

pale coneflower *Echinacea pallida*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Asterales

Family: Asteraceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

This perennial herb has stem and basal leaves. The lower stem leaves are lance-shaped, hairy, without teeth and with parallel veins. The basal leaves may be about eight inches long and one and one-half inches wide. Smaller leaves may be present along the stem. The large, purple or purple-pink flowers heads have both ray (usually sterile) and disk (fertile) flowers. The rays point downward. Each flower head is about one and one-half inches in diameter. The one-seeded fruit is dry and hard. Pale coneflower may attain a height of two to four feet.

BEHAVIORS

Pale coneflower may be found throughout Illinois. It grows in dry to moist prairies and open woods. Flowers are produced from July through August. After the rays drop off, the seed head turns dark brown in color. Pale coneflower is an important food source for grazing animals of the prairie. Its seeds are also a source of wildlife food.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

coniferous forests; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; gravel prairie; hill prairie

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