

NATIVE PLANTS OF BUFFALO BAYOU

MEET THE LOCALS: TREES



ACER RUBRUM VAR. DRUMMONDII

DRUMMOND RED MAPLE

MAPLE FAMILY *ACERACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

This towering plant has broad lavender and white fringed flowers atop a stout, leafy stem that can grow up to six feet or taller.

FUN FACT: The wide blooms of this flower act as a “basket” and are the perfect perch for pollinators.



QUERCUS ALBA

WHITE OAK

BEECH FAMILY *FAGACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

Long-lived shade trees with furrowed and ridged light gray bark and light green leaves with five to nine lobes.

FUN FACT: New twigs begin as a reddish color and fade to green, then gray as they age.



CERCIS CANADENSIS

EASTERN RED BUD

PEA FAMILY *FABACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

A large deciduous shrub or a small tree with a purplish trunk and iconic pink blooms blooming in early spring.

FUN FACT: When boiled in water, the twigs produce a bright yellow dye.



CELTIS OCCIDENTALIS

COMMON HACKBERRY

ELM FAMILY *ULMACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

Growing to a height of 60 – 100 feet, it has rough-textured bark and leaves that spread into a broad, often erratic canopy.

FUN FACT: Although commonly referred to as a “trash tree,” it produces dark purple fruits that are a valuable food source for a wide range of birds.

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MAGNOLIA GRANDIFLORA

SOUTHERN MAGNOLIA

MAGNOLIA FAMILY *MAGNOLIACEAE* | EVERGREEN

With a tall, straight trunk and conical crown of broad, leathery leaves, it produces creamy, cup-shaped flowers during the summer and fall.

FUN FACT: The blossoms open in the morning and close at night for multiple days before shedding their stamens and falling.



MORUS MICROPHYLLA

TEXAS MULBERRY

MULBERRY FAMILY *MORACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

A small tree with smooth, gray bark and oval-shaped leaves that produce dark purple berry-like fruit in the spring.

FUN FACT: Historically, the light colored bark of this tree was used to make amate or bark paper.



PRUNUS MEXICANA

MEXICAN PLUM

ROSE FAMILY *ROSACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

Known for its fragrant white flowers in the spring, it is characterized by satiny gray bark and long, narrow leaves.

FUN FACT: They are favorite hosts for moth and butterfly larvae, including Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterflies and Cecropia moths.



PINUS TAEDA

LOBLOLLY PINE

PINE FAMILY *PINACEAE* | EVERGREEN

This large, fragrant tree has a rounded crown of 6 – 10-inch needles on wide branches with gray, flaking bark.

FUN FACT: It is one of the fastest-growing southern pine species and is extensively cultivated for lumber across the southern United States.

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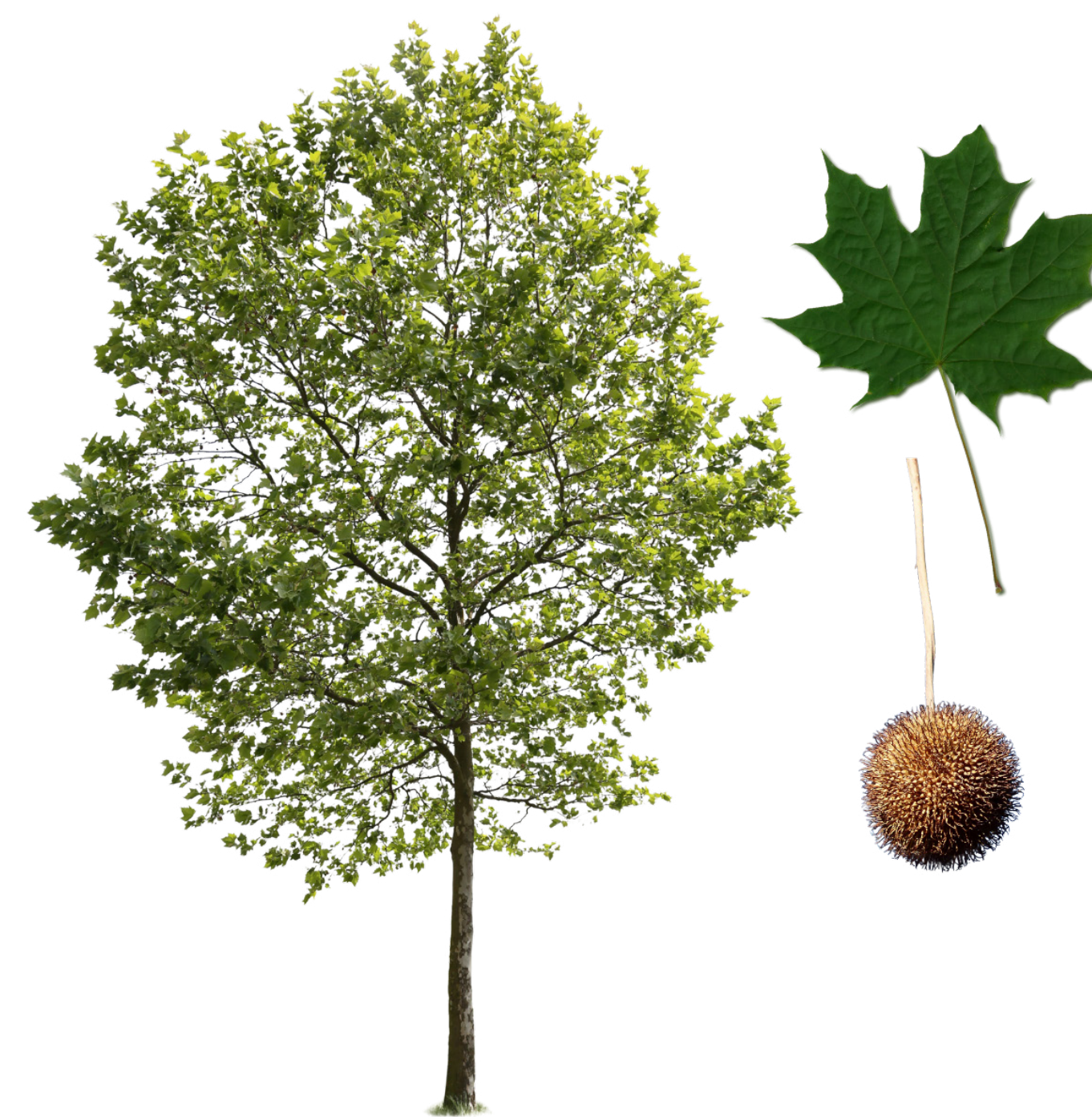
POPULUS DELTOIDES

