

Native Herbaceous Perennials

Erika Wood, Hopkins County
Extension Agent for Horticulture

Native Plant Nurseries

Ironweed Native Plant Nursery

270-250-3587

info@ironweednursery.com

<https://www.ironweednursery.com/>

Busy Bee Nursery – Shannon

Trimboli

Deliveries in Bowling Green and
Glasgow, KY

[https://busybeenurseryandconsulting.
com/nursery/](https://busybeenurseryandconsulting.com/nursery/)

Dropseed Native Plant Nursery

1205 S Buckeye Ln, Goshen, KY 40026

502-439-9033

info@dropseednursery.com

<https://www.dropseednursery.com/>

Roundstone Native Seed LLC

9764 Raider Hollow Road

Upton, Ky. 42784

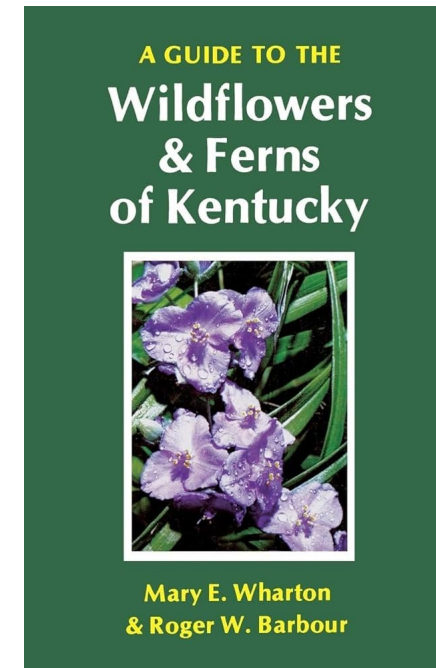
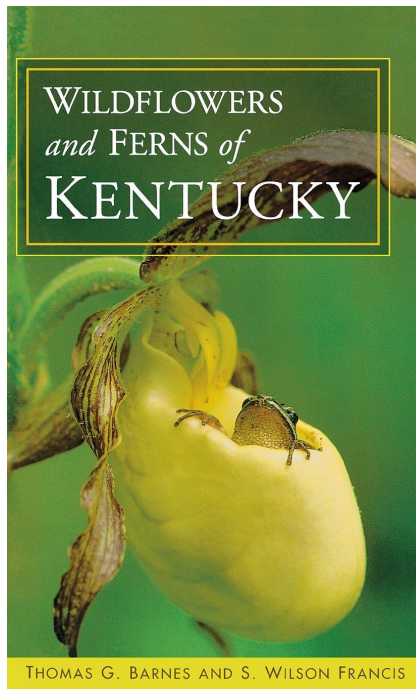
888-531-2353

sales@roundstoneseed.com

<https://roundstoneseed.com/>

Resources

- Kentucky Native Plant Society - <https://www.knps.org/>
 - <https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/>
 - <https://www.wildflower.org/>
 - <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants>
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- Wildflowers and Ferns of Kentucky by Thomas G. Barnes and S. Wilson Francis
 - A Guide to the Wildflowers and Ferns of Kentucky by Mary E. Wharton and Roger W. Barbour



True Species vs. Cultivar vs. Nativar

- Cultivar – cultivated variety selected for certain traits
 - Ex: Flower color, disease resistance, etc.
- Nativar – cultivars derived from native plants

What to keep in mind:

- Many nativars can still be beneficial for pollinators BUT be mindful that some cultivars and hybrids may have sterile flowers, produce no seeds, or have reproductive parts not accessible to pollinators



