

heath aster *Symphiotrichum ericoides*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Asterales

Family: Asteraceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Heath aster is also known as frost aster or wreath aster. This perennial herb's stem is covered with short, hairlike structures. The small, narrow leaves are linear to lance-shaped and hairy. These entire, simple leaves are arranged alternately along the stem. Flower heads are composed of white, ray flowers surrounding yellow, disk flowers. The flower rays sometimes appear to be pink. Hard, dry seeds are produced. Heath aster may grow from one to three feet tall.

BEHAVIORS

Heath aster may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows in dry to moist prairies and dry, open ground in woods and fields. Flowers are produced from July through October. This plant is important for binding soil in prairies. Heath aster flowers are pollinated by insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

coniferous forests; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; hill prairie

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