EASTERN COTTONWOOD

WILLOW FAMILY *SALICACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

It can grow more than 100 feet tall with a large canopy of stout, forked branches and triangular leaves.

FUN FACT: In late spring, the trees produce seeds that spread on the wind and have tufty cotton-like hairs.



PLATANUS OCCIDENTALIS

AMERICAN SYCAMORE

PLANE - TREE FAMILY *PLATANACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

It has a large trunk with gray scaly outer bark over smooth, white inner bark and broad, light-green, maple-shaped leaves.

FUN FACT: Known as the "Buttonball Tree," it produces globe- or button-shaped balls of seeds.



QUERCUS MACROCARPA

BUR OAK

BEECH FAMILY *FAGACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

The open crown spans up to 100 feet wide, often wider than the tree's height, with densely packed 9-inch leaves with large, rounded lobes.

FUN FACT: They have the largest acorns of all native oak trees – up to one and a half inches wide – nestled within spiny, coarse cups.



QUERCUS VIRGINIANA

LIVE OAK

BEECH FAMILY *FAGACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

They have irregular, spreading branches that can touch the ground, waxy, unlobed leaves, and thrive in moist coastal soils.

FUN FACT: Although they can appear evergreen, they wait until new leaves emerge in spring before dropping old leaves all at once.

NATIVE PLANTS OF BUFFALO BAYOU

MEET THE LOCALS: TREES



SALIX NIGRA
BLACK WILLOW

WILLOW FAMILY *SALICACEAE* | DECIDUOS

It grows multiple trunks with furrowed bark that extend at angles from a single root and thrives in marshy, wet soil near bodies of water.

FUN FACT: These deep-rooted trees are valuable soil stabilizers – they are planted in dense clusters along Buffalo Bayou to prevent erosion.



TAXODIUM DISTICHUM
BALD CYPRESS

CYPRESS FAMILY *CUPRESSACEAE* | DECIDUOUS

Known as “wood eternal” for its decay-resistant properties, these towering trees feature feathery sage-green leaves and reddish-brown bark that buttresses at the base.

FUN FACT: When planted in poorly draining soil, the tree roots extend knobby “knees” above the surface of the water to increase aeration.

NATIVE PLANTS OF BUFFALO BAYOU

MEET THE LOCALS: WILDFLOWERS



CENTAUREA AMERICANA

AMERICAN BASKETFLOWER

ASTER FAMILY *ASTERACEAE*

ANNUAL | BLOOM TIME: MAY - JULY

This towering plant has broad lavender and white fringed flowers atop a stout, leafy stem that can grow up to six feet or taller.

FUN FACT: The wide blooms of this flower act as a “basket” and are the perfect perch for pollinators.