Asteraceae family



Ray Flowers

Disk Flowers

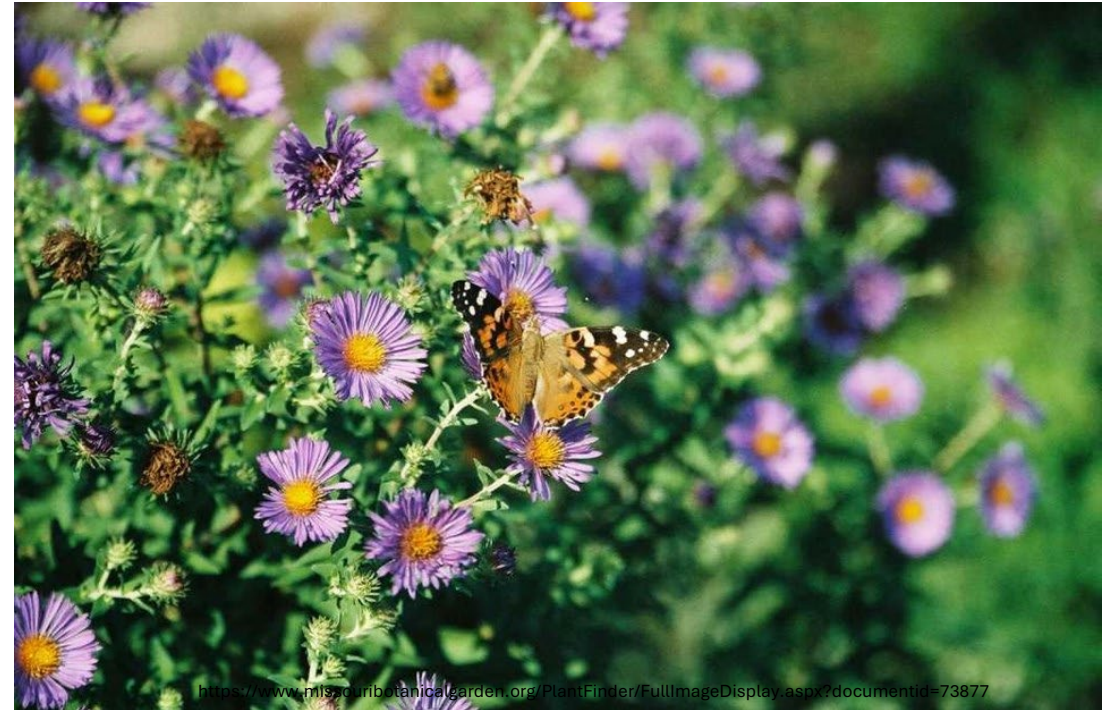
Amsonia - *Amsonia tabernaemontana*

- Apocynaceae family
- Clump-forming perennial
- Narrow, willow-shaped foliage
- Produces clusters of light blue, star-like flowers in late spring
- Grown best in full sun, may flop over in shade (would require staking)
- Attractive yellow foliage in fall



Aromatic Aster - *Symphotrichum oblongifolium*

- Asteraceae family
- Bushy, compact plant with hairy stems
- Rigid, toothless, oblong, blue-green are fragrant when crushed
- Produce small, daisy-like flowers with violet blue rays and yellow center disks
- Attractive to butterflies
- Some support needed for taller plants



Black-eyed Susan – *Rudbeckia* spp.

- Asteraceae family
- *Rudbeckia fulgida* vs. *Rudbeckia hirta*
 - *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *Sullivantii* ‘Goldsturm’
- Rhizomatous, clump-forming
- Oblong to lanceolate leaves, medium green foliage
- Produces daisy-like flowers
 - Yellow rays with brownish-purple center disks
- Flowers attractive to pollinators, seeds eaten by birds



Blazing Star – *Liatris spicata*

- Asteraceae family
 - Has disk flowers but no ray flowers
- Tall, upright, clump-forming
- Grows basal, grass-like leaves where rigid, leafy flower stalks arise
 - Stem leaves decrease in size toward the top
- Produces terminal spikes of rounded, fluffy purple flower heads
- Taller plants may require staking
- Performs better in moist, fertile soils



<https://www.missouriherbarium.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=d780>

Blue Lobelia - *Lobelia siphilitica*

- Campanulaceae family
- Grows in moist areas along streams, swamps, etc.
- Clump-forming
- Finely-toothed, lance-shaped, light green leaves
- Light to dark blue, tubular, two-lipped flowers
 - Three lobes on lower lip more prominent than two lobes on the upper lip
- Divide clumps as needed
- Can self-seed
- Appreciates some partial shade



Butterfly Weed – *Asclepias tuberosa*

- Apocynaceae family
 - Dogbane family
- Tuberos-rooted milkweed
- Lance-shaped leaves and hairy stems
- Stems do not have milky sap
- Produces umbels of orange/yellow star-like flowers
- Spindle-shaped seed pods
 - Split open when ripe
 - Silky-tailed seeds dispersal by the wind
- Larval food source for monarch butterfly



Cardinal Flower – *Lobelia cardinalis*

- Campanulaceae family
- Found along streams and in low wooded areas
- Short-lived, clump forming perennial
- Finely-toothed, lance-shaped, dark green leaves
- Produces terminal spikes of red, tubular flowers
 - Two-lipped flowers – Two lobes on upper lip, three lobes on bottom lip
- Attractive to butterflies and hummingbirds
- Foliage contains alkaloids that can be very toxic



Garden Phlox - *Phlox paniculata*

- Polemoniaceae family
- Upright, clump-forming perennial
- Opposite, pointed, elliptic, deep green leaves
- Produces pink-purple to white densely packed in domed terminal clusters
 - Corolla tube and five flat petal-like lobes
- Adored by butterflies and hummingbirds
- Provide good air circulation to resist powdery mildew issues
- Taller stems may need staking



Goldenrod – *Solidago* spp.

