

silky aster *Symphyotrichum sericeum*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Asterales

Family: Asteraceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Silky aster is also known as western silvery aster. This perennial herb has leaves arranged alternately along the stems. These simple, entire, leaves are oblong in shape and sessile on the stem. Leaves are covered with silvery, silky hairlike structures. Violet or blue flowers are clustered in numerous flower heads. Both disk and ray flowers are present, and both are fertile. Each flower head has 15 to 25 rays. The one-seeded fruit is dry and hard. Silky aster may attain a height of one to two feet.

BEHAVIORS

Silky aster may be found in the northern one-half of Illinois. It grows in dry prairies and sand barrens. Flowers are produced from September through October. Flowers are pollinated by insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

dolomite prairie; gravel prairie; hill prairie

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