



# Native Plants of North Georgia

A photo guide for plant enthusiasts



Mickey P. Cummings · The University of Georgia® · College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences · Cooperative Extension



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# Native Plants of North Georgia

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This publication is intended to be a quick guide for plant enthusiasts of North Georgia. Each plant listing is accompanied by a photograph and a brief plant description. The description contains the common name, scientific name, leaf description, flower description, habitat and plant uses. The plant uses are listed for historical perspective. The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension does not recommend these plants for medicinal purposes.

Plants are grouped according to their bloom times. The bloom times listed are ranges of time. Plants will bloom at different times within the range due to elevation differences. A few native mosses and ferns are also listed at the end of this publication.

Do not remove plants from natural habitats for personal or commercial purposes unless they are being rescued from destruction. If you wish to introduce native plants into your garden, there are many reputable sources of seed as well as plants available in the nursery trade. Ask for plants that have been propagated in the nursery.

This publication is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Glenna Mae Cummings, whose legacy is my love of native plants.

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**BLOOD ROOT. *Sanguinaria canadensis***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 6 inches tall, single leaf and flower stalk.

**Leaves:** Single, three to nine lobes.

**Flowers:** Showy, white, solitary in early April, 8-16 petals.

**Found:** Rich coves.

**Uses:** Bright red juice in the roots was used as body dye by Native Americans. Alkaloid in the plant was used as an anti-inflammatory and antibacterial. Plant can be TOXIC.

**COMMON CINQUEFOIL. *Potentilla canadensis***

**General Characteristics:** Low stoloniferous perennial, forming mats later in the spring.

**Leaves:** Palmately compound, five leaflets 1½ inches long, toothed ¾ of the way from the tip. Rosette leaves are often evergreen.

**Flowers:** Yellow, ½ inch across, five petals.

**Found:** Dry woods and fields from Virginia to Georgia.

**Uses:** Antiseptic and astringent. Cherokees used this plant as a gargle for mouth ailments.



**ROBIN'S-PLANTAIN. *Erigeron pulchellus***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial herb, 6-20 inches tall, with branching limited to the flower head-bearing portion of the stem. In the *Composite* family.

**Leaves:** Basal leaves are in a rosette with a few lance-shaped, alternate leaves on hairy stems.

**Flowers:** The head is composed of yellow disc flowers surrounded by white ray flowers. One of the earliest-blooming flowers.

**Found:** Roadsides and stream banks in the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Plants were burned to rid houses of bed bugs and fleas.

**SPRING BEAUTY. *Claytonia virginica***

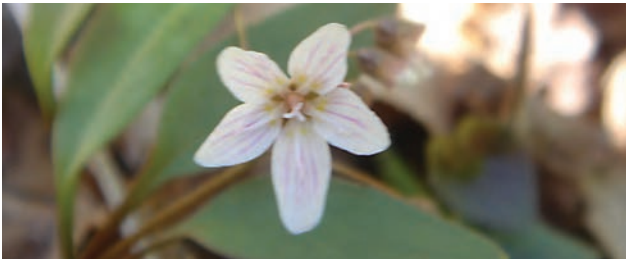
**General Characteristics:** Early spring perennial.

**Leaves:** Single pair of stem leaves 3 inches long, narrow blade merging with the petiole.

**Flowers:** Showy, white or pinkish, five petals, ½ inch long, pink-veined; borne in a loose raceme of four to 13 flowers.

**Found:** Mesic forests of the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Native American food source. Corms can be eaten like potatoes; raw, they have a flavor like radishes.





**STAR CHICKWEED. *Stellaria pubera***

**General Characteristics:** Up to 16 inches tall, spreading and hairy.

**Leaves:** Opposite, lanceolate, bright green, 3½ inches long.

**Flowers:** White, five petals so deeply notched they appear as 10 sepals.

**Found:** Rich woods and shaded bluffs from New York to Florida and west to Illinois.

**Uses:** Native Americans used a stem and root tea with Yellow Lady's Slipper to expel worms in children.

**TOOTHWORT. *Dentaria diphylla***

**Leaves:** Evergreen with three broad, toothed leaflets.

**Flowers:** Off-white flowers turn pinkish with age.

**Found:** Rich wooded slopes of the Appalachian Mountains.

**Uses:** Pepper-flavored roots add flavor to salads. Native Americans used this plant as a gargle for sore throats.



**TROUT LILY. *Erythronium americanum***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 6-9 inches tall, colonial.

**Leaves:** Two leaves, opposite, green with mottled purple-brown, 4-6 inches long.

**Flowers:** Yellow, often red-spotted on the inside; solitary and nodding.

**Found:** Rich woods from Canada to Georgia.

**Uses:** Native Americans used root teas to break fever and used juice from crushed leaves to heal wounds.



**BLUE COHOSH. *Caulophyllum thalictroides***

**General Characteristics:** Smooth perennial, 12-36 inches tall.

**Leaves:** A single, three-ternately compound leaf above the middle of the stem, with one smaller but similar compound leaf just below the flower.

**Flowers:** Yellow-green, ½ inch wide with one to three flower clusters.

**Found:** Rich woods from the northeastern United States to Georgia.

**Uses:** Native Americans used a tea of the plant to facilitate childbirth. Cherokees used the plant for toothache. In the late 1800s the plant was used as a sedative.

**CAROLINA SILVERBELL. *Halesia tetraptera***

**General Characteristics:** Shrubs or trees grow up to 50 feet tall and up to 3 feet in diameter. Smaller branches have whitish streaks.