- Asteraceae family
- Rhizomatous
- Stiff, narrow-leaved, reddish stems
- Produce tiny, bright yellow flowers borne in dense, erect, club-shaped terminal clusters
- Attractive to bees and butterflies
- Divide every few years to control growth
- Not the cause of hay fever, blame ragweed



Hoary Mountain Mint – *Pycnanthemum incanum*

- Lamiaceae family
- Distinguishable from other mountain mints due to whitish appearance of the upper leaves and bracts beneath the flower clusters
- Erect with multiple branches
- Broad-ovate, toothed leaves
- Small, two-lipped, white flowers with purple spotting on the lower lip
- All parts have strong, spearmint-like aroma when crushed
- Favorite of butterflies, moths and beneficial predatory wasps



Ironweed – *Vernonia spp.*

- Asteraceae family
- Upright perennial with stiff, leaf stems
- Lanceolate to lanceolate-ovate leaves with irregularly serrated margins
- Produce composite flowers, each with dense, fluffy, rose-purple disks (rays absent), bloom in corymbose cymes
- Rusty seed clusters
- Flowers very attractive to butterflies
- Easily grown from seed, self-seeds
- Tend to hybridize with other ironweed species (complicates identification)
- Not the most “ornamental” perennial



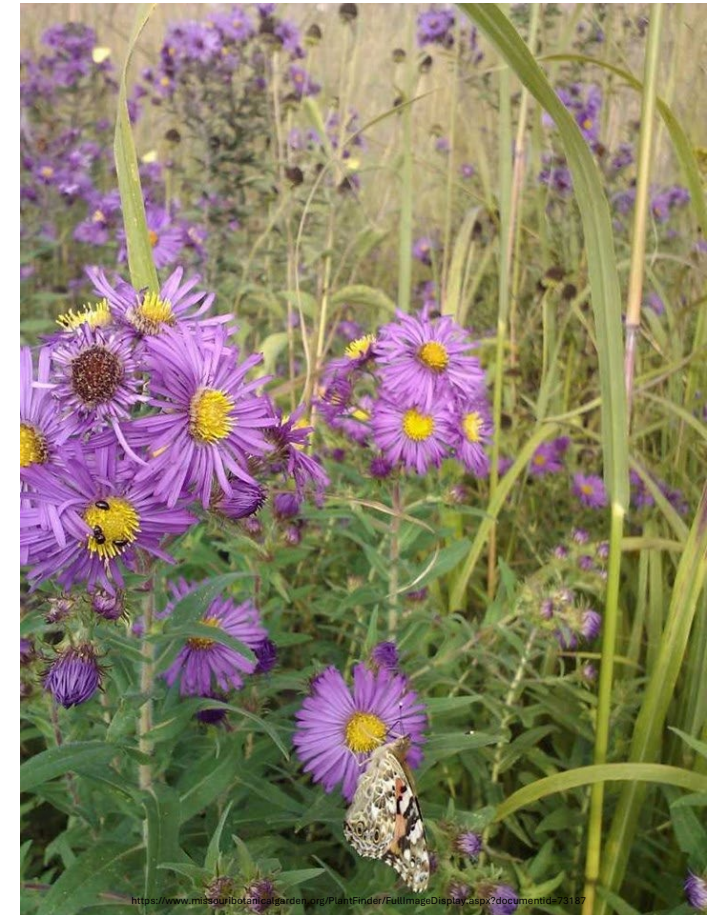
Joe Pye Weed – *Eutrochium* spp.

