

WILDFLOWERS OF MINNESOTA- FRIEND OR FOE?



Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium* spp.)
Blue-eyed grass photograph
Information: Foster, 199 and Tekiela, 9

Light green, delicate members of the Iris Family up to about a foot tall with grass-like leaves. Star-like flowers about 1/2 inch wide with blue tepals (petals and sepals that look alike) and a yellow center. Fruit is a small, round capsule. Several species found in prairies. Blooms in May-June.

Medicinal: American Indians used the root tea for diarrhea in children: the plant tea was used for worms, stomachaches- some species were used as laxatives.



Blue giant hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*)
Blue giant hyssop photograph; ? MN DNR, G. N. Rysgaard
Information: Foster, 213-214 and Tekiela, 41

Perennial mint to 3' tall growing in dry forests and grassy areas. Small bluish flowers clustered in a spike; blooms in July-August. As with all mints, it has a square stem. Leaves with fine hairs underneath.

Medicinal: The root is used medicinally by American Indians. Leaf tea used for fevers, colds and coughs. The tea induces sweating and strengthens a weakened heart.



Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*)
photograph: Tekiela, 296
Information: Tekiela, 297

Large biennial, grows 1-3' tall in dry, sunny, disturbed soil. White flowers bloom in summer and fall and grow in flat-topped clusters. Leaves are fern-like.

Medicinal: Queen Anne's lace is also called Wild Carrot as it is thought to be an ancestor of the common garden carrot. It's taproot can be dug up, roasted and ground as a coffee substitute.

WARNING: Queen Anne's Lace is sometimes confused with Water Hemlock



Water Hemlock (*Cicuta maculata*)
photograph: Tekiela, 292
Information: Foster, 70-71, Tekiela, 293

Large perennial grows 3-6' tall in sunny, wet ditches and wet meadows. Flowers are white flat clusters that bloom in summer and fall. Leaves are compound with lower leaves being larger than upper leaves.

Water Hemlock is a member of the Carrot family, its long taproot smells and tastes like carrot. **HOWEVER, this is the MOST POISONOUS PLANT IN MINNESOTA- just a SMALL amount will cause DEATH**



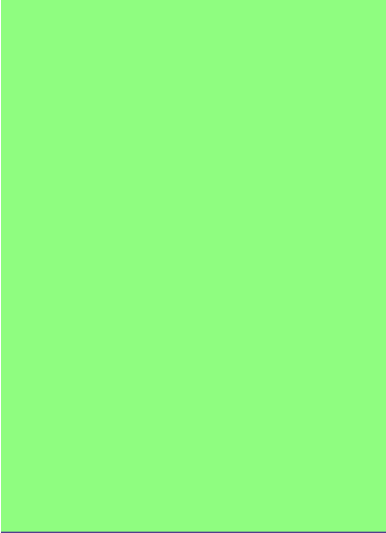
Cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*)
Cow parsnip photograph; © MN DNR, G. N. Rysgaard Cow parsnip
photograph; © MN DNR, G. N. Rysgaard
Information: Foster, 71-72, Tekiela, 305

Large coarse perennial grows 3-7' tall in moist, disturbed ground along streams and ditches. White flowers bloom in August and grow in “umbels” or flat-topped clusters. Leaves are woolly underneath



Medicinal: Leaves are poisonous to livestock. The sap of this causes blisters on contact. **DO NOT TOUCH!** (Foster, 72)

Cow parsnip



Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*)

photograph: Tekiela, 368

Information: Foster, 125-126 and Tekiela, 369

Large Biennial grows 2-4' tall in wet, sunny, disturbed ground along roadsides and fields. . Tiny yellow flowers bloom in spring and summer and form flat-topped clusters.

Medicinal: Native American's used roots as a treatment for pain and as a poultice for sores. Contains Xanthotoxin which is used to treat vertigo and psoriasis.

WARNING: Can cause blistering with exposure and sunlight.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Foster, Steven and James A. Duke. Eastern/Central Medicinal Plants and Herbs 2nd Ed. Peterson Field Guides. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company: 2000

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. 2007. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Web Site (online). Accessed 2007-3-21 at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/sitertools/copyright.html>

Tekiela, Stan. Wildflowers of Minnesota. Cambridge, Minnesota: Adventure Publications, Inc.:1999.