

azure aster *Symphyotrichum oolentangiense*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Asterales

Family: Asteraceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Azure aster is also known as sky-blue aster or blue devil. This perennial herb has leaves arranged alternately along the stem. Leaves are simple, rough, lance-shaped and mostly toothless. The long-stalked, lower leaves are arrowhead-shaped. Flowers are clustered into many heads at the stem tips. Both ray and disk flowers are present, and both are fertile. Rays are bright-blue or violet, and there are 10 to 20 per flower. The one-seeded fruit is dry and hard. Azure aster may attain a height of one to three feet.

BEHAVIORS

Azure aster may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows in moist and dry prairies and dry, open woods. Flowers are produced from September through October. The flowers attract insects, their main agents of pollination. The flowers and fruits of this plant are used as food by upland game animals.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

coniferous forests; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; hill prairie

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