

Path of the Flood Trail: Self-Guided Tree & Wildflower Tour

Wildflowers by bloom color

This tour was designed to help trail goers identify common and interesting wildflowers, trees, shrubs, and other plants along the Path of the Flood Trail. You will find photos, information, and fun facts about the trail's native and invasive species. Happy Hiking!

White

Common Name: Yarrow

Scientific Name: *Achillea millefolium*

Habitat: Dry soils in full to part sun

Characteristics: Common yarrow is unique because it is a mix of both native and introduced species and their cultivars. It is a member of the Aster family. The leaves are made up of many tiny leaflets along a midrib. This gives the plant an easily identifiable fern or lace-like appearance. Yarrow's white flowers can be dried and used in arrangements and its colorful cultivars are popular garden plants.



Common Name: Flat-topped Aster

Scientific Name: *Doellingeria umbellata*

Habitat: Wet to moist sandy soils in full to part sun

Characteristics: Flat-topped aster is sometimes called parasol white top because it forms a large umbrella-like top that can reach one foot wide. It is one of the first late summer asters to bloom. A perennial, it is native to much of the Eastern U.S., Midwest, and Canada. The pollen and nectar of its white flowers feed a variety of insects. The caterpillar of Harris' Checkerspot, an uncommon butterfly, feeds specifically on flat-topped aster. Birds and small mammals eat the plant's seeds and foliage.

Common Name: Boneset

Scientific Name: *Eupatorium perfoliatum*

Habitat: High moisture soils with all types of light

Characteristics: Boneset is a native perennial of the Aster family. It grows three to six feet in height, usually in damp prairies, woods and bogs. Boneset gets its name from the belief that the plant composition of the stem growing through the leaf would be useful in setting bones. It was also used to make tea for the treatment of colds, coughs, and constipation. The tiny white flowers of Boneset attract birds and butterflies.



Common Name: White Snakeroot

Scientific Name: *Eupatorium rugosom* syn. *Ageratina altissima*

Habitat: Dry or moist soil with full sun

Characteristics: White Snakeroot is a nonaromatic plant that grows from 1 to 3 feet tall. It has flat-topped clusters of small fuzzy white flowers and less coarsely toothed leaves. The plant prefers full sun but will tolerate shade as long as it is in warmer climates. Snakeroot is also part of the Aster family.



Common Name: Virginia Jumpseed

Scientific Name: *Polygonum virginianum* syn.
Persicaria virginiana

Habitat: Moist to wet soils in shade to part shade

Characteristics: Virginia Jumpseed is a perennial that is native to the Eastern U.S. Small white flowers appear in early fall. This member of the buckwheat family reproduces by seed. The seeds jump off when touched, giving the plant its common name.

Common Name: Pokeweed, Inkberry

Scientific Name: *Phytolacca americana*

Habitat: High moisture soil with partial shade

Characteristics: White flowers appear on this native perennial in late summer. It is often found along roadsides and in clearings, open woods, and disturbed sites. Although parts of the plant are used in folk medicines, the berries of this plant should be considered poisonous and potentially lethal. Early colonists used the berry juice as a dye.



Common Name: Mayapple, May Apple

Scientific Name: *Podophyllum peltatum*

Habitat: Deciduous forests, shaded fields, and riverbanks

Characteristics: A rhizomatous plant native to the Eastern half of the country, Mayapple gets its name from the May blooming of its apple-blossom-like flower. The plant produces a soft yellow fruit that is mature in August or September. The fruit is edible once ripe and can be used in jams and jellies because of its lemon-like flavor. Although the ripe fruit is edible, the unripe fruit, leaves, and roots are highly toxic.



Common Name: Panicked Aster, White Panicle Aster

Scientific Name: *Symphyotrichum lanceolatum* syn. *Aster lanceolatus*

Habitat: Damp thickets, fields

Characteristics: A member of the aster family, Panicked Aster is native to much of the US and Canada. It can form colonies by rhizome and stands two to five feet tall. This autumn bloomer has white to pale purple flowers with a yellow disk that often turns purple as the season progresses. The Iroquois used a subspecies of Panicked Aster to treat fevers.