**Leaves:** Deciduous and oblong, ovate to elliptic shapes, about 6 inches long.

**Flowers:** White, bell-shaped, four-lobed.

**Found:** Southern Appalachian Mountains on rich soils along streams and wooded slopes.



## COMMON BLUE VIOLET. *Viola sororia*

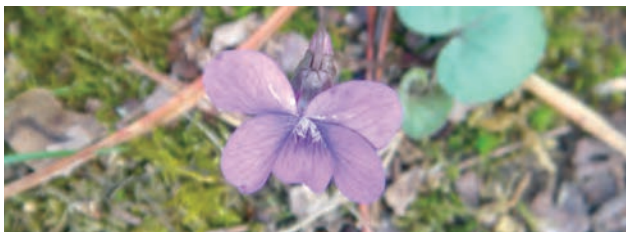
**General Characteristics:** Smooth, stemless perennial.

**Leaves:** Basal, ovate or broadly heart-shaped, 2-4 inches long, hairy.

**Flowers:** Blue-violet to white with a white center, 1 inch across, five petals.

**Found:** Woodlands and thickets across the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Cherokees used a root tea as a pre-plant soak for corn to repel insects; tea was also used as a cough medicine.



## DOLL'S EYE, WHITE BANE BERRY.

### *Actaea pachypoda*

**General Characteristics:** An aromatic perennial herb growing up to 3 feet tall.

**Leaves:** Large, twice to thrice compound, having long petioles. The largest leaves may have more than 20 lobed leaflets.

**Flowers:** Small and white with four to 10 petals about ¼ inch long. Flowers are in a raceme at the end of the stalk.

**Fruits:** Round, white berries with many seeds about ⅓ inch across with a single dot at the tip. The berry is on a thick red pedicel.

**Found:** Rich woods throughout the United States and Canada.

**Uses:** Berries are poisonous. When crushed and mixed with alum, berries produce a black dye.



### **DUTCHMAN'S BREECHES. *Dicentra cucullaria***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, growing up to 12 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Basal, long stalked, 2-4 inches long and wide, compound and finely divided.

**Flowers:** White, hanging, no fragrance, approximately ½ inch long; two outer petals have long spurs.

**Found:** Rich woods from Canada to north Georgia.

**Uses:** Native Americans used the plant as a love charm. A poultice of the leaves was used to treat skin ailments, and the plant has also been used to treat tremors.



### **DWARF CRESTED IRIS. *Iris cristata***

**General Characteristics:** Low-growing perennial, 4-6 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Light green, broad, linear, 4-8 inches long, 1 inch wide.

**Flowers:** Showy, pale to deep lavender, 3 inches wide, with three unmarked petals and three sepals with a yellow crest bordered with white.

**Found:** Moist hillsides and ledges from Pennsylvania to Georgia and west to Missouri.

**Uses:** Cherokees drank a tea made from this plant for improvement of the liver and made a salve for ulcers.



**FALSE SOLOMON'S SEAL. *Smilacina racemosa***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 16-20 inches tall, unbranched, arching stems.

**Leaves:** Alternate in two rows, sessile, 3-6 inches long, prominent parallel veins, hairy beneath.

**Flowers:** White, located on the terminal end of the stem in a panicle, 2-6 inches long.

**Found:** Moist, deciduous woods from Canada to Georgia.

**Uses:** Native Americans ate the berries in small quantities. Cherokees used this plant as an eye wash.

**FOAM FLOWER. *Tiarella cordifolia***

**General Characteristics:** Erect perennial, 8-20 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Basal, long-stalked, heart-shaped, 2-4 inches long, three to five lobed, palmately veined, hairy.

**Flowers:**  $\frac{1}{3}$  inch across, five white or pinkish petals, 10 long stamens borne on a terminal raceme on a leafless stalk.

**Found:** Rich woods in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

**Uses:** Native Americans used the leaves to treat burns and skin ailments; also, the leaves were made into tea to treat mouth and eye ailments.



## **GOLDENSEAL. *Hydrastis canadensis***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial herb approximately 12 inches tall, from a yellow rhizome.

**Leaves:** A single basal leaf with two more leaves near the top of the stem. Leaves are 5-7 inches wide with palmate veins and deep lobes. Leaves are wrinkled during flowering.

**Flowers:** Solitary, ½ inch wide, petals absent, three greenish-white sepals with numerous white stamens.

**Found:** Rich woodlands from the northeastern United States to Georgia.

**Uses:** Native Americans used the plant to make dye. It can be used as an antiseptic, antibiotic and immune-system stimulant.



## **LADY'S SLIPPER, PINK. *Cypripedium acaule***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial with leafless flower stalks.

**Leaves:** Two, basal, opposite, 4-10 inches long, hairy, deeply pleated.

**Flowers:** Solitary, two lateral petals, yellow-green to purple-brown; the lower petal is a showy pink pouch.

**Found:** Acidic mixed conifer and hardwood forests from Alabama to Minnesota and Georgia to New York.

**Uses:** Sedative to treat nervous conditions.



**LADY'S SLIPPER, YELLOW.*****Cypripedium calceolus***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 12-18 inches tall, hairy stem.

**Leaves:** Alternate, usually three to five leaves, pleated, 4-8 inches long.

**Flowers:** Yellow, pouch-like, 1 inch long or more, one to two flowers.

**Found:** Open, moist deciduous woodlands and rocky slopes in the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Roots were used for nervous disorders.

**MAYAPPLE. *Podophyllum peltatum***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial herb up to 18 inches tall, usually in large colonies.

**Leaves:** 8-15 inches across, divided into five to nine segments; flowering plants have a forked stem with one leaf on each branch.

**Flowers:** Solitary, white, with six to nine petals on a short stalk arising from the fork of the stem.

**Found:** Moist woods throughout the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Ripe fruit can be used to make jam. Roots and leaves are poisonous. Extracted compounds from the plant are used to treat venereal warts and small cell carcinoma.





