

# Cup Plant *Silphium perfoliatum*

Forb

A coarse perennial, 3-6+ ft. tall with numerous large, yellow composite flowers. Each flower head has 20-30 yellow rays and darker yellow discs. Stout leaves are joined at stem to form a small cup that holds water and attracts birds. The small cup formed by the leaves holds water and attracts birds.

## Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Size Notes: Up to about 10 feet tall.

Fruit: Fruit is a cypsela (pl. cypselae).

## Bloom Information

Bloom Color: Yellow

Bloom Time: Jun , Jul , Aug , Sep

## Ecosystem Benefits

Long-tongued bees, butterflies, and skippers are common visitors and the most important pollinators of the flowers. Some short-tongued bees, wasps, bee flies, and other kinds of flies also visit the flowers for pollen or nectar. Various birds, especially goldfinches, are very fond of the seeds, and drink water from the cups formed by the leaves. This plant provides good cover for birds, which often lurk among the leaves during the heat of the day, searching for insects or pausing to rest.



# Downy Skullcap *Scutellaria incana*

Forb

The square stems are covered with fine white hairs and small purplish-blue flowers bloom in loose racemes in summer. This perennial plant is 2-3' tall and little branched, except near the apex. The erect central stem is whitish green, bluntly 4-angled, and finely pubescent. The opposite leaves are up to 3" long and 1½" across; they are ovate in shape and crenate along their margins. The upper leaf surface is pale-medium or yellowish green and glabrous or nearly so (except for young leaves), while the lower leaf surface is whitish green and finely pubescent.

## Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Size Notes: Up to about 3 feet tall.

Fruit: Dark nutlets.

## Bloom Information

Bloom Color: White , Blue , Purple , Violet

Bloom Time: Jun , Jul , Aug , Sep

## Ecosystem Benefits

The flowers are pollinated by bumblebees primarily, which suck nectar or collect pollen. Less common visitors are bee flies, skippers, or small butterflies, but these visitors are less likely to cross-pollinate the flowers. Insects that feed destructively on Downy Skullcap include the flea beetles , the leaf-mining larvae of the Skullcap Caloptilia Moth, and the larvae of Skullcap Skeletonizer Moth. The foliage is bitter-tasting and possibly toxic, so mammalian herbivores rarely bother with it.



# Honewort *Cryptotaenia canadensis*

Forb

Honewort is a woodland wildflower that blooms in the shade during the summer. Its white flowers are quite small and not very showy, which is quite typical of wildflower species that adapt to this type of habitat. Honewort can be distinguished from similar species by the following characteristics: 1) It has hairless leaves and stems, 2) it has trifoliate leaves with leaflets that are sometimes cleft, 3) its leaflets are elliptic to ovate, rather than narrowly linear, 4) its umbels of white flowers are compound, rather than simple, and 5) it has no significant floral bracts at the bases of either umbels or umbellets. Their margin are usually doubly serrate, and the bases of leaflets taper to winged petiolules.

## Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Size Notes: Up to about 3 feet tall.

Fruit: Black

## Bloom Information

Bloom Color: White

Bloom Time: Jun , Jul , Aug , Sep

## Ecosystem Benefits

The nectar of the flowers attracts Halictid bees, masked bees, Andrenid bees, cuckoo wasps, wild carrot wasps, Ichneumonid wasps, Syrphid flies, dance flies, bee flies, thick-headed flies , Tachinid flies, Chloropid flies, long-horned beetles, leaf beetles, tumbling flower beetles, and other insects. Insect that feed destructively include the leaf-mining larvae of Hogweed Picture-Winged Fly, Willow-Carrot Aphid, Fennel Aphid, and caterpillars of the Black Swallowtail.



# Showy Tick Trefoil *Desmodium canadense*

Forb

Erect, bushy, hairy plant with crowded, elongated terminal clusters of pink or rose-purple pea-like flowers. Showy tick-trefoil is a slender-stemmed, often bushy perennial, 2-6 ft. high. Hundreds of rose-colored, pea-like flowers occur in dense, nodding clusters at the tops of the stems. Velvety hair covers the stems and three-parted, compound leaves. Seedpods cling to animal fur or clothing. The most showy of the Tick Trefoils is one of some two dozen species distinguished by their leaf and fruit shape. The distinctively jointed fruits, known as loments, break into 1-seeded segments, that stick to clothes and animal fur, thus facilitating seed dispersal.

## Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Fruit Type: Legume

Fruit: Brown

## Bloom Information

Bloom Color: Pink , Purple

Bloom Time: Jun , Jul , Aug , Sep

## Ecosystem Benefits

The most important visitors of the flowers are long-tongued bees, including bumblebees, and leaf-cutting bees. Other insects feed on the foliage, seeds, and other parts. Like many other members of the Bean family, this plant is highly edible to various mammalian herbivores, including deer, rabbits, groundhogs, and livestock. Some upland gamebirds and small rodents eat the seeds, including the Bobwhite Quail, Wild Turkey, White-Footed Mouse, and Woodland Deer Mouse.



# White Avens *Geum canadense*

Forb

White Avens is a member of the family Rosaceae, which includes herbs, shrubs, and trees with mostly prickly stems. Flowers: usually bisexual, radially symmetrical; sepals 5; petals 5 or sometimes none, separate; stamens usually numerous; sepals, petals, and stamens attached at edge of cup (which is attached at bottom of ovary), or attached at top of ovary. Leaves: alternate, simple or compound, usually with small leaf-like structures at the base of the leaf stalk. Fruit: dry or fleshy, opening at maturity or remaining closed. The leaves resemble those of strawberries. The seeds attach to dog fur or clothing.

## Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Leaf Retention: Semi-evergreen

Size Notes: Usually 4 to 18 inches, can be 4 feet.

## Bloom Information

Bloom Color: White

Bloom Time: Mar , Apr , May , Jun , Jul , Aug

## Ecosystem Benefits

The flowers attract various insects, including bees, wasps, flies, and beetles. These insects suck nectar; some bees also collect pollen, while Syrphid flies often feed on the pollen. Insects that feed on the foliage of White Avens consist primarily of aphids. In addition, the larvae of a moth, *Tinagma obsкуроfasciella*, mine the leaves. The hooked achenes can cling to the fur of mammals, feathers of birds, and clothing of humans; by this means, they are distributed far and wide.



# Frank's Sedge *Carex frankii*

Sedge

This sedge consists of a tuft of basal leaves and one or more flowering culms up to 2½' tall; these culms have alternate leaves and leafy bracts near the inflorescence. The culms are light green, 3-angled, and glabrous. The leaf blades are up to 12" long and 10 mm. across; they are light green, glabrous, linear, shallowly furrowed, and scabrous (rough-textured) along their margins. The basal and lower leaf blades are usually arching, while the upper leaf blades are ascending. The leaf sheaths are mostly light green and glabrous – however, the apices of inner sheaths are membranous, forming concave upper margins.

## Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Size Notes: Up to about 32 inches tall.

## Bloom Information

Bloom Time: Jun , Jul , Aug

Bloom Notes: Flowers inconspicuous. Bloom time refers to fruiting period.

## Ecosystem Benefits

Insects that feed on wetland sedges include sedge grasshoppers, semi-aquatic leaf beetles, Sedge Billbug, seed bugs, a shield bug, misc. aphids, leafhoppers, stem-boring larvae of flies, larvae of the fly Lesser Rice Leafminer, caterpillars of the butterfly Eyed Brown, caterpillars of skippers, and larvae of various moths. The seeds and/or spikelets of wetland sedges are an important source of food to various ducks, rails, and granivorous songbirds. The Canada Goose also eats the foliage of wetland sedges. The muskrat occasionally feeds on the rhizomes, culms, and young shoots.



# Pointed Broom Sedge *Carex scoparia*

Sedge

This sedge is 1½–2½' tall, forming tight bunches of flowering culms with alternate leaves. Vegetative shoots are relatively uncommon. The culms of the fertile shoots are erect to ascending; they are light to medium green, slender, stiff, and 3-angled. Each culm is rough along its margins underneath the inflorescence. During the flowering period, 3-4 leaves occur along the lower half of each culm, while older leaves have withered away. The ascending to widely spreading leaf blades are up to 10" long and 3 mm. (1/8") across; they are light to medium green, hairless, and slender. The leaf sheaths wrap tightly around the culm; the mouth of each sheath is membranous and concave, forming a "U" shape.

## Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Size Notes: Up to about 3 feet tall.

## Bloom Information

Bloom Time: Apr , May , Jun , Jul , Aug

Bloom Notes: Perianth absent. Bloom time refers to fruiting period.

## Ecosystem Benefits

The foliage, juices, or seeds of sedges are eaten by various insects, including sedge grasshoppers , leafhoppers, leaf beetles, aphids, billbugs, and plant bugs. The caterpillars of several skippers and moths also feed on the foliage of sedges. The seeds or seedheads of wetland sedges are sources of food to birds (ducks, rails, and some songbirds), small rodents, and some turtles. Canada geese, muskrats, and other turtles occasionally feed on the foliage or rhizomes of such sedges.



# Rice Cut Grass *Leersia oryzoides*

Grass

Rice cut grass is a 2 1/2-5 ft., prickly-leaved grass. The asymmetrically-shaped inflorescence often stays tucked inside the leaf sheath. Flower clusters stay close to the slightly drooping branches of the perennial grass' inflorescence.

## Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Fruit Type: Caryopsis

Size Notes: Up to about 5 feet tall.

Leaf: Dark Green

## Bloom Information

Bloom Color: Green

Bloom Time: Jun , Jul , Aug , Sep , Oct

## Ecosystem Benefits

Insects that feed on Rice Cutgrass include the larvae of Least Skipper, the larvae of Peck's Skipper, the larvae of the moth Angelic Crocidophora, Black-headed Billbug, Little Billbug, and Short-winged Meadow Katydid. The seeds of Rice Cutgrass are eaten by such birds as the Swamp Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Sora Rail, Canada Goose, Mallard, and other ducks. The harsh foliage of this grass deters most mammalian herbivores, although muskrats feed on the rootstocks to a limited extent.



## River Oats *Chasmanthium latifolium*

Grass

This is a 2-4 ft., clump-forming, perennial grass bearing large, drooping, oat-like flower spikelets from slender, arching branches. The blue-green, bamboo-like leaves often turn a bright yellow-gold, especially in sunnier sites, in fall.

### Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Leaf Arrangement: Alternate

Fruit Type: Caryopsis

Size Notes: 2 to 4 feet tall

Fruit: Tan

### Ecosystem Benefits

The flowers attract few insects because they are wind-pollinated. The caterpillars of the butterfly Northern Pearly Eye feed on the foliage, as do the caterpillars of several Roadside Skippers, including Common Roadside Skipper. The larvae of a moth, *Elachista brachyelytrifoliella* mine the leaves of Inland Oats and other woodland grasses.

### Bloom Information

Bloom Color: Green

Bloom Time: Jun , Jul , Aug , Sep

