

# Allegheny Monkey Flower

*Mimulus ringens*



**Color:** Pale Blue-Violet (occasionally leaning towards pink or white)

**Blooms:** June-September

**Mature Height:** 2-3'

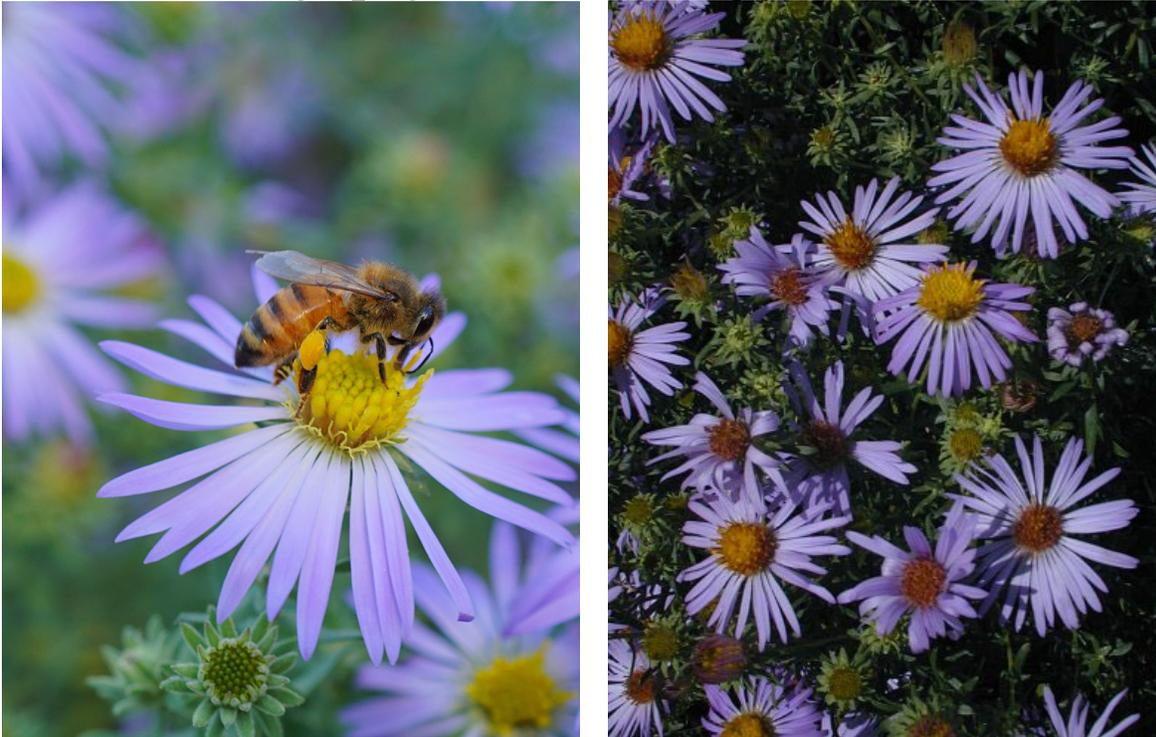
**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Mesic-Wet

**Planting Tips.** Although this plant can spread vegetatively, it isn't a strong colonizer. The preference is full or partial sun, rich loamy soil, and wet conditions. This plant will also grow in soil that is consistently moist, particularly in partially shaded situations. The size of a plant is strongly influenced by moisture conditions and soil fertility. In the wild, it typically occurs in areas that are prone to occasional flooding or standing water. The common name comes from the fancied resemblance of the flower to a monkey's face when it is squeezed by the fingers.

# Aromatic Aster

*Symphotrichum oblongifolium*



**Color:** Violet

**Blooms:** August-October

**Mature Height:** 1-2'

**Sun Exposure:** Full Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Dry

**Planting Tips.** The preference is full sun and dry conditions, although an average moisture level is tolerated if the site is well-drained. Poor, rocky soil with open terrain is preferred; a high pH is tolerated. Some of the lower leaves may wither away before the plants begin to bloom, but the foliage usually remains quite attractive. At moist fertile sites, this plant has trouble competing against tall aggressive plants, unless such neighbors are selectively weeded out. This plant branches frequently, creating a bushy appearance. It works well planted in clumps in sunny rock gardens and similar areas. Despite the name, aromatic aster has no noticeable floral scent, although the crushed foliage and flowerheads have a balsam-like aroma.

