

Old-field goldenrod (*S. nemoralis*)



Plant: solitary and forms small clumps, short stem with fine grayish hairs.

Flowers: slender, curving to one side.

Leaves: narrow with fine grayish hairs, leaflets at base of leaves.

Habitat: dry; prairies, savannas.

Canada goldenrod (*S. canadensis*)



Plant: very large patches, tall stems, insects can cause galls, hybridizes with *S. gigantea* and *S. altissima*.

Flowers: variable, open spreading cluster, plume or pyramid shape.

Leaves: stalkless, smooth, with teeth.

Habitat: dry to moist; prairies, fields, woods, roadsides.

Prairie flower walk

Goldenrod flower heads are made of many tiny flowers. The shape of the flower heads and leaves are clues to identification. Take some time to look at the yellow flowers of late summer and autumn. Observe the differences and similarities.

About Holy Wisdom

In 1953, the Benedictine sisters first set down roots on this hill overlooking Lake Mendota. Since then, they have built a strong tradition of caring for the earth, rooted in the Benedictine values of stability and respect for all creation. Some of the sisters' first projects caring for the earth included planting trees, many of which are still present today.

We welcome you to explore the trails, prairies and woodlands at Holy Wisdom Monastery and hope you enjoy this oasis of quiet beauty. To learn more, please visit HolyWisdomMonastery.org. Friends are also invited to join volunteer work days and attend environmental education events. If you would like to support our work of caring for the earth, please become a [Friend of Wisdom Prairie](#).

Created by Sylvia Marek & Peter Marshall © 9/22



Holy Wisdom Monastery

*Weaving prayer, hospitality, justice and
care for the earth into a shared way of life*

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Goldenrods of Holy Wisdom



Beautiful yellow flowers celebrate the end of summer. Many of them are goldenrods. These perennial plants have alternate leaves and form clumps or larger patches. There are 22 kinds of native goldenrods in Wisconsin.

Goldenrod and ragweed both bloom August to October. [Goldenrod pollen does not cause hay fever](#). It is heavy and an important source of food for insects. Rag-weed pollen is light, wind-born and allergenic.

Wisconsin Goldenrods

Old-field	Canada
Grass-leaf	Stiff
Showy	Riddell's
Elm-leaf	Zig-zag

Grass-leaf goldenrod (*E. graminifolia*)



Plant: forms large patches, stem smooth and slender.

Flowers: mostly flat-topped clusters of tiny yellow flowers.

Leaves: long and narrow without teeth.

Habitat: moist to dry; full sun, prairies, meadows.

Stiff goldenrod (*S. rigida*)



Plant: solitary or forms clumps, rigid erect stem with dense stiff hairs.

Flowers: branching flat-topped clusters with large bright yellow flowers.

Leaves: gray-green, oval, with stiff hairs, rough on both sides, lower leaves stalked, upper leaves stalkless.

Habitat: dry to medium moisture; prairies, woods.

Showy goldenrod (*S. speciosa*)



Plant: mostly in dense clumps, stem smooth, often reddish.

Flowers: elongated oval flowerhead, sometimes branched, at the top of stem.

Leaves: smooth, without teeth, pointed, larger at the base of stem.

Habitat: dry to medium moisture; full sun, prairies.

Riddell's goldenrod (*S. riddellii*)



Plant: mostly solitary, smooth thick stem.

Flowers: flat or round topped, branched cluster.

Leaves: smooth, clasping stem, curved with pointed tips, edges folded up.

Habitat: wet; prairies, fens, meadows.

Elm-leaf goldenrod (*S. ulmifolia*)



Plant: often forms patches, sometimes solitary, stem is smooth.

Flowers: long spreading and arching flower branches.

Leaves: coarsely toothed, rough to touch, elm-like leaves

Habitat: dry; shady woods, savannas.

Zig-zag goldenrod (*S. flexicaulis*)



Plant: often forms patches, sometimes solitary, stem is smooth and zig-zags.

Flowers: short clusters at leaf junctures and in long terminal clusters.

Leaves: broad, pointed, sharply toothed, tapers to winged stalk.

Habitat: dry to medium moisture; sun to shade; woods and savannas.