**MOUNTAIN LAUREL. *Kalmia latifolia***

**General Characteristics:** Large evergreen shrub growing to about 30 feet tall. Large groups of plants can form impenetrable thickets.

**Leaves:** Alternate, glabrous, elliptic to elliptic-lanceolate.

**Flowers:** Numerous in terminal corymbs, white to pink.

**Found:** Acidic soils, dry, rocky woods, slopes and stream banks.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant as an external wash to treat rheumatism.

**MOUNTAIN MEADOW RUE.*****Thalictrum clavatum***

**General Characteristics:** Tuberos roots, perennial, less than 10 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Basal leaves are divided into nine rounded, toothed leaflets; upper leaves are whorled with three leaflets per whorl; tips have three shallow lobes.

**Flowers:** Flowers lack petals. Parts are not discernable with the naked eye.

**Found:** Rich woods and seepage slopes of the Appalachian Mountains.



### PRICE'S WOOD SORRELL. *Oxalis priceae*

**General Characteristics:** Showy perennial, 4-12 inches tall, hairy and much branched.

**Leaves:** Alternate, three shamrock-shaped leaflets.

**Flowers:** Five yellow petals with red near the base.

**Found:** Calcareous areas from Kentucky to Florida.

**Uses:** Cherokees mixed this plant with animal fat to make a salve for sores.



### SHOWY ORCHIS. *Galearis spectabilis*

**General Characteristics:** Showy, smooth perennial, 3-10 inches tall, flower stalks sharply ridged.

**Leaves:** Basal, nearly opposite, glossy dark green.

**Flowers:** Two lateral petals and three sepals that are pink to lavender; lip is usually white and in a raceme.

**Found:** Rich hardwood forests, close to streams or at the base of slopes, from Canada to Georgia.



### **SQUIRREL CORN. *Dicentra canadensis***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial herb growing up to 12 inches tall from a cluster of yellow corms.

**Leaves:** Basal with long stalks, 2-6 inches long and wide, compound and divided, typically one leaf per flowering stem.

**Flowers:** White with some pink tones, approximately ½ inch long and drooping. Similar to Dutchman's Breeches except spurs are more rounded. Flowers are heart-shaped.

**Found:** Rich woods from Canada to north Georgia.

**Uses:** Native Americans used the plant as a tonic to treat syphilis.



### **STONE CROP. *Sedum ternatum***

**General Characteristics:** A low, sprawling perennial growing on logs, rocks or bare soil.

**Leaves:** Whorls of three, flat, spatula-shaped, ¾ inch long.

**Flowers:** ½ inch across, four white petals and sepals.

**Found:** Rich forests and moist soils of the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Native Americans used the seeds in cough syrup.



**SWEET BETSY. *Trillium cuneatum***

**General Characteristics:** Yellow form is easily confused with *T. luteum*.

**Leaves:** In a whorl of three, mottled, ovate, 3-7 inches long.

**Flowers:** Maroon, yellow, bronze or green; solitary with a fruity fragrance. Petals are 1-2½ inches long, three times as long as stamens.

**Found:** From Mississippi to North Carolina.

**TRAILING ARBUTUS. *Epigaea repens***

**Leaves:** Clustered, elliptic, leathery, 1-4 inches long, rounded or heart-shaped at the base.

**Flowers:** Pink or white; corollas are five-lobed.

**Found:** Sandy, acidic soils and rocky slopes of the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant as a root tea with wintergreen for indigestion.



### TRILLIUM, CATESBY'S. *Trillium catesbaei*

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 8-20 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Whorl of three, solid green, 3-6 inches long.

**Flower:** Solitary, white or pink turning rose pink with age; three petals recurved with wavy margins, outward curved anthers with yellow pollen, nodding.

**Found:** Piney, upland woods from southeast Tennessee to southwest Georgia and eastern Alabama.



### TRILLIUM, LARGE-FLOWERED.

#### *Trillium grandiflorum*

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 6-20 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Whorl of three, solid green, 3-6 inches long, with prominent veins.

**Flowers:** Solitary, white turning pink with age; petals are 1½ inches long with visible yellow anthers.

**Found:** Moist, deciduous forests from Canada to Alabama and Georgia.



**TRILLIUM, PAINTED. *Trillium undulatum***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 8-18 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Whorl of three bluish- to coppery-green leaves, 2-5 inches long, pointed.

**Flowers:** Solitary, white with a red, inverted "V" at the base of the petal; three petals with wavy margins.

**Found:** Cool coniferous forests with acidic soils, Appalachian Mountain forests from Canada to Georgia.

**TRILLIUM, SOUTHERN NODDING. *Trillium rugelii***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 6-20 inches tall.

**Leaves:** In a whorl of three, solid green, 3-6 inches long.

**Flowers:** White, rarely pink or maroon; three petals, recurved, with purple anthers, nodding or below leaves.

**Found:** From the rich hardwood forests of Tennessee to the Coastal Plain of Georgia and Alabama.



**TRILLIUM, SWEET WHITE. *Trillium simile***

**General Characteristics:** 12-20 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Whorl of three, solid green, 4-7 inches long and wide.

**Flower:** Solitary, three petals, 1½-2½ inches long and forming a cup shape overlapping with leaves.

**Found:** Southern Appalachian Mountains.

**TRILLIUM, VASEY'S. *Trillium vaseyi***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 12-24 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Whorl of three, solid green, 4-8 inches long.

**Flower:** Solitary, maroon, 2-5 inches across, stalked and nodding, three petals somewhat to strongly recurved. (Photographed with flower erect.)

