

# cup-plant

## *Silphium perfoliatum*

Kingdom: Plantae  
Division: Magnoliophyta  
Class: Magnoliopsida  
Order: Asterales  
Family: Asteraceae

### ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

### FEATURES

The cup-plant is a perennial herb. Its rough, hairy leaves are toothed. Each leaf may be up to one foot long and six inches wide. The leaf shape is triangular to ovate. Lower leaves have a stalk. The opposite, upper leaves surround the flowering stem, forming what appears to be one, large leaf. This structure makes a cup around the stem that acts to catch water. The stem is smooth and upright. This plant may grow to a height of four to eight feet. Its many, yellow flowers are crowded into a head that may be three inches wide. The outer flowers are raylike, while the inner flowers are tubular. The dry, hard seeds are ovoid, winged up to one-half inch wide and usually have two teeth at the tip.

### BEHAVIORS

The cup-plant may be found throughout Illinois. It grows in low areas along streams and ponds, in prairies, in wet meadows and in open woods. Flowers are produced from July through August. Cup-plant is an important food source for grazing animals of the prairie.



flower head



flower buds

### ILLINOIS RANGE



plants with flower heads



leaves and stems





### **Aquatic Habitats**

bottomland forests; lakes, ponds and reservoirs; rivers and streams;  
wet prairies and fens

### **Woodland Habitats**

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

### **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

black soil prairie; edge