- Asteraceae family
- Erect, clump-forming perennial
 - Can get up to 7 feet tall
 - Dwarf cultivars are available
- Coarsely-serrated, lance-shaped leaves found in whorls of 3-4
- Stems have purplish leaf nodes
- Produce vanilla-scented, pinkish-purple flowers
 - Each cluster has five to seven florets
- Very attractive to butterflies
- Seed heads persist into the winter months



New England Aster - *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*

- Asteraceae family
- Upright growth habit (up to six feet tall)
- Rough, hairy, lance-shaped leaves on stiff, hairy stems
- Produces daisy-like asters with purple rays and yellow centers
- May self-seed
- Pinching back stems several times before mid-July will help control plant height, promote bushiness, and delay flowering
- Attractive to butterflies
- Some susceptibility to powdery mildew and aster wilt



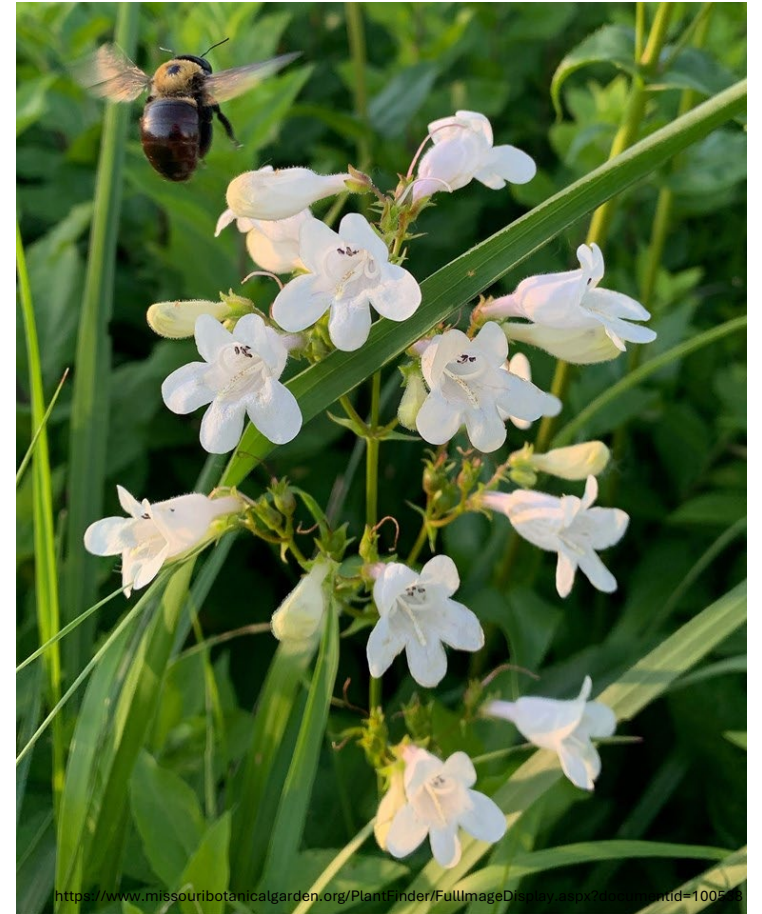
Obedient Plant - *Physostegia virginiana*

- Lamiaceae family
- Square stems, opposite, narrow-lanceolate, sharply-toothed leaves
- Produce tubular, two-lipped, snapdragon-like, pink to pale lilac flowers in upright terminal spikes
 - Flowers bloom bottom to top on each spike
- Very aggressive
 - Spreads by seeds and rhizomes
- Watch for rust diseases



Penstemon – *Penstemon spp.*

- Plantaginaceae family
- Clump-forming perennial
 - Three-five feet tall
- Elliptic, basal leaves and lance-shaped to oblong stem leaves
- Produce two-lipped flowers on erect stems
 - Two lobes on upper lip, three lobes on lower lip
- Attractive to hummingbirds, butterflies, and other pollinators
- Commonly called beard tongue because the sterile stamen has a tuft of small hairs



Purple Coneflower – *Echinacea purpurea*

- Asteraceae family
- Native to most prairies in the southeastern U.S.
- Very adaptable plant
- Coarse, rough, ovate to broad-lanceolate, dark green leaves
- Produces daisy-like pink/purple coneflowers
- Seed heads beloved by goldfinches
- Divide clumps to avoid overcrowding (every few years)
- Susceptible to yellow asters disease



Spiderwort - *Tradescantia virginiana*

- Commelinaceae family
- Clump-forming perennial
- Arching, iris-like, dark green leaves folded lengthwise forming a groove
- Produces violet-blue to purple, three-petaled flowers accented by contrasting yellow stamens
 - Typically only bloom one day
- Foliage may sprawl and decline by mid-summer