CASTILLEJA INDIVISA

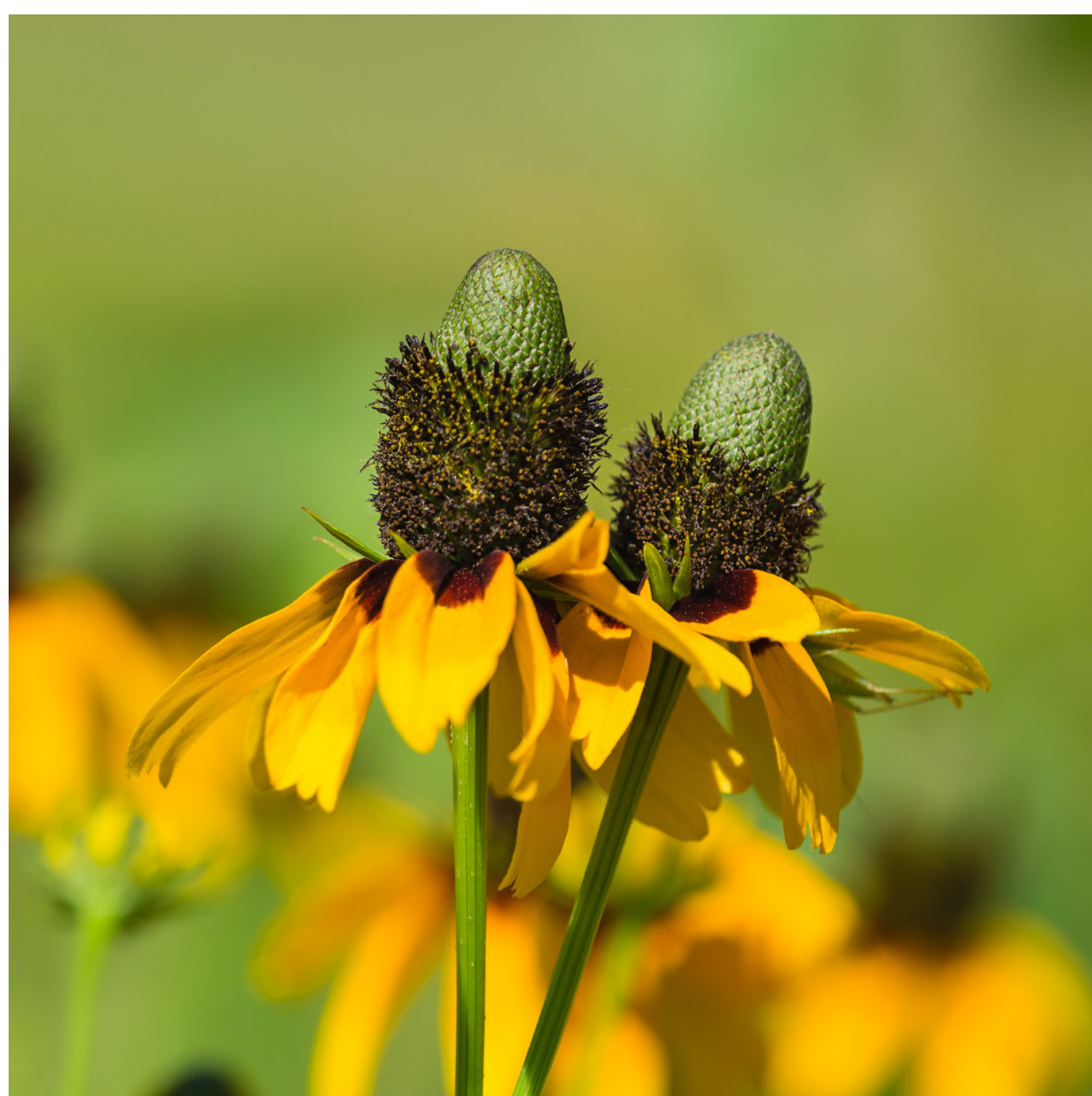
TEXAS PAINTBRUSH

FIGWORT FAMILY *SCROPHULARIACEAE*

ANNUAL | BLOOM TIME: MARCH - JUNE

This vivid wildflower can be found in open prairies and grasslands and are characterized by their paintbrush-like red to orange flowers.

FUN FACT: The roots of this plant touch other plant roots, especially grasses, to obtain essential nutrients.



DRACOPIS AMPLEXICAULIS

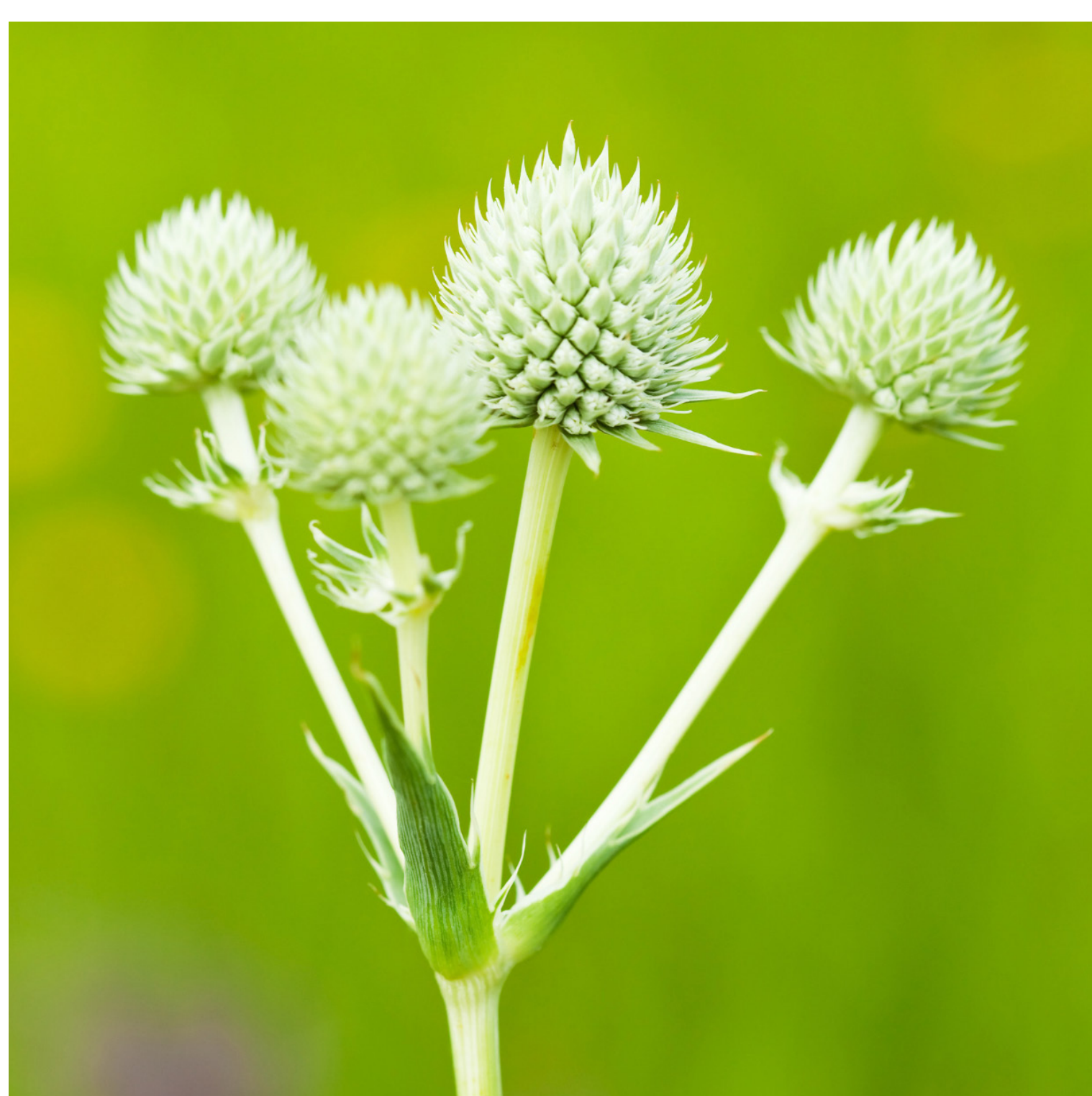
CLASPING CONEFLOWER

ASTER FAMILY *ASTERACEAE*

ANNUAL | BLOOM TIME: APRIL - JULY

This smooth-stemmed wildflower grows up to three feet tall with a single, conical flower.