Orange & Yellow

Common Name: Jewelweed, Spotted Touch-me-not

Scientific Name: *Impatiens capensis*

Habitat: Moist and wet areas, such as swamps, marshes, and floodplains

Characteristics: Flowers in July through August. Produces a delicate pale green fruit that will burst upon contact, leading to the name touch-me-not. Is naturally water repellent, causing water to bead on leaves like small jewels. Jewelweed is a main source of food for the Ruby-throated Hummingbird. It was also used as a medicinal herb by Native Americans for afflictions of the skin, like poison ivy. A similar species, Yellow Jewelweed (*Impatiens pallida*) is often seen growing alongside it.



Common Name: Seedbox

Scientific Name: *Ludwigia alternifolia*

Habitat: Moist to wet soils in full sun

Characteristics: This Pennsylvania native is found in wet meadows, marshes, ditches, and depressions. Yellow flowers are short-lived but give way to a more interesting plant feature. Seedbox gets its name from the unique box shaped fruit. The plant is also called rattle-box due to the rattling sound produced by mature seeds when shaken. Always found in wet areas, Seedbox makes a great addition to rain gardens and pond edges.



Common Name: Fringed Loosestrife

Scientific Name: *Lysimachia ciliata*

Habitat: Medium to high moisture soils with part to full shade

Characteristics: Fringed Loosestrife gets its name from the leafstalks which are covered in spreading hairs. A mature plant can grow up to three feet tall and has five-petaled yellow flowers. This plant prefers wetland conditions and can survive seasonal flooding. Fringed Loosestrife blooms from June to September.

Common Name: Sweet Goldenrod, Anise-scented Goldenrod

Scientific Name: *Solidago odora*

Habitat: Drier soils with sun exposure

Characteristics: Leaves smell of anise when crushed. This plant can survive in very poor soil conditions, making it an easy to care for ornamental. The plant can be identified by its cluster of small yellow buds at the top of the plant. Goldenrod flowers from July to October. It spreads by rhizome and can grow up to five feet tall. Goldenrod is often used as a detoxifying agent in teas and tinctures. The Native Americans used the leaves and roots to relieve sore throats and toothaches.



Common Name: Wingstem

Scientific Name: *Verbesina alternifolia*

Habitat: Consistently moist soils in full sun to part shade

Characteristics: Late blooming wingstem is a native perennial in the Aster family. It grows three to eight feet in height, usually in woodlands, moist meadows, ditches, and along streams. The uniquely shaped seeds are attractive to birds. A variety of bees, beetles, caterpillars, and other insects feed on wingstem. The winged central stem gives the plant its name.



Pink & Purple



Common Name: Wild Basil

Scientific Name: *Clinopodium vulgare*

Habitat: Dry to average soils in shade to part shade

Characteristics: Wild basil is a native perennial in the mint family. Like other mints, it has square stems. It is covered in fine hairs, giving it a velvety or wooly appearance. The flowers can range from pink to purple. The leaves can be used fresh or dried for culinary purposes.

Common Name: Fringed Willowherb

Scientific Name: *Epilobium ciliatum*

Habitat: Moist and dry soils in full to part sun

Characteristics: Fringed willowherb is a native perennial that can be found in almost every state except the Deep South. Variety is key for this member of the Evening Primrose family. It can grow in a wide range of soils and the characteristics of the plant itself can vary greatly. The soft, tufted seeds of willowherb are carried by the wind and can sometimes be a nuisance to container gardeners.



Common Name: Joe Pye Weed

Scientific Name: *Eutrochium purpureum*

Habitat: Medium to high moisture soils with full sun to part shade, such as open woodland areas

Characteristics: Joe Pye Weed is a plant native to the Eastern and Northern US. It blooms pink and purple flowers from July to September. Joe Pye attracts butterflies and its fragrance is similar to vanilla. It can grow up to seven feet tall and is often used for bordering and ornamental plantings.



Common Name: Spotted Lady's Thumb

Scientific Name: *Polygonum persicaria* syn. *Persicaria vulgaris*

Habitat: Moist soils in full sun to light shade

Characteristics: Spotted Lady's Thumb is a non-native annual smartweed in the Knotweed family. It can be distinguished from other smartweeds by the purple "thumbprint" in the center of the leaf. This European plant is short, usually under two inches tall. It prefers moist, disturbed areas such as roadside ditches, drainage canals, vacant lots, and edges of cultivated fields, yards, and railroads. The foliage is a favorite of Japanese and Flea beetles.