**Found:** Rich woods from the Blue Ridge Mountains of Tennessee to southwest Georgia and eastern Alabama.



**TRILLIUM, YELLOW. *Trillium luteum***

**General Characteristics:** Smooth, erect, perennial herb, growing up to 15 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Whorl of three, mottled in color, ovate to elliptic.

**Flowers:** Yellow with a lemony fragrance. Flowers lack maroon coloration on inner parts. Flowers have three petals, which are about 2 inches long and solitary.

**Found:** Rich woods in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

**WILD OATS, BELLWORT. *Uvularia sessifolia***

**General Characteristics:** Erect perennial herb 6-18 inches tall with smooth, unbranched stems.

**Leaves:** Alternate, having no stem, 1½-2½ inches long.

**Flowers:** Straw-colored with six tepals, ½-1 inch long, nodding.

**Found:** Deciduous forests in the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Native Americans and early settlers used the roots as food.





**WOOD ANEMONE. *Anemone quinquefolia***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, grows up to 8 inches.

**Leaves:** Basal leaves are three-parted (sometimes appearing five-parted); stem leaves under the flower are similar to but smaller than the basal leaves.

**Flowers:** Solitary, about 1 inch wide, petals absent, five white petal-like sepals.

**Found:** Rich woods of the southeastern United States.



## AMERICAN GINSENG. *Panax quinquefolius*

**General Characteristics:** Perennial herb growing up to 24 inches tall from a tuber with an unbranched stem.

**Leaves:** Single whorl of three to four palmately compound leaves with a long leaf stalk. Each leaf has five leaflets with stalks.

**Flowers:** Small, greenish-white to yellow-green with five petals growing from the top of the stem. Flowers usually stay below the leaves.

**Found:** Cool, rich woodlands in the mountains of the eastern United States and Canada.

**Uses:** Has many heralded curative properties, including longevity and overall wellness.



## BLUE-EYED GRASS. *Sisyrinchium species*

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 4-16 inches tall, grass-like.

**Leaves:** Basal, light green, linear, smooth, iris-like, 3-10 inches long, shorter than flower stalks.

**Flowers:** Pale blue, ½ inch wide with a yellow center.

**Found:** Low, wet places.

**Uses:** Cherokees cooked and ate this plant as greens to improve digestive regularity.



**FIRE PINK. *Silene virginica***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 12-30 inches tall with sticky stems.

**Leaves:** Basal leaves form a rosette, and stem leaves are opposite, lance-shaped, 2-6 inches long and narrow.

**Flowers:** Scarlet red with five narrow and notched petals.

**Found:** Open woods from New Jersey to Georgia and elevations from 1,500 to 2,500 feet.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant as a worm expellant.

**FLAME AZALEA.*****Rhododendron calendulaceum***

**General Characteristics:** An upright, nonstolon-producing shrub growing up to 15 feet tall.

**Leaves:** Oblong to almost lanceolate with fine hairs on the surface.

**Flowers:** Appear with or shortly after leaves in clusters of five to seven. Orange to yellow with funnel-shaped corolla. Filaments are also yellow to orange.

**Found:** Dry, open woods on west-facing slopes from Pennsylvania to Georgia.



## JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT, INDIAN TURNIP.

### *Arisaema triphyllum*

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 12-36 inches tall, coming from a corm.

**Leaves:** Palmately divided, one to two leaves, compound with three ovate leaflets, up to 6 inches long.

**Flowers:** Small, male and female flowers on the same plant; inflorescence is a club-shaped fleshy spike, with flowers at the base and a slender tip (Jack) encircled by a leaf-like bract with a hood over the spike to form the pulpit. Fruits are bright red berries.

**Found:** Rich, moist woods and stream banks throughout the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Native Americans ate the cooked roots. If eaten raw, the roots cause a severe burning reaction from calcium oxalate crystals.



## PARTRIDGEBERRY, SQUAW BERRY.

### *Mitchella repens*

**General Characteristics:** Small, creeping evergreen perennial, stems root at the nodes, plants form mats on small banks in woodlands.

**Leaves:** Opposite, dark green, leathery, ½ inch long.

**Flowers:** Fragrant, white, trumpet-shaped; ½ inch long with four lobes; occur in pairs. Fruit is a red berry.

**Found:** Rich, deciduous woodlands and acidic soils from Canada to Georgia.

**Uses:** Berries are edible. Native Americans used the plant as an aid in childbirth.



**WILD COMFREY. *Cynoglossum virginianum***

**General Characteristics:** Unbranched, hairy perennial, 15-30 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Basal leaves are hairy, thick, 4-8 inches long; stem leaves are alternate and sessile.

**Flowers:** Light blue,  $\frac{1}{3}$  inch long, five lobes, raceme-like forked inflorescence.

**Found:** Upland woods in the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant as a wound treatment, for digestive disorders and as a mild sedative.

**YELLOW STARGRASS. *Hypoxis hirsuta***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 4-18 inches tall, easily confused with grass when not in flower.

**Leaves:** Basal, hairy, grass-like, 4-20 inches long.

**Flowers:** Star-like, yellow, borne on hairy stalks.

**Found:** Open woods and meadows, widespread across the central and eastern United States.

**Uses:** Cherokees made this plant into a tea for heart ailments.



## **FOUR LEAF MILKWEED. *Asclepias quadrifolia***

**General Characteristics:** Unbranched perennial, 12-20 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Lance-shaped, 2-6 inches long, middle leaves in whorls of four, upper and lower leaves smaller and opposite.

**Flowers:** Light pink, five corolla lobes with white hoods, in umbels, terminal or from the upper leaf nodes.

**Found:** Dry upland woods from New Hampshire to Georgia, west to Arkansas and Minnesota.

**Uses:** Cherokees used this plant as a laxative and to make bowstrings.



## **INDIAN CUCUMBER ROOT.**

### ***Medeola virginiana***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 12-30 inches tall; stems have sparse clumps of hair.