FUN FACT: This flower’s petals droop away from the conical center and look like they are “clasping” the stem.



ERYNGIUM YUCCIFOLIUM

RATTLESNAKE MASTER

CARROT FAMILY *APIACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: MAY - AUGUST

This yucca lookalike produces ridged, thistle-like flower heads made up of small, white florets between pointed bracts.

FUN FACT: This unique plant is can be found in meadows as well as swampy conditions.

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MEET THE LOCALS: WILDFLOWERS



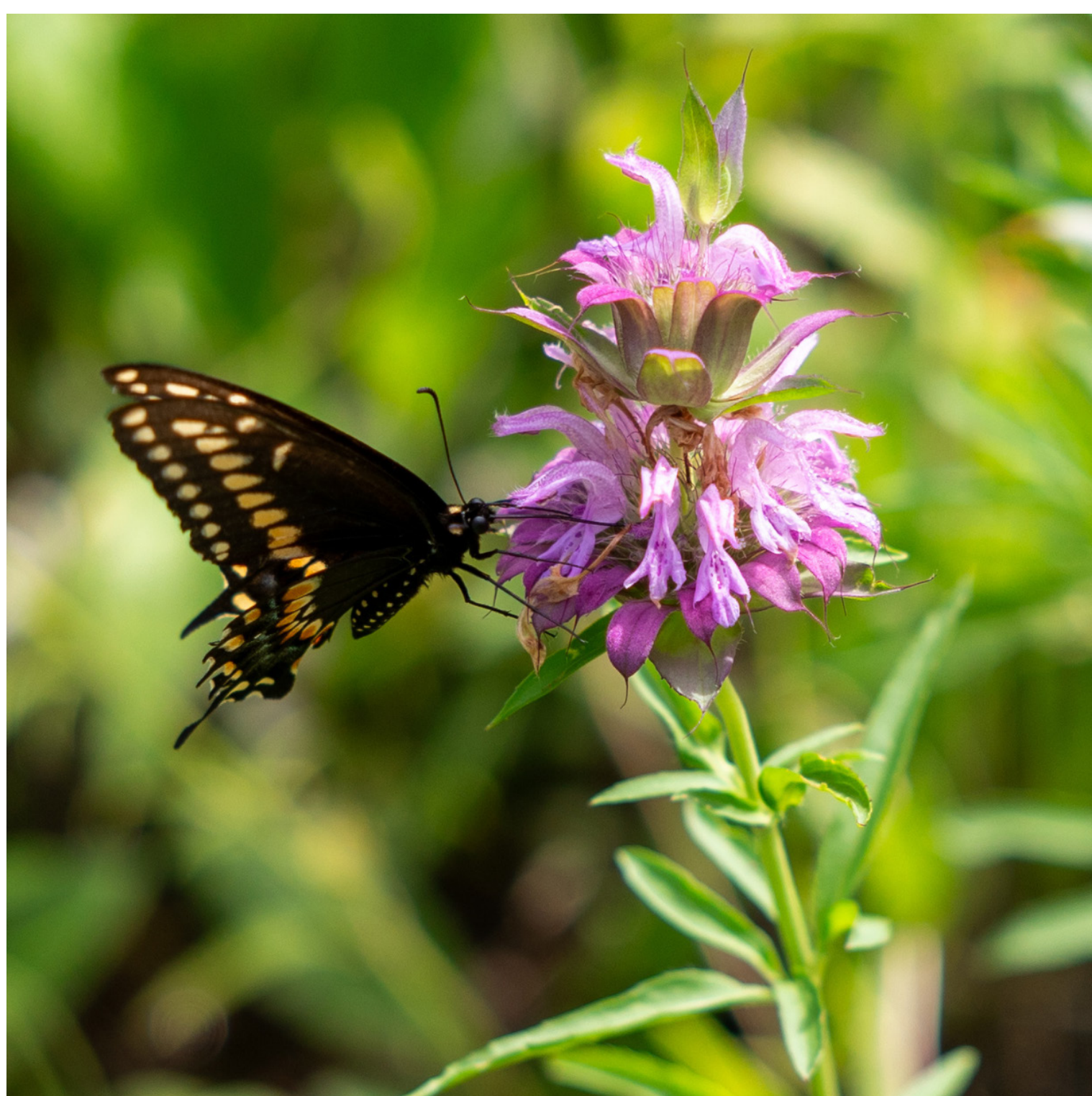
GAILLARDIA PULCHELLA
BLANKETFLOWER

ASTER FAMILY *ASTERACEAE*

ANNUAL | BLOOM TIME: MAY - AUGUST

Also known as a Firewheel, the red, orange, and yellow petals of this brightly-colored flower form a wheel shape with clefted edges.

FUN FACT: Though it is an annual, this wildflower reseeds itself rapidly after its spherical seedhead dries.