Common Name: Purple-flowering Raspberry

Scientific Name: *Rubus odoratus*

Habitat: Medium moisture soil, large wooded areas

Characteristics: This plant of the rose family also has fragrant flowers. It can grow from three to six feet tall and produces edible red berries. It blooms from July to August. Its dark green leaves become pale yellow in fall. Purple-flowering Raspberry is relatively immune to pests and diseases, but attracts birds.



Common Name: New England Aster

Scientific Name: *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*

Habitat: Rich, moist soils in full sun to part shade

Characteristics: New England Aster is a showy native perennial. Purple daisy-like flowers with yellow centers bloom profusely in the fall. It grows three to six feet in height, usually in meadows, thickets and along stream banks. The Pearl Crescent and Checkerspot butterflies use New England Aster as a host plant. It is becoming increasingly available in nurseries and can be used in butterfly, cottage, and rain gardens.



Inconspicuous



Common Name: Sensitive Fern

Scientific Name: *Onoclea sensibilis*

Habitat: Moist loamy soils in shade to light shade

Characteristics: Sensitive fern is a native perennial commonly found in Pennsylvania forests. It is often seen in moderate and high quality natural areas such as deciduous woodlands, thickets, moist meadows, forested bogs and swamps, and shady seeps. Sensitive fern is easily identifiable and is the only plant in its genus. It is toxic to horses. Of particular note are the pale red fiddleheads which appear in spring.

Common Name: Clearweed

Scientific Name: *Pilea pumila*

Habitat: Moist to wet soils in light shade

Characteristics: Clearweed is an annual that is native to the U.S. This member of the nettle family looks similar to its cousin, stinging nettle, but lacks the often painful, stinging hairs. Clearweed has a translucent, watery looking stem which gives the plant its common name. It reseeds itself to create large colonies along streams, floodplains and poorly drained areas.



Common Name: Coltsfoot

Scientific Name: *Tussilago farfara*

Habitat: Moist soils in part shade to full sun

Characteristics: Coltsfoot is a succulent perennial of the Daisy family. Yellow dandelion-like flowers emerge in early spring before leaves appear. Because the flowers and leaves do not appear together, many people don't realize it is the same plant. The plant gets its name from the unique leaf shape which resembles a horse hoof. Coltsfoot can often be spotted covering roadside embankments, stream banks, and disturbed areas. A treatment for lung and throat ailments, it was introduced to New England by early European colonists.



Common Name: Broadleaf Cattail

Scientific Name: *Typha latifolia*

Habitat: High moisture areas with full sun to part shade, such as swamps and marshes

Characteristics: Cattail is native to North America, Europe, Northern and Central Asia, and Northern Africa. They are an aggressive plant that spread by rhizomes and will crowd out other surrounding plants. Cattail flowers bloom from June to July, and the flowers attract birds. Cattails are suitable for rain gardens and ponds because of their high water tolerance.

Vines

Common Name: Virginia Creeper

Scientific Name: *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*

Habitat: Average moisture soils in full sun to part shade

Characteristics: Often mistaken for three-leaved poison ivy, Virginia Creeper can be identified by its five toothed leaflets. It is a climbing vine which can reach fifty feet high. The leaves of this Pennsylvania native turn deep red in the fall. The dark purple-black berries are a food source for birds and mammals, but are poisonous to humans if ingested. Virginia Creeper can be found climbing hardwoods, pines, shrubs, fences, and rock walls.



Common Name: Bur Cucumber

Scientific Name: *Sicyos angulatus*

Habitat: Moist soils in full to partial sun

Characteristics: Bur cucumber is an annual vine native to the Eastern US. This member of the gourd family can reach twenty-five feet long. Long-tongued bees such as bumble and honeybees are attracted to its nectar. Its scientific name means “angular cucumber” in Greek and refers to the unique hairy star shaped fruit. Bur cucumber prefers floodplains and moist meadows and woodlands.



Common Name: Riverbank Grape

Scientific Name: *Vitis riparia*

Habitat: Moist to dry soils in full sun to light shade

Characteristics: Riverbank grape is a native woody perennial vine that can grow up to fifty feet long. This grape can be distinguished from other grapes by tiny hairs on the edges of the leaves. The dark violet grapes that ripen in late summer and fall provide food for birds and large mammals including bears, foxes, raccoons, and skunks. The leaves serve as cover and food for insects such as the Sphinx moths.

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