**Leaves:** One to two whorls, lower whorl has five to 11 leaves, upper whorl (only on flowering plants) has three leaves; elliptic, 2-5 inches long.

**Flowers:** Greenish-yellow with six recurved tepals, three to nine nodding flowers coming from the upper leaf whorl.

**Found:** Mesic hardwood or hardwood mixed with coniferous forests.

**Uses:** Roots were used by Native Americans as a food source. Cherokees used a tea made from this plant for kidney ailments.



### **LOUSEWORT. *Pedicularis canadensis***

**General Characteristics:** Colonial, hairy, perennial, 6-16 inches tall; has a symbiotic relationship with a root fungus that helps it gather nutrients; do not disturb.

**Leaves:** Basal, alternate on the stem; dark green, lance-shaped, 2-6 inches long, pinnately lobed, fern-like.

**Flowers:** Pale yellow to deep maroon, may be bicolored; two-lipped corolla with upper hood; flowers appear whorled.

**Found:** Moist to dry woods from Canada to Georgia.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant as a love tonic, for bloody discharge from bowels, and to rid dogs and sheep of lice.



### **RAMP. *Allium tricoccum***

**General Characteristics:** In early spring, its tubers have the pleasant taste of spring onions, but a garlic-like strong odor persists for days after eating the bulb.

**Leaves:** Two broad leaves appear in April and disappear by June.

**Flowers:** Greenish-purple flower clusters appear after the leaves disappear.

**Found:** Moist, wooded slopes at elevations of 1,500 to 4,000 feet in the Appalachian Mountains.

**Uses:** Food source. Native Americans used a warm juice made from this plant to treat ear ache and ate the bulb to treat croup.



**RATTLESNAKE WEED. *Hieracium venosum***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 8-24 inches tall with mostly leafless stems.

**Leaves:** Basal, lance-shaped to elliptic, 2-6 inches long, purple-veined.

**Flowers:** Yellow, 15 to 40 petals, disk flowers absent.

**Found:** Dry, open woods from Maine to Georgia.

**Uses:** Once believed to be a cure for snake bite, the leaves were chewed and applied to the bitten area.

**SQUAW ROOT. *Conopholis americana***

**General Characteristics:** Yellow-brown perennial, 2-8 inches tall, root parasite, lacks chlorophyll.

**Leaves:** Brown, fleshy, scaly.

**Flowers:** White to yellow.

**Found:** Rich woods from Nova Scotia to Florida.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant as a source of food. It is also a favorite food of bears. Native Americans used the boiled roots as a purgative.





### **SWEET SHRUB. *Calycanthus floridus***

**General Characteristics:** Deciduous shrub 3-6 feet tall.

**Leaves:** Opposite with smooth margins.

**Flowers:** Solitary, purplish-brown or greenish-purple. All parts are aromatic.

**Found:** From Pennsylvania and Ohio to Florida and Mississippi.

**Uses:** Planted as an ornamental for its spicy fragrance.



### **UMBRELLA LEAF. *Diphylleia cymosa***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial herb, 12-36 inches tall, coming from a rhizome.

**Leaves:** Two leaves, 12-24 inches across with two deep lobes that are toothed and pointed; flowering plants have only one leaf.

**Flowers:** White, borne in clusters above the leaves.

**Found:** Rich woods, moist coves and seepage slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains from Virginia to Georgia.

**Uses:** Cherokees used the plant to make a tea to induce sweating and treat smallpox.



**WATER LEAF. *Hydrophyllum canadense***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 12 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Palmately-lobed leaf, mottled with splotches.

**Flowers:** Lavender flowers.

**Found:** Rich mountain coves from Canada to north Georgia.



### **BOWMAN'S ROOT. *Gillenia trifoliata***

**General Characteristics:** Branched perennial, grows up to 3 feet tall.

**Leaves:** Alternate, three narrow leaflets tapering at both ends; upper and lower leaves are similar, finely-toothed, 2-4 inches long.

**Flowers:** White, five narrow petals.

**Found:** Rich, acidic soils in the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Native Americans used the plant for hallucinogenic purposes.



### **SPOTTED WINTERGREEN, PIPSISSEWA. *Chimaphila maculata***

**General Characteristics:** Short perennial, 4-8 inches tall.

**Leaves:** One to three sets of alternate leaves that may appear whorled; evergreen, 1½-2 inches long, dark green with a white stripe down the middle.

**Flowers:** Nodding, white or pinkish, borne in clusters of two to five.

**Found:** Dry, acidic soils in forests throughout the eastern United States.

**Uses:** "Pipsissewa" is a Native American word meaning "break into small pieces." It was used by Native Americans to treat kidney stones.



**WOODLAND PHLOX. *Phlox carolina***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, growing up to 20 inches.

**Leaves:** Widely spaced pairs, 1-2 inches wide, lance-like, sharp-tipped.

**Flowers:** Pale blue to red-purple, tubular with five lobes, stamens extend beyond the flower.

**Found:** Rich, moist woods from Vermont to Florida.



### **BLACK COHOSH. *Cimicifuga racemosa***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial with flower stalks up to 8 feet tall.

**Leaves:** Basal with alternate leaves on the stem, having two to three ternately compound leaves with broad, sharp-pointed, coarsely toothed leaflets; terminal leaflet is three-lobed.

**Flowers:** ½ inch wide, petals absent, many showy white stamens, unpleasant odor, borne on a crowded raceme, 12 inches long.

**Found:** Rich woods in the Appalachian Mountains, from Canada to Georgia.

**Uses:** Has insect repellent properties; used as a treatment for snakebites, menopausal symptoms, labor pains, arthritis and as a gargle for sore throats.