MONARDA CITRIODORA
LEMON BEEBALM

MINT FAMILY *LAMIACEAE*

ANNUAL | BLOOM TIME: MAY - SEPTEMBER

This aromatic wildflower grows whorls of tufty flowerheads stacked along its stem.

FUN FACT: With a high tolerance for hot and dry conditions, this flower blooms throughout the summer and sometimes into the fall.



OENOTHERA SPECIOSA
SHOWY EVENING PRIMROSE

EVENING PRIMROSE FAMILY *ONAGRACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: FEBRUARY - JUNE

Commonly known as "buttercups," these cup-like pink flowers have buttery yellow centers.

FUN FACT: The blooms vary in color based on location, ranging from dark pink in northern Mexico and pale pink in northern climates.



PASSIFLORA INCARNATA
PURPLE PASSIONFLOWER

PASSION - FLOWER FAMILY *PASSIFLORACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: MARCH - NOVEMBER

Extending up to 25 feet long, this deciduous vine has distinct 3-lobed leaves and iconic petals with crimped hair-like segments.

FUN FACT: A valuable host for many butterflies, such as the Gulf Fritillary, Zebra Longwing, and Red-banded Hairstreak.

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MEET THE LOCALS: WILDFLOWERS



LIATRIS SPICATA

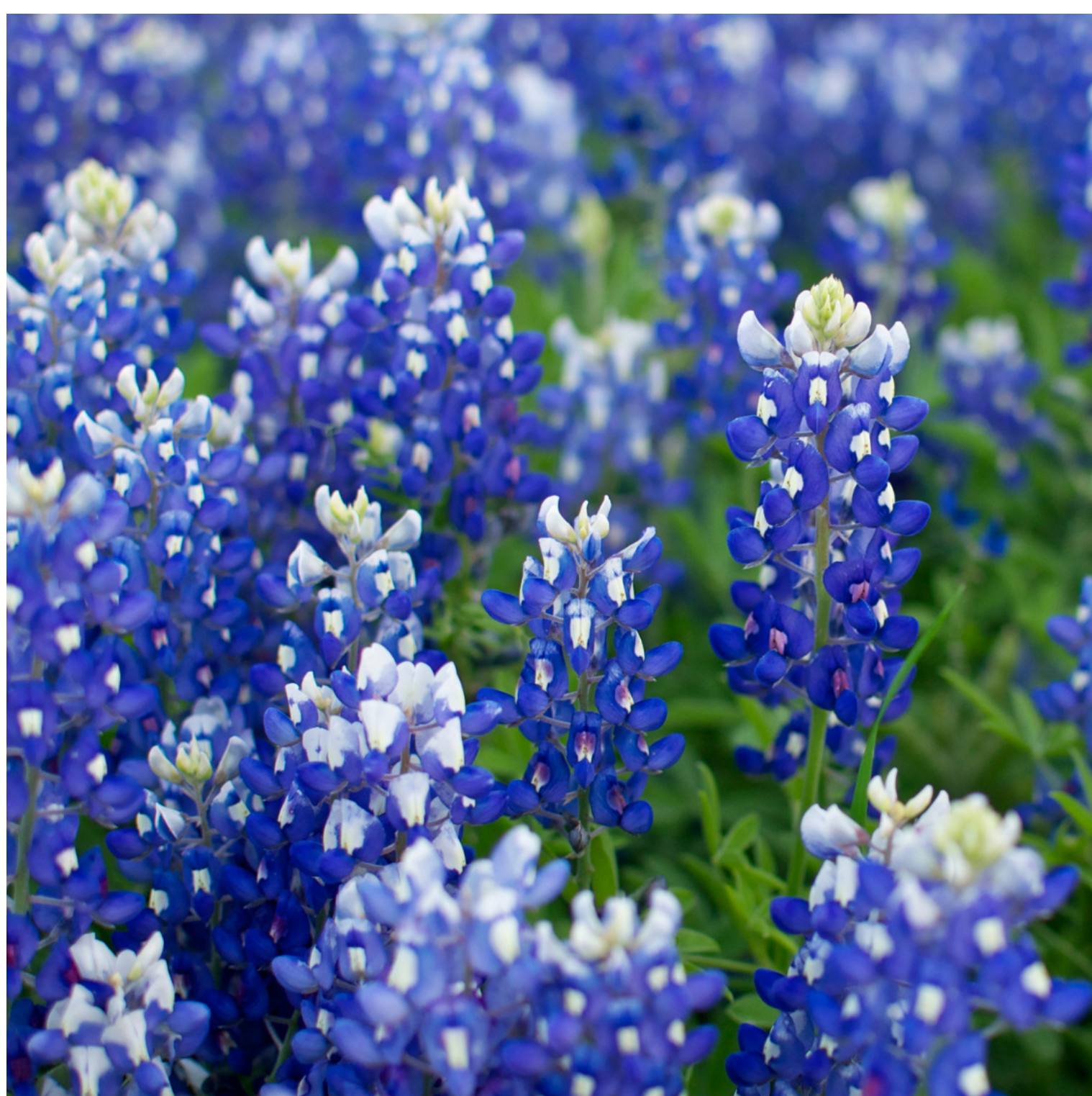
PRAIRIE BLAZING STAR

ASTER FAMILY *ASTERACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: JULY - SEPTEMBER

This slender flower can grow up to six feet tall with narrow, grass-like leaves and a tall spike of purple flowers.

FUN FACT: Described as an “inflorescence,” the vertical, dense flowerheads with protruding styles have a feathery appearance.



LUPINUS TEXENSIS

TEXAS BLUEBONNET

PEA FAMILY *FABACEAE*

ANNUAL | BLOOM TIME: MARCH - MAY

The iconic blue and white blooms of this flower are accompanied by light green clusters of leaflets, with usually five in each cluster.

