

downy phlox *Phlox pilosa*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Polemoniales

Family: Polemoniaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Downy phlox is also known as prairie phlox. This perennial herb grows from slender roots. Its stems are upright and may grow to two feet tall. The hairy stems are sometimes branched. Leaves are arranged opposite each other on the stem. Each leaf is sessile and simple. These hairy leaves are narrow to lance-shaped and may be four inches long. Flowers are clustered at the stem tip. A single flower may be one and one-fourth inches wide. Each flower is attached to a thin, hairy stalk. Five, pink to light purple petals are united at the bottom to form a tube. The fruit is an oblong capsule, up to one-sixth inch in length.

BEHAVIORS

Downy phlox may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows in dry rocky woods and prairies. Flowers are produced from May through August.

A subspecies of this species, *Phlox pilosa sangamonensis*, the Sangamon phlox, is endangered in Illinois. It is native to central Illinois in forest openings, bluffs and prairies along a few miles of the Sangamon River, mainly in Champaign County. This area is undergoing rapid urban development, and only two populations of the plant are now known to exist.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie

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