Heart-leaved Alexander
*Zizia aptera*

1-3’ x 1-1.5’ upright perennial, unbranched on lower half. It can seed into small colonies, but does not seed with abandon.

CT native, though a Species of Special Concern. While the plant has a wide distribution in the U.S, it is no longer present in other New England states. This plant reacts poorly to general land disturbance. Found in small colonies in meadows, clearings, opening, thickets, rocky uplands. Generally prefers neutral to alkaline calcium-rich shallow soils.

Basal and lower stem have 4” evergreen glossy heart-shaped leaves, with rounded tips and whitish finely-toothed leaf margins.

In mid-spring, flat-top 3” wide clusters of showy attractive tiny bright yellow flowers, on stems with three-part lance-shaped leaves. May-June, for about a month.

Green fruit capsules turn purplish towards fall.

Sun to part shade.
Moist to dry soils. Tolerates rocky, gravelly, and shallow soils. Tolerates acid soil, but likes a little lime in the spring.
Rugged easy long-lived plant. Site thoughtfully, as prefers not to be undisturbed.

Bold evergreen groundcover. Very attractive in patches, with sunny flowers in spring. Use in wildflower or pollinator gardens, in meadows, open woods, rock gardens, borders, and for cut flowers. Attractive paired with Amsonia, Little Bluestem, and more.

Provides accessible nectar to many beneficial insects with short mouthparts. Special value to Native Bees, especially small bees, like Halictid, Andrenid, Nomadine. Attracts butterflies, larval host for Black Swallowtails.

Deer resistant.

Photos 1, 3, 9, 10: Missouri Botanical Garden missouribotanicalgarden.org/plantfinder/plantfinder-search.aspx
Photo 2: UMass, Center for Agriculture, Food, and Environ. ag.umass.edu/sites/ag.umass.edu/files/pest-alerts/images/content/zizia_aptera_heart-leaved_golden_alexanders.jpg
Photo 4: Peter Dziuk, Minnesota Wildflowers minnesotawildflowers.info/flower/heart-leaved-alexanders
Photos 6, 8: Dan Mullen flickr.com/photos/8583446@N05/5830657694/sizes/l/
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