FUN FACT: As the state flower of Texas, they are commonly seen in the Blackland prairie of central and north Texas.



COREOPSIS TINCTORIA

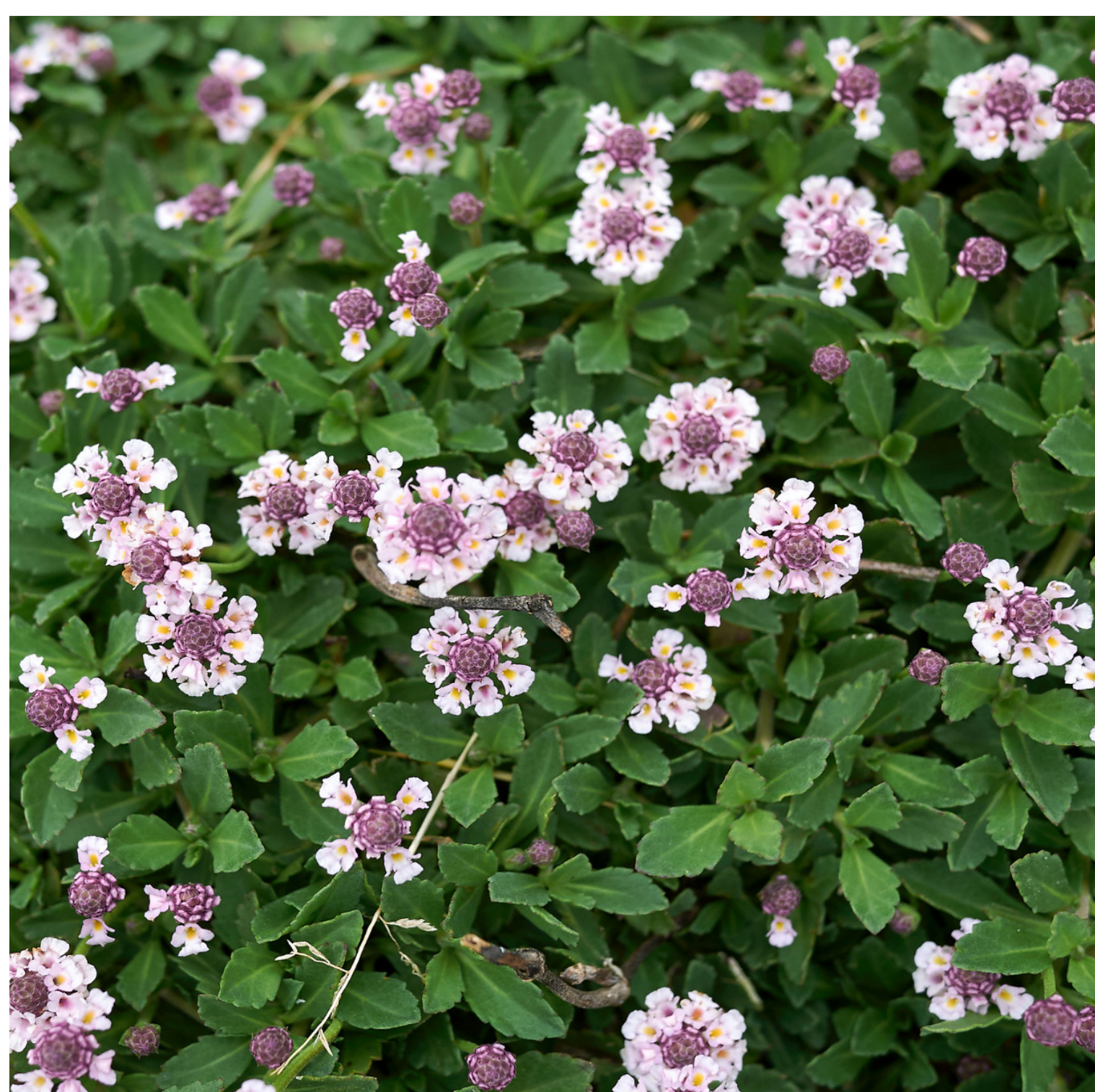
PLAINS COREOPSIS

ASTER FAMILY *ASTERACEAE*

ANNUAL | BLOOM TIME: APRIL - JUNE

Also known as Golden Tickseed, this slender wildflower is small but vibrant yellow blooms with maroon centers.

FUN FACT: The stems and flowers of this plant can be used as a source of yellow and red dyes.



PHYLA NODIFLORA

FROGFRUIT

VERBENA FAMILY *VERBENACEAE*

EVERGREEN | BLOOM TIME: MAY - NOVEMBER

This quick spreading vining plant keeps close to the ground and grows small white clusters of blooms that are pollinator favorites.

FUN FACT: This plant is an excellent ground cover and substitute for non-native grasses in residential lawns.

NATIVE PLANTS OF BUFFALO BAYOU

MEET THE LOCALS: WILDFLOWERS



RATIBIDA COLUMNIFERA

UPRIGHT PRARIE CONEFLOWER

ASTER FAMILY *ASTERACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: JULY - SEPTEMBER

A tall, slender wildflower with pale green stems sprouting fringes of leaves and a conical flower with drooping petals.

FUN FACT: The high, oblong center of this flower and its maroon and yellow petals are reminiscent of broad-brimmed hats of Mexico.



RUDBECKIA HIRTA

BLACK-EYED SUSAN

ASTER FAMILY *ASTERACEAE*

ALL | BLOOM TIME: APRIL - OCTOBER

The characteristic bright yellow petals and dark center of this flower sit atop a coarse stem with hairy, oval leaves.

FUN FACT: Depending on conditions, this flower can be a short-lived annual, a biennial, or a perennial!



