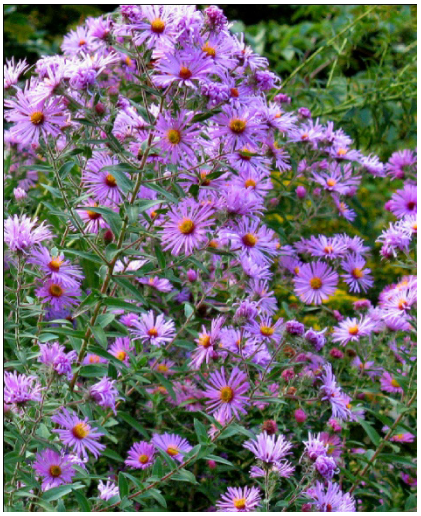
RIPARIAN FRINGE

Seasonally inundated area;
tolerant of exposure during dry periods.

Aster, New England
(Aster nova-angliae)



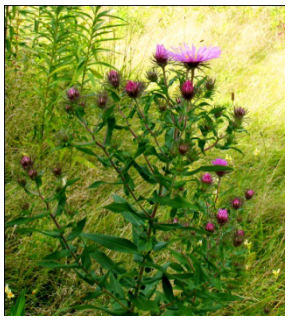
3-4' x 2-3', robust, upright. Forms a thick clump after a few years.

CT native, found in moist meadows, open woods, fields, thickets, stream banks, low valleys.

Profuse 1" violet blue flowers with yellow-orange center disks, at the tips of leafy branches, August-October.

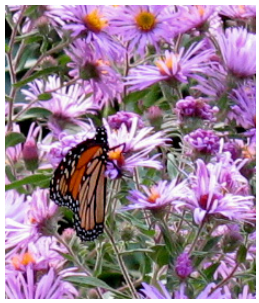
3-4" narrow rough lance-shaped leaves, dense on stout stems.

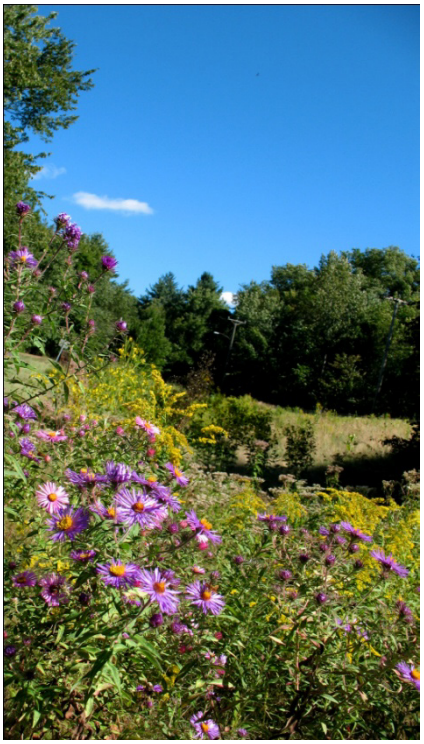
Sun to part sun. Moist to average well-drained soil, prefers moist rich soil.
Good air circulation.
Add a little lime for best growth.
Pinching stems back a few times before Mid-July helps control plant height.



Use in borders, cottage gardens, and meadows.

One of the most important nectar flowers, supporting 105 native butterflies.
Larval host for Pearl Crescent Butterflies and several moths.





Visited by several bees including bumblebees and honeybees.

Birds eat seeds.

Photos: North Central Conservation District

Christmas Fern

Polystichum acrostichoides

8-16” x 14-24”, strongly clumping.

CT native, found in woodlands and wooded slopes.

Deep green glossy fronds are evergreen.

Shade. Moist to moderately dry soil.
Very adaptable.

Though the evergreen leaves are often tattered by spring, don’t remove them, or, if you do, wait until the new leaves of the season have expanded and the old are withered.

Photo 1
North Central Conservation District
Photo 2
Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder
www.mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder
Photo 3
Elaine Haug @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

New York Ironweed
(Vernonia novaborocensis)

3-7' x 3-4' robust, upright, substantial clumps.

