultice for
rheumatism.



Prairie Milkweed

Asclepias sullivanti

Moist prairies

June-July

Pink -
purple

2-4'

a.k.a.: yucca-leaf eryngo, Sullivant's milkweed

Uses: During WWI, the silk from these plants
was used to make life pre-
servers since it is more
buoyant than cork. Only a few
pounds of the silk is needed to
support a 150 pound person.

They bloom June-July, yet it is in the
early spring when the sprouts first
emerge from the ground that they
can be harvested and eaten like as-
paragus. A favorite food of various
Native American tribes.



Oxeye Sunflower

Heliopsis helianthoides

Tall grass prairies,
open spaces, dry
woodlands

a.k.a.: false sunflower

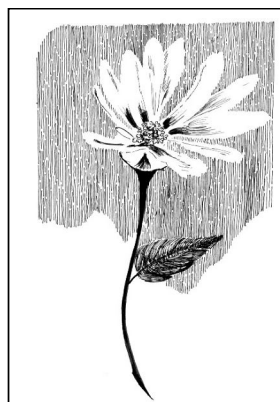
June-Oct.

Yellow

2-3' H
3-4' W

Uses: A grazed

plant. Was made into a
tea to treat a wide
range of lung troubles.
Oxeye's are considered
one of the best hardy
plants for a wildflower
garden, especially in dry
locations.



Pale Beardtongue

Penstemon digitalis

Tall grass prairie,
Dry soils, open wood-
lands, roadsides and
disturbed fields

a.k.a. White or Foxglove beardtongue

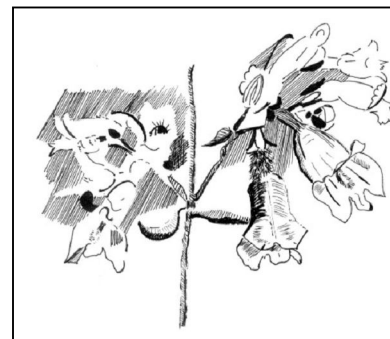
May-July

Uses: Native Americans used this plant to

treat chills and
fever and
chewed the
root to aid with
toothaches. The
root was used
to speed deliv-
ery of
afterbirth.

White,
purple
tinged

1-3'



Pale Purple Coneflower

Echinacea pallida



Bluffs and roadsides of dry prairie

May-July

Uses: A juice was made and then bathed in to give relief from pain. All Echinacea species have been used for medicine to treat many different ailments such as head and toothaches, snakebites, bee stings and blood poisoning.

Pinkish

2-3'

This plant is important for grazing as it contributes toward roughage in livestock diet.

Partridge Pea

Chamaecrista fasciculata



Dry or sandy soils of tall grass prairies, woodland edges, roadsides and disturbed areas

a.k.a.: golden cassia, wild sensitive plant

July-Sept.

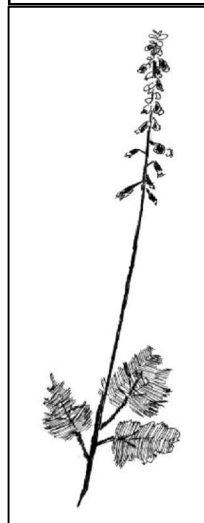
Uses: White-tailed deer often browse on the leaves of this plant, though they are toxic to livestock. The seeds provide food for several different species of birds and is a **good honey plant for bees.**

Yellow

2'+

Prairie Alum

Heuchera richardsonii



Throughout prairies, mostly sandy, drier soils, dry and sloping woods

a.k.a.: alum root

April-June

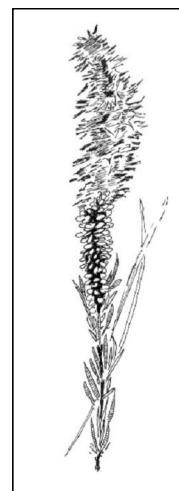
Uses: A powder made from the root was used as an astringent to close wounds and also to treat sore throat and diarrhea. Boiling the roots produced a medicinal tea. A milder form of the tea was used cold as an eye-wash.

White, pale green

1-3'

Prairie Blazing Star

Liatris pycnostrachya



Tall grass prairies

a.k.a.: gay feather, button snakeroot

July-Sept.

Uses: Used in gardens as an Ornamental. The roots supposedly taste like carrots. Related species of Prairie Blazing Star were used extensively by Native Americans to treat diarrhea, urinary trouble and uterine diseases.

Violet

Up To 5'