SOLIDAGO ALTISSIMA

TALL GOLDENROD

ASTER FAMILY *ASTERACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER

This tall, bushy wildflower blooms in the fall with dense clusters of small, yellow flowers on the upper side of its branches.

FUN FACT: This flower is commonly blamed for hay fever, however, it is typically caused by pollen from Ragweed.



VERBENA HALEI

TEXAS VERVAIN

VERBENA FAMILY *VERBENACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: MARCH - JULY

This plant is characterized by its slender stems with delicate lavender blooms in loose clusters toward the top.

FUN FACT: The rough, hairy stem of this plant is actually square in shape.

NATIVE PLANTS OF BUFFALO BAYOU

MEET THE LOCALS: WILDFLOWERS



CALLIRHOE INVOLUCRATA

WINECUP

MALLOW FAMILY MALVACEAE

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: MARCH - JUNE

With showy, wine-colored blooms, this wildflower sprawls across the ground in prairies, open woodlands, and rocky shrublands.

FUN FACT: Its cup-shaped flowers open in the morning and close in the evening until they are successfully pollinated.

NATIVE PLANTS OF BUFFALO BAYOU

MEET THE LOCALS: GRASSES AND SHRUBS



CALLICARPA AMERICANA

AMERICAN BEAUTYBERRY

VERBENA FAMILY *VERBENACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: MAY - SEPTEMBER

This large shrub prefers shady conditions beneath tree canopy and can grow up to nine feet tall.

FUN FACT: Lavender blooms give way to bright purple berries, which are a favorite food source for wildlife like deer and quail.



ANDROPOGON GERARDII

BIG BLUESTEM

GRASS FAMILY *POACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: AUGUST - NOVEMBER

Native to coastal and tallgrass prairies of central North America, it has 3-pronged seedheads that resemble a turkey's foot.

FUN FACT: The roots can grow as deep as ten feet underground, stabilizing soils and absorbing stormwater.



CEPHALANTHUS OCCIDENTALIS

BUTTONBUSH

MADDER FAMILY *RUBIACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: JUNE - SEPTEMBER

With iconic globes of pincushion-like blossoms, this deciduous shrub has crooked branches with narrow, dark-green leaves.

FUN FACT: This swampy shrub thrives in the moist edges of swamps, ponds, and streams with clay, sandy, and poor-draining soil.



ERYTHRINA HERBACEA

CORALBEAN

PEA FAMILY *FABACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: MARCH - NOVEMBER

This low-growing thorny shrub produces vibrant, herbaceous stems with distinctive arrowhead-shaped leaves.

FUN FACT: Though this shrub's blooms look like long red beans, they are actually flowers and a favorite of hummingbirds.

NATIVE PLANTS OF BUFFALO BAYOU

MEET THE LOCALS: GRASSES AND SHRUBS



MUHLENBERGIA CAPILLARIS

GULF MUHLY

GRASS FAMILY *POACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: OCTOBER - DECEMBER

An ornamental grass that grows in large clumps and its 2 to 3-foot-tall spiky stems are topped with feathery, pink fronds.

FUN FACT: A great native choice for incorporating fall color into gardens or landscaping as it is a late bloomer.



CHASMANTHIUM LATIFOLIUM

INLAND SEA OATS

GRASS FAMILY *POACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: JUNE - SEPTEMBER

This shade-loving grass has iconic chevron-patterned oat-like seed heads that drape gracefully from slender stems.

FUN FACT: The leaves, stems, and seeds provide valuable food and nesting material for birds and grazing mammals throughout the year.



