



Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve

Bloom Guide August



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Big Bluestem Grass *Andropogon gerardii* is a warm season perennial grass that blooms in late summer. The maroon flower clusters, or racemes, sit on blue-green stems usually with three or more branches, giving rise to its other common name, turkey foot. Growing 4-8 feet high, and forming large clumps, big bluestem is a dominant grass in the meadow. It is highly deer resistant and is a host plant to a few of our native butterflies.



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Sweet Joe-pye Weed *Eutrochium purpureum* is one of several species of *Eutrochium* growing at the Preserve. Seen in many locations throughout including both ponds, the meadow, Marsh Marigold Trail and the Visitor Center garden, the purple domed flowers are a butterfly magnet; offering a landing platform, copious amounts of nectar as well as a butterfly's favorite color, purple. Notice the whorled leaves of this plant are slightly torqued along the stem, ensuring the set above doesn't shade those below.



New York Ironweed, *Vernonia noveboracensis*. This tall purple flower is a butterfly and bee magnet, blooming from July into September. Each cluster contains 30-50 lobed disk flowers, offering insect visitors lots of pollen and nectar. The genus name *Vernonia* is a nod to the English botanist, William Vernon who collected this plant in the seventeenth century. New York Ironweed is abundant in the lower part of the meadow.



Three-lobed or Thin-leaved coneflower *Rudbeckia triloba*. This self-seeding summer bloomer offers a colorful display of yellow ray flowers (petals) that are off-set by brown disk flowers (center disk). The genus name honors Olof Rudbeck (1630-1702), a Swedish botanist and founder of the Uppsala Botanic Garden in Sweden, where Carl Linnaeus was professor of botany. Thin-leaved coneflower can be found throughout the meadow, near the new pond, as well as in the Visitor Center garden.



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Wild Senna *Senna hebecarpa*. Bright yellow flowers containing brown stamens make this plant a showstopper in July and August for both humans and insects. Two different kinds of stamens full of pollen almost guarantee a bumblebee will leave sated, ants are rewarded for their protective services with a sweet snack from extrafloral nectaries (small protrusions in the axils of the leaves) and several species of butterflies use wild senna as their host plant for hungry caterpillars. Wild Senna grows along President's Drive, around the new pond and in the lower part of the meadow. Look closely. It's a party on a plant.



Photo by Jean Barrell

Butterfly Weed, *Asclepias tuberosa*, is a low growing milkweed that upon close inspection is made up of unusual crown-shaped flowers. A wonderful full sun garden plant, butterfly weed will grow in well-drained soil and behaves in a perennial bed. Though its toxins are not as potent as other milkweeds, monarch butterflies will still lay their eggs on it for their caterpillars. Look for splashes of orange throughout the meadow, and you will be treated to a bevy of pollinators on this lovely native plant.



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Hyssop-leaved Boneset *Eupatorium hyssopifolium*. This flat-topped wildflower consists of many small disk flowers appearing as one unified inflorescence with narrow gray-green foliage. In mass, it makes a striking display for butterflies, bees and humans alike. Occasionally called justice weed, in the 1800's it was used medicinally in South Carolina by John Justice to treat rattlesnake bites. There is no medical evidence of its efficacy though. Look for it throughout the meadow.



Eastern Coneflower *Rudbeckia fulgida*. This beautiful late summer bloomer is spectacular in the garden setting. Free-forming clumps of bright orange ray flowers surround brown-black disk flowers. Like many in this genus, eastern coneflower is drought and deer resistant. The stems and leaves are covered with fine hairs that give a sandpaper feel when touched. Bees, butterflies, and moths will visit during bloom time, while goldfinches and other birds feed on the seeds in the fall. Find this lovely perennial along Presidents Drive and throughout the meadow.

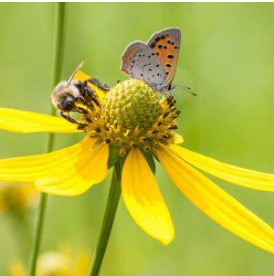


Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Green-headed Coneflower *Rudbeckia laciniata*. Close inspection of members of the aster family reveal a collection of many flowers arranged in one inflorescence. Like other 'daisy-like' flowers, coneflowers contain ray flowers that most think of as the petals, and center disk flowers. The disk flowers are the fertile ones that contain pollen and nectar, while the ray flowers are most often an advertisement. After pollination, goldfinches love to eat the seeds ripened seeds. Find green-headed coneflower in the meadow.



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*, is perfectly designed to give and receive pollen when visited by its primary pollinator, the ruby-throated hummingbird. Red flowers born on a spike are dichogamous (pronounced di-cog-am-us), meaning male and female reproductive parts develop at different times therefore reducing the risk of self-pollinating. Cardinal flower can be found at both ponds, the meadow, and in the Visitor Center garden.



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Grass-leaved Goldenrod *Euthamia graminifolia*. This goldenrod grows in a flat-topped branching form which makes it unique to other goldenrods the meadow. Individual flowers are less than 1/8" with 15-25 minute ray flowers and 5-10 central disk flowers. The species *graminifolia* gives a nod to the unique grass-like leaves. An important flower for late summer pollinators, this goldenrod will host butterflies, bees, wasps, flies and many other insects in the meadow.