CT native. Found in moist thickets, low areas, marshes, along streambanks, fields.

Loose clusters of half-inch fluffy deep reddish-purple flowers, August to October, on short branching stems. Flower heads on mature plants can be 2' across, with hundreds of flowers, atop sturdy stems.

4-8" deep green lance-shaped leaves, rough textured, serrate along margins, densely alternating up stems.

Stout stems often persist throughout winter.

Rust-color seed clusters.

Full sun to light shade. Medium to wet, prefers rich moist soil.
Takes some drought once established.
Can reduce height by cutting stems back nearly to the ground in late spring.
Will naturalize. Remove flowers before seed develops if you want to avoid self-seeding.
Deep-rooted, so difficult to divide or move.
Easily grown.

Use in backs of large borders, cottage gardens, meadows, screening.

Streamside buffers.

Attracts birds, butterflies, other pollinators.
Provides cover for beneficial insects if stems are left over winter.

Photo 1
Eleanor Saulys
Connecticut Botanical Society
ct-botanical-society.org
Photo 2
Missouri Botanical PlantFinder
mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder
Photo 3
Scott Hagood, Extension, Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
http://www.ppws.vt.edu/

Sensitive Fern

Onoclea sensibilis

10-24” x 2-3’

CT native, found in meadows, openings, swamp margins, by roadsides.

Fronts are triangular, with paired light green pinnae, often deeply lobed.
Slow to emerge in spring.

Sun to shade. Moist to wet soil, but will grow many places. The name comes from its sensitivity to frost.
Spreads widely by spores.

Use as groundcover, naturalize at edge of woods, in masses.

Stream buffer plant.

Supports upland game birds.
Attracts 3 species of native butterflies.

Photo 1
Carol Levine
Connecticut Botanical Society
www.ct-botanical-society.org
Photo 2
Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder
mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder

Wild Bee Balm

(**Monarda fistulosa**)

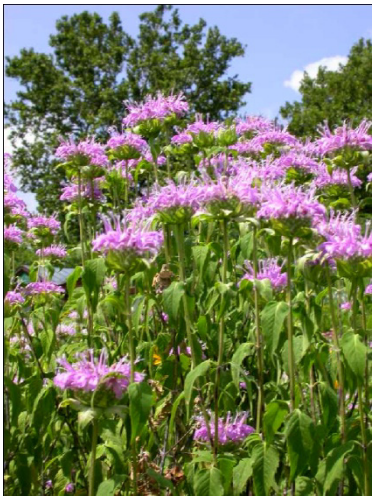
3-4' x 2-3' rounded clump-forming wildflower.

CT native, found in woods, thickets, fields.

Lovely fragrant pink-lavender flowers surrounded by equally showy whitish lavender bracts, in dense heads atop square stems. Long bloom period during July-August.

Sweetly aromatic soft oblong toothed gray-green 3-4" leaves, spreading stems.

Sun to light shade. Dry to moist well-drained soils, prefers rich moisture-retentive soil.
Tolerates somewhat-poor soils and some drought.
Plants need good air circulation.
Easy to grow and adaptable.
Remove spent flowers to prolong summer bloom.
A moderate spreader, through underground rhizomes and self-seeding. Ideal for naturalizing, and in optimal areas may form colonies. However, shallow rhizomes are easy to pull up. Also, if you want to discourage self-sowing, cut plants back to ground after flowering.



Use for naturalizing, and informal plantings. Provides color for the herb garden, wild garden, and meadows. Good for cut and dried flowers. A culinary herb – can boil leaves for tea, and flowers are edible.

A premiere butterfly nectar plant. Also attracts many pollinators, birds, hummingbirds, and hummingbird moths. High deer resistance.

Photos 1, 3, 4:
Missouri Botanical PlantFinder
mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder
Photo 2:
Merel R. Black, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point
wisplants.uwsp.edu/scripts/Detail.asp?spCode=MONFISsFIS
Photo 5:
Sharon Yiesla
urbanext.illinois.edu/wildflowers/directory_detail.cfm?PlantID=858&page=13