### **GALAX. *Galax urceolata***

**General Characteristics:** Evergreen, perennial, stemless; sometimes called Skunkweed.

**Leaves:** Basal, circular to ovate, 2-4 inches wide; maroon in winter, green in summer.

**Flowers:** White in a tall raceme or spike with five petals.

**Found:** Moist to dry, acidic soils in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant in a poultice to heal wounds.



**PINESAP. *Monotropa hypopithys***

**General Characteristics:** A saprophyte that lacks chlorophyll, growing 4-10 inches tall. Grows in clusters much like Indian Pipe.

**Leaves:** Scales along the stem. Stem and leaves are yellowish-red.

**Flowers:** Nodding, yellowish-red and urn-shaped, about ½ inch long. Each plant has three to 10 flowers arranged along one side of the stem, whereas Indian Pipe has one solitary flower per plant. This plant is edible.

**Found:** Acidic soils under pines and oaks in the eastern United States and Canada.



**BUTTERFLY WEED. *Asclepias tuberosa***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, grows up to 24 inches tall, without milky sap.

**Leaves:** Alternate, 2-4 inches long, hairy, linear to lance-shaped.

**Flowers:** Orange to orange-red, borne in terminal umbels, 1-2 inches wide.

**Uses:** Used by Native Americans to treat lung ailments.

**CULVER'S ROOT. *Veronicastrum virginicum***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 24-60 inches tall.

**Leaves:** 2-6 inches long, lance-shaped, in whorls of three to seven, toothed.

**Flowers:** Many white flowers borne in several showy spikes, 3-8 inches long, coming from the upper leaf whorls.

**Found:** Wet to dry soils on roadsides and in meadows from Maine to Florida and Texas.

**Uses:** Native Americans made a tea from the roots to use as a laxative. Can be TOXIC.



### **DAISY FLEABANE. *Erigeron annuus***

**General Characteristics:** Biennial or perennial, hairy, 12-30 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Basal leaves are 2-6 inches long, lance-shaped and coarsely toothed; stem leaves are alternate with bases clasping the stem.

**Flowers:** More than 150 ray flowers; white, pinkish- or pale rose with a yellow disk.

**Found:** Widespread in North America.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant to treat menstrual problems, headaches and bad vision.



### **INDIAN PIPES. *Monotropa uniflora***

**General Characteristics:** Without chlorophyll, one to many translucent, waxy, white or pale pink stems, 3-9 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Scattered pointed scales in place of leaves.

**Flowers:** Solitary, urn-like, nodding.

**Found:** Rich, shady woods from Canada to the Southeast.

**Uses:** Native Americans collected the clear juice to use as eye medicine and sharpen vision.





## **PENNYROYAL. *Obolaria virginica***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 3-6 inches tall with an unbranched stem and thick leaves.

**Leaves:** Upper leaves are obovate, ½ inch long, wedge-shaped at the base and green with a purple tint. Lower leaves are opposite and bract-like.

**Flowers:** White to purplish-white and funnel-shaped.

**Found:** Rich hardwood forests from New Jersey to Illinois and south to Texas and Florida.



## **RATTLESNAKE PLANTAIN.**

### ***Goodyera pubescens***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 6-20 inches tall, hairy flower stalk.

**Leaves:** Basal rosette, evergreen, 1½-3½ inches long, white veins, netted with a white stripe down the center.



**Flowers:** White and hairy in a cylindrical raceme.

**Found:** Dry woods from Quebec to Florida.

**Uses:** Native American women believed that rubbing their bodies with this plant's leaves would make their husbands love them more. Leaves were made into a tea to treat colds and improve appetite.

**VIRGINIA DAYFLOWER. *Commelina virginica***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, coming from a rhizome, 12-48 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Alternate, lance-shaped, 4-8 inches long, 1-2 inches wide, bases around the stem.

**Flowers:** Three blue petals, opens for one day only; terminals bear a sequence of flowers; blooms from June until frost.

**Found:** Moist woods and ditches from New Jersey to Georgia.

**Uses:** Leaves are edible. Young leaves can be eaten raw; older leaves taste better cooked. Flowers can be used in salads. This plant was a Native American food source.



**JEWELWEED. *Impatiens capensis***

**General Characteristics:** 3-5 feet tall, colonial; the name comes from dew glistening on the leaves in early morning sunlight.

**Leaves:** Alternate, ovate to elliptic, 1-4 inches long; margins crenate to serrate.

**Flowers:** Orange-yellow, hanging from a hair-like stalk, sac-shaped flower with reddish-brown spots; flowers from June until frost.

**Found:** Creek banks and roadsides from Canada to Florida.

**Uses:** Native Americans used poultices from leaves and stems to alleviate poison ivy rash.

**RED TURTLEHEAD. *Chelone lyonii***

**General Characteristics:** Southern Appalachian perennial, 16-40 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Opposite, ovate to lance-shaped, 3-5 inches long, serrated margins.

**Flowers:** Two-lipped, reddish-pink, 1½ inches long.

**Found:** Rich coves and open stream banks in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant as an appetite stimulant.



**SHRUBBY ST. JOHNSWORT.*****Hypericum prolificum***

**General Characteristics:** A shrub growing up to 7 feet tall with sharply two-edged twigs.

**Leaves:** Narrow with petioles. Lance-shaped.

**Flowers:** Three to seven flowers in each cyme, small, yellow petals  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long with numerous stamens.

**Found:** In diverse habitats from wet lowlands to dry cliffs and ridge tops, from the northeastern United States to Georgia and Louisiana.