# Black-Eyed Susan

*Rudbeckia hirta*



**Color:** Yellow

**Blooms:** June - August

**Mature Height:** 1-3'

**Sun Exposure:** Full Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Mesic-Dry

**Planting Tips:** This plant is fast to mature and easy to grow, although short-lived. It will bloom in its first year! A biennial or short-lived perennial, it'll usually remain in the garden though self-seeding. Deadhead spent flowers to encourage additional bloom and/or to prevent unwanted spreading. The composite flowers appeal to a wide range of insects, and the seeds are occasionally eaten by goldfinches. Watch for slugs and snails on young plants, but generally not browsed by deer.

# Blue Flag Iris

*Iris virginica shrevei*



**Color:** Blue-Violet

**Blooms:** June - September

**Mature Height:** 2-4'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Moist Mesic-Wet

**Planting Tips:** Like most iris species, this lovely native specimen tends to spread through rhizomes, forming a clumped colony over time. The blue flag iris prefers moist to wet soils, and naturally grows in wet prairies, soggy meadows along streams and rivers, and in low woodland areas. It prefers full sun, and may not flower if planted in shady areas. It makes a lovely addition in rain gardens and along pond or creek banks. Deer resistant.

# Bottle Gentian

*Gentiana andrewsii*



**Color:** Blue

**Blooms:** Late Summer-Early Fall

**Mature Height:** 1-2'

**Sun Exposure:** Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Mesic-Moist Mesic

**Planting Tips:** Bottle gentian is most often found in moist areas near streams and ponds. Typically grows 1-2' tall and features tight clusters of tubular, deep blue flowers which never open. The closed flowers have a tiny opening at the tip and are pollinated by bumblebees that push their way in.

# Butterfly Milkweed

*Asclepias tuberosa*



**Color:** Bright Orange

**Blooms:** June - September

**Mature Height:** 2-3'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Dry-Mesic

**Planting Tips:** This showy, bright orange species of the milkweed family is a host for monarch butterfly larvae! It's large, showy clusters of flowers stand out in the garden, and look best when planted with other medium-height plant. After flowering, its large seed pods provide visual interest through fall. When fully dry seeds can be collected for planting. Will spread gradually once established.

# Cardinal Flower

*Lobelia cardinalis*



**Color:** Red

**Blooms:** July - September

**Mature Height:** 2-4'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Moist-Mesic-Wet

**Planting Tips:** The large spikes of blooms on the Cardinal Flower are an impressive sight, particularly in mass plantings, borders, rain gardens, or naturalized in woodland gardens. They prefer moist soils, and a heavy mulching is helpful. Not truly perennial, but spread easily by seed and cuttings. Plant will often form its own offsets from the lowest leaves, resulting in a clumping growth pattern that “acts” perennial. Very attractive to hummingbirds!

# Columbine

*Aquilegia canadensis*



**Color:** Red

**Blooms:** May-June

**Mature Height:** 2-3'

**Sun Exposure:** Partial Sun-Shade

**Soil Moisture:** Dry - Moist-Mesic

**Planting Tips:** Prefers soil that is loamy, rocky, or slightly sandy. Mature plants can also tolerate full sun, although young plants require some shade from neighboring vegetation. Once it becomes established, this plant is easy to maintain.

Bumblebees and the Ruby-Throated Hummingbird visit the flowers for nectar

Because the foliage is toxic, it is rarely bothered by deer.

# Foxglove Beard Tongue

*Penstemon digitalis*



**Color:** White

**Blooms:** April - June

**Mature Height:** 3-5'

**Sun Exposure:** Full -Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Dry-Mesic

**Planting Tips:** A tall plant with early and long-blooming period, this species is large enough to compete against many kinds of weeds. It adapts well to cultivation, is not bothered by disease, and is easy to grow. The tubular flowers attract long-tongued bees, as well as some butterflies and hummingbirds

# Jacob's Ladder

*Polemonium reptans*



**Color:** Blue

**Blooms:** Spring

**Mature Height:** 10-24"

**Sun Exposure:** Partial Sun-Shade

**Soil Moisture:** Dry Mesic-Moist Mesic

**Planting Tips:** Naturally found in deciduous woodlands and shaded banks of streams and rivers, this plant is able to adapt to somewhat shady gardens that are located near deciduous trees. This is a rather floppy plant, although both the flowers and foliage are quite attractive. It is also an attractive plant to bees and butterflies!

# Lead Plant

*Amorpha canescens*



**Color:** Purple

**Blooms:** July - August

**Mature Height:** 1-4'

**Mature Width:** 2-4'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Dry-Mesic

**Planting Tips:** This is a slow-growing prairie shrub that thrives in drier conditions. It has showy clusters of purple flowers with orange-red stamens that make it truly a unique show when in bloom. As part of the pea family, it has compound leaves that offer great texture to the landscape. Its nitrogen-fixing ability aids in overall soil health. It's an attractive plant to pollinators, although isn't deer resistant.

