

New England aster *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Asterales

Family: Asteraceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

New England aster is a perennial herb with a short, thick, underground stem. The stems above the surface of the ground are erect and hairy. Stems may be solitary or growing in clumps. The rough, lance-shaped leaves have a heart-shaped base that clasps the stem. These simple, entire, hairy leaves are arranged alternately along the stem. Each leaf may be four inches long and about one inch wide. Many flowers are crowded into a head. The outer flowers are violet-purple and raylike, while the inner, tubular, yellow flowers form a disk. There are about 45 to 100 rays per flower. The fruit is dry, hard, dark-brown, ellipsoid and hairy, about one-sixth inch long. New England aster may grow from two to four feet in height.

BEHAVIORS

New England aster may be found throughout Illinois. It grows in moist ground, wet and moist prairies, wet meadows, along streams and in thickets. Flowers are produced from August through October.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; marshes; peatlands; rivers and streams; swamps; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; edge; hill prairie

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