**APPALACHIAN OAK LEECH.*****Aureolaria laevigata***

**General Characteristics:** Hemiparasite on members of the White Oak family; 3 feet tall, smooth stems.

**Leaves:** Stem leaves are opposite; lower leaves are entire to serrate.

**Flowers:** Yellow, tube-shaped flowers with five lobes.

**Found:** From Pennsylvania to Georgia in the Appalachian Mountains.

**Uses:** Cherokees drank a tea made from this plant while fasting for four days to see their vision.

**BASIL BEE BALM. *Monarda clinopodia***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial herb, 18-36 inches tall with a smooth or slightly hairy stem.

**Leaves:** Opposite, 2-5 inches long, acuminate tip with shallow-toothed margins and a rounded base.

**Flowers:** Deep lavender to white, sometimes with purple dots. Corolla is two-lipped, with the upper lip narrow and erect without a tuft of hairs. Floral bracts are green to white.

**Found:** Moist woods in the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Fresh or dried leaves and flower heads can be used to make tea.



**CARDINAL FLOWER. *Lobelia cardinalis*****General Characteristics:**

Unbranched perennial, 24-48 inches tall.

**Leaves:** Alternate, lance-shaped, 2-6 inches long, toothed margins.

**Flowers:** Deep scarlet-red, 1½ inches long, borne in a showy raceme.

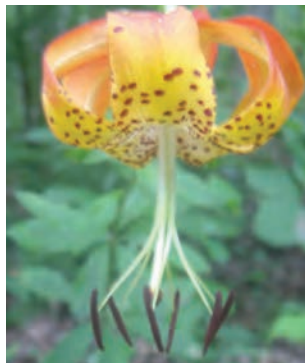
**Found:** Wet soil, stream banks and ditches from Canada to the southeastern and southwestern United States.

**Uses:** Native Americans used this plant as a worm expellant. TOXIC — can cause death.

**CAROLINA LILY. *Lilium michauxii***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial herb, 2-4 feet tall with a stout stem.

**Leaves:** In whorls of three to seven, fleshy, covered in waxy powder, oblanceolate.



**Flowers:** One to six flowers, orange-red fading to yellow in the throat, the lower half of the petals are purple-spotted and strongly recurved; stamens extend well beyond petals.

**Found:** Dry to moist woodlands along the Coastal Plain and southward from the mountains of Kentucky and West Virginia.

**COWBANE. *Oxypolis rigidior***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, grows up to 5 feet tall, stem has few branches and leaves.

**Leaves:** Alternate, pinnately divided into five to nine leaflets, 2-5 inches long, lance-shaped.

**Flowers:** Small, white, borne in compound umbels.

**Found:** Wet meadows and stream banks in the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Poisonous to cattle; there are reports of skin irritations as a result of handling leaves.

**CRIMSON BEE BALM. *Monarda didyma***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 30-60 inches tall with hairy nodes.

**Leaves:** Opposite-stalked, oval to lanceolate, 3-6 inches long, serrated along margins.

**Flowers:** Scarlet to crimson, two-lipped corolla, showy reddish bracts in terminal heads.

**Found:** Mountain woods and bottomlands from the northeastern United States to Georgia.

**Uses:** Colonists used the leaves as a substitute for tea, especially after the Boston Tea Party.



**GOLDENROD. *Solidago canadensis***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 2-7 feet tall, grayish and hairy stem.

**Leaves:** Alternate, sharply-toothed, narrow, lance-shaped, 3-6 inches long.

**Flowers:** Yellow, heads are plume-like, bell-shaped and in a showy terminal.

**Found:** Moist or dry open places from Canada to Florida.

**Uses:** Cherokees used this plant as a root tea to treat fever.

**IRONWEED. *Vernonia gigantea***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 3-10 feet tall, smooth stems.

**Leaves:** Alternate, simple, lance-shaped, 4-12 inches long; smooth above, hairy beneath.

**Flowers:** Purple, 13-30 heads in terminal corymbs.

**Found:** Moist woods, meadows and pastures from New York to Florida and west to Texas.

**Uses:** Native Americans used roots and leaves to make a tea used to treat pain resulting from childbirth.





**JOE-PYE WEED. *Eupatorium purpureum***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, 3-7 feet tall with a green, solid stem that is purple at the nodes.

**Leaves:** Three to four whorls, lance-shaped, 4-12 inches long.

**Flowers:** In heads of four to seven; pink to purple; inflorescence large, dense and rounded.

**Found:** Wet meadows and marshes in the eastern United States.

**Uses:** Widely used in the 19th century to treat kidney stones and fever.



**APPALACHIAN GENTIAN. *Gentiana species***

**General Characteristics:** Perennial, grows up to 20 inches tall, having erect, hairy stems.

**Leaves:** Opposite, lance-shaped, 2-4 inches long.

**Flowers:** Tubular, 1-2 inches long; blue, white or violet with blue or purple stripes.

**Found:** Open woods from Pennsylvania to Georgia.

**Uses:** Cherokees used this plant as a tonic.



### **RUNNING PINE. *Diphasiastrum digitatum***

**General Characteristics:** Evergreen perennial, nonflowering vascular plant.

**Leaves:** Scale-like, on branchlets organized into fan-shaped units.

**Fruiting Bodies:** Sporangia in cones up to 2 inches long, in groups of three to four.

**Found:** Most common in pine-oak forests in association with Pink Lady's Slippers.

**Uses:** The dry spores were used as flash powder in early photography.



### **SHINING CLUB MOSS. *Huperzia lucidula***

**General Characteristics:** Coming from short creeping and rooting stems. Erect evergreen stems grow to about 5 inches tall.

**Leaves:** About ¼ inch wide, shiny dark green, in six rows, lance-shaped.

**Found:** Moist woods, wet, rocky slopes and stream banks on acidic soils rich in humus; from Canada to north Alabama and Georgia.