Great Blue Lobelia *Lobelia siphilitica*. The bluish-purple flowers of this gorgeous summer bloomer grow on a spike rising from a whorl of basal leaves. Each flower consists of two lobes that point up and three that point down. A favorite of bumblebees, it is great fun to watch them visit the flowers and stuff their fat bodies into the mouth of the flower. The genus *Lobelia* is in reference to a 16th century botanist Matthias L'Obel. Great blue lobelia can be found in the visitor center garden and around the new pond.



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Indian grass *Sorghastrum nutans*. This tall warm-season grass grows in clumps with rich gold-and-purple sprays of flowers. In late summer, the yellow stamens are clearly visible as they release their pollen to the wind. After pollination, the reddish-brown seed heads bend in the wind and drop their seeds for the next generation. Many ground-feeding birds such as juncos, sparrows, finches and others relish the nutritious seeds. Find Indian grass throughout the meadow.



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Obedient Plant *Physostegia virginiana*. This tall perennial can get aggressive if it likes where it is growing, but the beautiful pink/purple spike of flowers are a real showstopper in mass. Notice the flowers bloom from the bottom of the spike up, offering a great nectar and pollen source for insects for many weeks. The common name refers to the flowers. When nudged to the side, they stay put. Try your hand at rearranging the flowers next time you visit the meadow.



Purple-top *Tridens flavus*. This is a tall, clumping warm season grass with drooping reddish-purple flowers that turn brown in fall. Purpletop is beautiful to watch waving in a warm summer wind, so make sure when you visit the Preserve's meadow, you look for the undulations of the grasses. A caterpillar plant for many North American butterflies, purpletop attracts common wood nymphs and a few skippers to lay their eggs on the leaves.



Photo by Mary Anne Borge

Tall Coreopsis *Coreopsis tripteris*. A beautiful addition to the home landscape, tall coreopsis grows in moist, well-drained soils. Each flower head usually has eight yellow ray flowers surrounding a central cluster of brownish disk flowers. This lovely plant will attract a variety of insect pollinators in summer as well as hungry birds in fall which feed on the seeds. Stalked, anise-scented stem leaves are divided into three lance-shaped segments.



River Oats *Chasmanthium latifolia*. This beautiful native grass is a common sight in perennial garden beds not only for its attractive flattened seed heads, but also because it is one of the only warm season grasses to grow happily in partial shade. The blue-green foliage and flowers work well when planted in mass with other flowers, though it can be aggressive if planted in the sun. The seed heads turn golden-brown in the autumn and make an attractive arrangement for a vase or in a seed pod arrangement.



Summer Phlox *Phlox paniculata*. Phlox is such a recognizable plant many don't realize there are many native species. With bright purple-pink, tubular flowers born on a spreading flower head, phlox is sure to catch your eye, as well as butterflies, hummingbirds and the day flying hummingbird and snowberry clearwing moths. With colors ranging from white to blue to purple, phlox is a must in any perennial bed. Look for it just as you drive through the gate to the Preserve on the left as well as in the visitor center garden.

Photo by Mary Anne Borge



Swamp Rose Mallow *Hibiscus moscheutos*. The flowers of this gorgeous perennial come in white to deep purple, often with a maroon center which acts as a guide to visiting insects. The stamens and pistil protrude out from the flower's center. Though each flower only lasts a day or two, new flowers will open in rapid succession offering a long bloom time. The gorgeous display throughout the wet part of the meadow is a can't miss scene as you pull into the Preserve from River Road.

Photo by Marv Anne Borge



Thin-leaved sunflower *Helianthus decapetalus*. Thin-leaved sunflower is a landscaper's dream since it grows in wet shaded areas. As the species name implies, this gorgeous yellow sunflower usually has 10 petals (ray flowers) that surround hundreds of yellow disk flowers. Keep an eye on this lovely native as it attracts an array of pollinators including bees, wasps, flies, butterflies, beetles and some specialty bees that only pollinate members of *Helianthus*. You can find it growing along Presidents Drive.

Photo by Mary Anne Borge



Woodland sunflower *Helianthus divaricatus*. As the name implies, woodland sunflower will thrive in dappled shade and provides a splash of bright yellow in darker areas of the landscape. The 2" wide flowers sit atop 2-6' stems and hold smooth, sessile or short stalked leaves. This combination helps distinguish woodland sunflower from other members of the genus. *Helianthus* is from the Greek helios meaning sun and anthos meaning flower.



Turtlehead *Chelone glabra*. *Chelone* is Greek for turtle, which references the flower's resemblance to a turtle's head. *Glabra* is Latin for smooth, referring to the fact that turtlehead lacks any hairs. The white flowers are borne on stiff, erect spikes and invite bumblebees to visit since they are large and strong enough to pry open the flower. Turtlehead is the caterpillar food plant for the Baltimore checkerspot butterfly. Find it growing at the new pond and along the fence in the lower part of the meadow just as you pull into the Preserve.