# Little Bluestem

*Schizachyrium scoparium*



**Color:** Bluish-Green to Reddish-Gold

**Mature Height:** 2-4'

**Plant Spacing:** 2'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Dry-Mesic

**Planting Tips:** Little bluestem is a colorful and easy-care addition to gardens. It gets its name from the bluish tint of new growth, which matures to a lovely reddish-gold color that's maintained through winter. Fluffy silver-white plumes add interest in late summer and fall, and are a nice addition to cut arrangements. Plant in clumps as a medium-height accent plant. Also works well in naturalized areas. Provides shelter and food for small animals and birds.

# Marsh Milkweed

*Asclepias incarnata*



**Color:** Deep Pink to Mauve

**Blooms:** Summer

**Mature Height:** 3-4'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Moist Mesic-Wet

**Planting Tips:** This member of the milkweed family prefers damp, loamy or clay soils with lots of decaying organic material. It'll tolerate wet areas and doesn't mind occasional standing water, as long as it's temporary. It has a bunch growth habit, and its rapid growth rate allows it to fill in quickly in the landscape. The flowers have a pleasant fragrance, almost like cinnamon. Attracts pollinators, deer resistant.

# Nodding Pink Onion

*Allium cernuum*



**Color:** White, Light Lavender to Pink

**Blooms:** July

**Mature Height:** 1-2'

**Sun Exposure:** Full to Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Mesic-Wet-Mesic

**Planting Tips.** The preference is full to partial sun, moist to mesic conditions, and soil containing black loam, sand, or rocky material. While this plant can survive hot dry summers, it does better with more moisture. Foliar disease is rarely a problem. This plant is easy to grow under cultivation, and it will spread gradually under suitable conditions. It is easier to establish plants by transplanting the bulbs or offsets, rather than by attempting to germinate the seeds. Both the bulb and foliage of this plant have a typical onion-like scent. Clonal offsets are produced, forming new bulbs underground. Mammalian herbivores usually avoid *Allium spp.*

# Pale Purple Coneflower

*Echinacea pallida*



**Color:** Light Lavender Purple

**Blooms:** July

**Mature Height:** 2-3'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Mesic-Dry

**Planting Tips:** Pale Purple Coneflower doesn't like having its feet wet. It strongly prefers well-drained soils. A long tap-root helps make this a very drought tolerant plant once established. As a relatively early bloomer, planting in a naturalized bed with other forbs will provide color all season! Also looks lovely in mass plantings, and makes nice cut flowers. Will readily self-seed if seed pods are left in place.

# Prairie Blazingstar

*Liatris pycnostachya*



**Color:** Rosey to Lilac Purple

**Blooms:** July - August

**Mature Height:** 2-5'

**Sun Exposure:** Full Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Mesic-Dry

**Planting Tips:** Established plants tolerate poor soils, drought, summer heat and humidity, but seedlings and transplants are vulnerable. In diverse prairies, taller, sturdy plants help support the flowers. In a garden or landscape setting, flowers may need staking. It will spread through underground corms and develop a clustered colony after a few years. Intolerant of wet soils in winter. Sometimes treated as a biennial. The flowers are pollinated primarily by long-tongued bees, butterflies, and skippers.

# Prairie Coreopsis

*Coreopsis palmata*



**Color:** Yellow

**Blooms:** June - July

**Mature Height:** 2-5'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Mesic-Dry

**Planting Tips:** The densely spaced, bright, showy yellow flowers of prairie coreopsis are a striking addition to any garden. Once established, this plant loves to be neglected! Excellent drought tolerance! The mostly upright plant will spread via rhizomes and seeds, and looks lovely when allowed to form clonal colonies. Excellent for pollinators, particularly bees. Plant with butterfly weed for a lovely mix of sunny bright colors!

# Prairie Milkweed

*Asclepias sullivanti*



**Color:** Pink

**Blooms:** June-July

**Mature Height:** 2-3'

**Sun Exposure:** Full Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Mesic-Wet

**Planting Tips:** While it can spread by means of its rhizomes, this plant is far less aggressive than Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*). May self-seed in the landscape if seed pods are not removed prior to splitting open. Flowers are a nectar source for many insects and leaves are a food source for monarch butterfly larvae (caterpillars). Because the foliage of Prairie Milkweed contains a white latex that is bitter-tasting and toxic to mammals, deer and rabbits avoid it!