**Uses:** Native Americans used a tea made from this plant for postpartum pain, fever and weakness.



**CINNAMON FERN. *Osmunda cinnamomea***

**General Characteristics:** Coming from a stout, short, creeping rootstock. Named for its large, cinnamon-colored fertile fronds.

**Leaves and Fronds:** Dimorphic and deciduous fronds can grow up to 40 inches long. The cinnamon-colored fertile fronds are produced in the spring and sometimes in the fall. Leaves are alternate, lance-shaped and deeply lobed. Leaf blades can be up to 20 inches long.

**Found:** Wet, acidic soil throughout eastern North America.

**EBONY SPLEENWORT. *Asplenium platyneuron***

**General Characteristics:** Coming from a thick, short, creeping rootstock.

**Fronds:** Fertile fronds are in central tufts and can grow to about 14 inches long. They are erect and deciduous. The sterile evergreen fronds can grow up to 5 inches long and lie almost flat.

**Stem:** Dark brown and shiny.

**Pinnae or Leaflets:** About 1 inch long. Alternate, oblong and sessile.

**Found:** Wooded slopes and open woods throughout eastern North America. Common throughout Georgia except for the southeastern Coastal Plain.



**MAIDENHAIR FERN. *Adiantum pedatum***

**Description:** Fern with horseshoe-shaped fronds; black and shiny stalk; blade with two equal divisions, each bearing pinnae on just one side.

**Found:** Rich cove forests and seepages around cliffs.

**Uses:** Native Americans used the leaf to make a hair rinse. Cherokees used this plant as a powder, smoke and snuff treatment for asthma; also used to relieve fever.

**MARGINAL WOODFERN.*****Dryopteris marginalis***

**General Characteristics:** Has a leathery feel and comes from a short, thick rootstock covered in large, light brown, shiny scales. Spores are kidney-shaped, prominent and marginal.

**Fronds:** Up to 24 inches long, leathery and evergreen.

**Leaves:** Alternate and deeply cut. Leaflets are blunt-tipped with edges shallow-toothed or lobed.

**Found:** Rocky, wooded slopes and rich woods from Canada to Oklahoma, northern Alabama and Georgia.



**ROCKCAP FERN. *Polypodium virginianum***

**General Characteristics:** Coming from a creeping, partially exposed rootstock with brown scales.

**FronDs:** 4-14 inches long, evergreen and produced singly along rootstock.

**Leaflets:** 11 to 18 pairs. Oblong, with a rounded to pointed tip. Winged at axis.

**Found:** Partially sheltered rocks and ledges in eastern and central North America. Very common in north Georgia. The farthest southern locations are Carroll County, Clarke County and Cobb County, Georgia.



- Alternate:** Leaf arrangement alternating along a stem; one leaf at a node.
- Anthers:** Pollen-bearing part of the stamen.
- Basal:** When leaves are at the base of the plant.
- Calcareous:** Calcium-rich soil.
- Chlorophyll:** The green pigment of the plant that traps light for photosynthesis.
- Corolla:** The inner whorl of the flower.
- Creeping:** Growing along the ground surface and producing roots at intervals.
- Crenate:** Margins with blunt teeth.
- Deciduous:** Leaves fall after completion of normal function.
- Disk flowers:** The central portion of the flowering head of many plants in the Aster family.
- Elliptic:** Oval, broadest in the middle.
- Evergreen:** Having foliage that remains green all year.
- Fronde:** The leaf of ferns.
- Hemiparasite:** Dependent on the host for water and minerals.
- Inflorescence:** The arrangement of flowers on the plant.
- Lanceolate:** Lance-shaped, longer than wide and broadest near the base.
- Lobe:** Leaf blade divided into parts separated by sinuses.
- Mesic:** Moist, well-drained soils.
- Mottled:** Spotted, alternating between light green and dark green.
- Nodding:** Hanging downward.
- Nodes:** The point on a stem where two or more leaves are attached.
- Oblanceolate:** Lance-shaped, broadest above the middle.
- Opposite leaves:** Two leaves at a node that are opposite each other.
- Palmately:** Looking like the outstretched fingers on your hand.
- Perennial:** Lasting for three or more years.
- Petals:** One segment of the corolla.
- Petiole:** A leaf stalk.
-

- Pinnae:** The first division of a pinnately compound leaflet in ferns.
- Pistil:** Female part of the flower, consisting of the stigma, style and ovary.
- Pubescent:** Covered with soft hairs.
- Raceme:** A simple inflorescence of stalked flowers.
- Rhizome:** Underground stem with nodes, buds and roots.
- Rich coves:** A mountain cove with soils high in organic matter.
- Rosette:** A circular cluster of leaves at or near ground level.
- Sepals:** A segment of the calyx, a part of the outer floral envelope.
- Serrate:** Saw-toothed margins.
- Sessile:** Attached directly to the stem without a petiole.
- Spike:** An unbranched, indeterminate inflorescence with sessile flowers.
- Sporangia:** A case containing spores; the reproductive mechanism of ferns.
- Stamens:** The male, pollen-bearing organ of the flower.
- Symbiotic relationship:** Two or more individuals of different species living in intimate association.
- Tepals:** A single flower petal. Used when the two flower envelopes, corolla and calyx, are indistinguishable.
- Terminal leaflet:** The end or top leaflet.
- Ternately compound:** Thrice-compound leaves.
- Tuberous roots:** Thick underground storage stems.
- Umbel:** A flat-topped, indeterminate inflorescence in which flower stalks arise from a common point.
- Vascular:** Various plants that are typified by a conducting and supporting system of xylem and phloem (e.g., ferns, cone-bearing and flowering plants).
- Whorl:** Three or more leaves at a node.
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