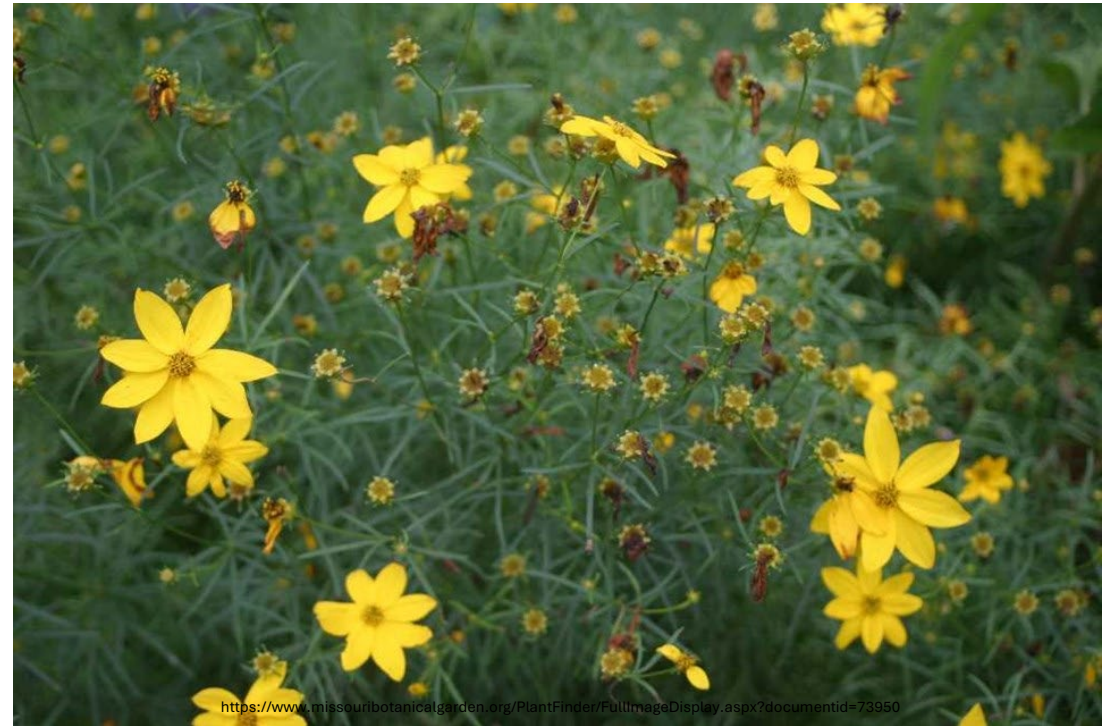
Swamp Milkweed – *Asclepias incarnata*

- Apocynaceae family
- Native to swamps and wet meadows but adaptable to well-drained soils
- Erect and clump-forming, branching stems
- Narrow, lance-shaped, taper-pointed leaves
- Produce small, fragrant, pink to mauve flowers, each with five reflexed petals and an elevated central crown, in tight clusters
- Attractive seed pods which split open when ripe releasing silky-haired seeds easily carried by the wind
- Larval food source of the monarch butterfly, great nectar food source for butterflies
- Stems exude toxic, milky sap when cut
- Have deep taproots when mature
 - Best left undisturbed



Threadleaf Coreopsis - *Coreopsis verticillata*

- Asteraceae family
- Rhizomatous
- Forms dense, bushy clumps
- Palmately 3-parted leaves with thread-like segments
- Produce yellow, daisy-like flowers
 - Yellow, untoothed rays and yellow center disks
- Shear in mid-summer to promote fall bloom
- Crown rot can occur in moist, poorly drained soils



<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/FullImageDisplay.aspx?documentid=73950>

Turtlehead - *Chelone obliqua*

- Plantaginaceae family
- Found in moist areas, swamps, floodplains
- Erect, clump-forming perennial
- Pairs of opposite, coarsely-toothed, lance-shaped, dark green leaves appear in pairs along the stem
- Produce hooded, snapdragon-like, two-lipped flowers (ranging in color from red to pink to deep rose) in tight, spike-like terminal racemes
 - Each flower has a sparse pale yellow beard inside the lower lip
 - Flowers resemble the heads of open-mouthed turtles



Wild Bergamot – *Monarda fistulosa*

- Lamiaceae family
- Toothed, aromatic, oblong, grayish-green leaves
- Produce lavender, two-lipped, tubular flowers in dense, globular, solitary, terminal heads
 - Each flower head rests upon a whorl of showy, pinkish, leafy bracts
 - Attractive to bees and butterflies
- Self-seeds easily
- Provide good air circulation to reduce powdery mildew