# Royal Catchfly

*Silene regia*



**Color:** Red

**Blooms:** Mid-Late Summer

**Mature Height:** 2-4'

**Sun Exposure:** Full Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Dry-Mesic

**Planting Tips:** Royal Catchfly is a rare plant that has endangered status in Illinois, although it is fairly easy to grow. Plants begin to bloom while small in size, but it takes several years to reach their full potential. The long, narrow flowers attract butterflies as pollinators.

# Spiderwort

*Tradescantia ohiensis*



**Color:** Blue

**Blooms:** May-July

**Mature Height:** 2-3'

**Sun Exposure:** Full Sun-Part Shade

**Soil Moisture:** Dry -Mesic

**Planting Tips:** An interesting and long-blooming perennial for the border, naturalized area, meadow or open spaces of the woodland garden, Spiderwort is very tolerant of part shade, but bloom may be less profuse. Cut back to 6-12" in mid-summer to encourage new growth and a possible fall bloom. Clusters of blue, three-petaled flowers bloom from late May into early July. Each flower opens up for only one day. This flower reseeds readily, as well as forming clumps.

# Three-Square Rush

*Schoenoplectus pungens*



**Color:** Green – Blueish Green

**Mature Height:** 1½–4'

**Sun Exposure:** Full – Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Wet – Emergent Aquatic

**Planting Tips.** This plant can temporarily withstand flooded conditions with water up to 2' deep, and it can withstand periods of drought when the soil is merely moist, rather than wet. Because of its tough rhizomes and stout stems, a limited amount of wave action and gusts of wind are tolerated. It is often used in restorations of wetlands and ponds. Another common name is Chairmaker's Rush because its stems were used in the construction of seats for wooden chairs.

# Turtle Head

*Chelone glabra*



**Color:** Cream

**Blooms:** Summer

**Mature Height:** 3-4'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Moist Mesic-Wet

**Planting Tips:** The interesting flowers of this species resemble the head of a turtle, hence the common name. This species is uncommon and usually occurs in damp wooded habitats. They are an excellent addition to rain gardens, as they tolerate temporary flooding well. The flowers are pollinated by nectar-seeking bumblebees; sometimes they also attract the Ruby-Throated Hummingbird. Deer resistant.

# Water Willow

*Justicia americana*



**Color:** White to Light Purple, often with darker purple “speckles”

**Blooms:** June - August

**Mature Height:** 1-3’

**Sun Exposure:** Full – Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Wet – Emergent Aquatic

**Planting Tips.** This emergent aquatic plant prefers shallow standing water (up to 3’ deep) or wet conditions, and soil that is muddy, sandy, or gravelly. The root system is highly rhizomatous, forming colonies of plants, which can help stabilize shorelines and creek banks. The flowers of Water Willow are fairly showy and bloom intermittently for a long period of time. In spite of its common name, this is a non-woody herbaceous plant that is not closely related to willows.

# Western Sunflower

*Helianthus occidentalis*



**Color:** Yellow

**Blooms:** July-September

**Mature Height:** 2-3'

**Sun Exposure:** Full Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Mesic to Dry

**Planting Tips.** This is one of the less aggressive native sunflower species. It prefers well-drained sandy soils in full sun but will adapt to partial shade and rockier conditions. It can be found in the wild in upland sand prairies, sandy hill prairies, upland sandy savannas, limestone and sandstone glades, sandy areas along railroads, and sandy abandoned fields. The seeds of wild sunflowers are a nutritious source of food for many birds and small mammals.

# Wild Bergamot

*Monarda fistulosa*



**Color:** Lilac Purple

**Blooms:** July - August

**Mature Height:** 2-4'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Dry-Moist Mesic

**Planting Tips:** A very adaptable plant, Wild Bergamot can grow nearly anywhere! This flower is actually a member of the mint family, and has a pleasant herbal aroma. Also known as bee balm, it really does draw in the bees! The pale, lilac purple blooms are a lovely complement to yellow coneflowers in naturalized plantings. It also grows well in mass plantings.

# Wild Hairy Petunia

*Ruellia himilis*



**Color:** Light purple

**Blooms:** Summer

**Mature Height:** 1'

**Sun Exposure:** Full-Partial Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Dry-Moist Mesic

**Planting Tips:** This wild petunia looks similar to the familiar cultivated petunias. It is very adaptable, and will grow in practically any soil and with varied light conditions. In the wild, it generally grows in areas with poor soil and sparse vegetative cover, such as open woodlands, sandy areas, and limestone glades. It's a great addition to a rock garden! Although its seeds tend to drop nearby and will sprout, it's a dainty plant and can be crowded out by more aggressive neighbors so keep it protected.