SORGHASTRUM NUTANS

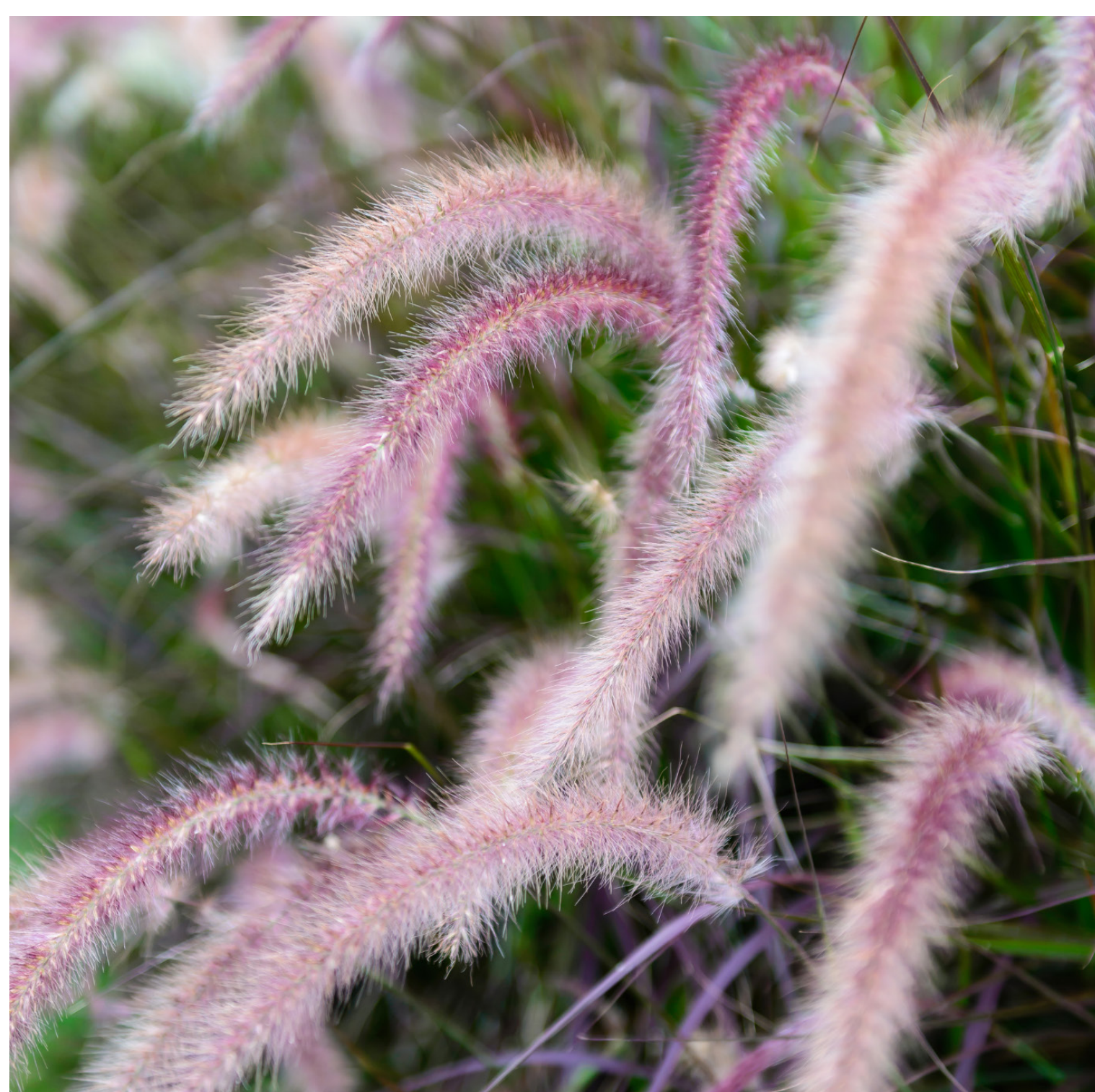
INDIANGRASS

GRASS FAMILY *POACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: AUGUST - OCTOBER

A tall, bunching grass that grows up to eight feet in height with broad, blueish-green blades and plume-like golden seed heads.

FUN FACT: It benefits from occasional controlled burns and flooding, adding to the richness and health of the soil.



SETARIA PARVIFLORA

KNOTROOT BRISTLEGRASS

GRASS FAMILY *POACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: YEAR - ROUND

Produces delicate, narrow leaf blades and prefers moist, salty habitats around marshes and slow-moving bodies of water.

FUN FACT: Though “bristle” is in its common name, the seed heads of this grass are quite soft and feathery to the touch.

NATIVE PLANTS OF BUFFALO BAYOU

MEET THE LOCALS: GRASSES AND SHRUBS



SCHIZACHYRIUM SCOPARIUM

LITTLE BLUESTEM

GRASS FAMILY *POACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: JUNE - DECEMBER

This fine-textured grass grows in dense mounds with slender blue-green stems often reaching over five feet in height.

FUN FACT: Like its name suggests, the color of this grass stem ranges from bluish to a vibrant reddish tan throughout the year.



SAMBUCUS NIGRA SSP. *CANADENSIS*

COMMON ELDERBERRY

HONEYSUCKLE FAMILY *CAPRIFOLIACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: MAY - JULY

Growing up to twelve feet tall, the limbs are fanned with elliptical leaves and bloom clouds of white flowers before fruit develops.

FUN FACT: Its berries attract birds and small mammals and can be used for medicinal purposes and to make jams, syrups, and wine.



SERENOA REPENS

SAW PALMETTO

PALM FAMILY *ARECACEAE*

EVERGREEN | BLOOM TIME: MARCH - JULY

This plant has tall stems with saw-like teeth and stunning fan-shaped leaves that can spread up to three feet wide.

FUN FACT: Often found in the understory of southern pine forests, this marshy palm produces delicate strands of white flowers.



SALVIA COCCINEA

SCARLET SAGE

MINT FAMILY *LAMIACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: FEBRUARY - OCTOBER

This showy native stays small in height but produces long stems with dark green leaves and vibrant red flowers.

FUN FACT: This shade-loving plant is resilient to the hot and dry climate and is a nectar source for bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.

NATIVE PLANTS OF BUFFALO BAYOU

MEET THE LOCALS: GRASSES AND SHRUBS



PANICUM VIRGATUM
SWITCHGRASS

GRASS FAMILY *POACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: AUGUST - NOVEMBER

This towering grass grows in large, dense clumps with small seeds clustered on feathery tops that can reach up to ten feet in height.

FUN FACT: This tall prairie grass provides important shelter for ground-nesting birds and mammals.



LANTANA URTICOIDES
TEXAS LANTANA

VERBANA FAMILY *VERBENACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: APRIL - OCTOBER

This shrub extends many branches from a central base with prickly stems and leaves ending in colorful clusters of red, orange, and yellow.

FUN FACT: This species can be easily confused with its non-native invasive cousin, Largeleaf Lantana (*Lantana camara*).



MALVAVISCUS ARBOREUS VAR. *DRUMMONDII*
TURK'S CAP

MALLOW FAMILY *MALVACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: MAY - NOVEMBER

Often grows as wide as it does tall and produces iconic bright red hibiscus-like flowers with whorled, overlapping petals.

FUN FACT: The berries of this shrub are edible with a slight apple-like flavor, though the large seeds make it difficult to eat.



ELYMUS VIRGINICUS
VIRGINIA WILD RYE

GRASS FAMILY *POACEAE*

PERENNIAL | BLOOM TIME: MARCH - MAY

Grows up to four feet tall, produces yellow blooms in the spring, and prefers sandy and loam soils of shaded riverbanks and open prairies.

FUN FACT: Birds and small mammals forage for the seeds of this grass for food and nesting material.