

Friends of the Wild Flower Garden



Native summer wild flowers for a shady area.

Once the tree canopy is in leaf and only dappled sunlight reaches the soil, a group of summer flowering wild flowers will brighten the shade. As all but one are perennials, once established, these Minnesota natives will please without much annual exertion and provide a pleasing color contrast to the greens and browns of summer shade.

This selection of plants begins with those that transition from late spring into early summer, followed by those that withhold their bloom until after mid-July. They will obtain their moisture requirements from rainfall, but in extreme heat or drought, a helpful soaking will tide them over. These are taller than the spring selection so place the tallest with careful selection.

None require special soil - just a top soil that has medium or moderate richness and good drainage. If the subsoil is clay - no matter. The shade must not be dense as in a deep forest but more dappled or at least with some slanting sunlight for an hour or two.

Now to get started: Some will start easily from seed but buying bare root young plants from a native nursery is a sure way to get started, after that they reward you with more plants from self seeding and clump enlargement.

Here is a quick look at each of the recommended species - not an exclusive list, but reliably rewarding. Use the link to our web pages for more detailed information, plus more photos. The list follows the sequence of bloom time, from early to latest.

Wild Columbine. (*Aquilegia canadensis*). Late May into early July, stems 1 to 3 feet high, red flowers with yellow, interesting seed pods. Self-seeds and transplants easily.

Aniseroot (*Osmorhiza longistylis*). Late spring to early summer, bushy clump to 24 inches high, umbels of white flowers. Aromatic root. Self-seeds and transplants easily.

Poke Milkweed. (*Asclepias exaltata*). Early to mid-summer, white flowers, stems 2 to 4 feet high. A milkweed that likes shade. Does not transplant easily.



Wild Columbine



Aniseroot



Poke Milkweed

Downy Wood Mint. (*Blephilia ciliata*). June into late summer, whitish-lavender flowers. Stems to 2 feet high. Self-seeds and transplants easily.

Enchanter's Nightshade. (*Circaea lutetiana* ssp. *canadensis*). Late June to early August. Small white flowers. Stems to 1 to 2 feet. Self-seeds.

Black Bugbane. (*Cimicifuga racemosa*). Mid-summer; stems very tall - 5 to 7 feet, white flowers, use in the background. Clumps enlarge and self-seeds. Can be transplanted.



Downy Woodmint



Enchanter's Nightshade



Bugbane

Fringed Loosestrife. (*Lysimachia ciliata*). July, yellow-flowers. Stems to 3 feet high. Clumps can enlarge.

Tall Bellflower. (*Campanulastrum americanum*). July into August flowering, pale blue to violet flowers, stems from 2 to 4 feet high.. An annual but self-seeds.

American Spikenard. (*Aralia racemosa* ssp. *racemosa*). Late summer, leaves spread very wide, give it room to grow, greenish-white flowers, followed by purple berries. Clumps enlarge. Autumn fruit shown in photo at top.



Fringed Loosestrife



Tall Bellflower



American Spikenard

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