

Do You Love an Aster?

Then, this game is for you! All the images in this plant match are species in the astronomically large Aster Family or Asteraceae—see the Spring 2023 Marilandica for a list of over 300 species occurring in Maryland. Taxonomists have grouped the members of this family into tribes and sometimes further into subtribes based on similar features and genetic characteristics. The Flora of North America defines a tribe to be a taxonomic rank above genus and below family, and is designated by the suffix “-eae”; the suffix for family is “-aceae”. We invite you to match each species to its image.

Extra Credit Bonus. Select the tribe associated with each species. A-Aster Tribe (Astereae); B-Boneset Tribe (Eupatorieae); C-Thistle Tribe (Cardueae); D-Ironweed Tribe (Vernonieae); E-Sunflower Tribe (Heliantheae).



1. *Bidens polylepis*, **Bearded Beggarticks**. Flowers with yellow ray florets and a yellow central disk; outer phyllaries curly, inner phyllaries clear; leaves divided.

2. *Cirsium discolor*, **Field Thistle**. Flowers pink, disc florets only; phyllaries have white stripes and spines; underside of leaves is white.

3. *Conoclinium coelestinum*, **Blue mistflower**. Flowers blue, disc florets only; leaves opposite, egg-shaped to triangular.

4. *Elephantopus carolinianus*, **Carolina Elephants-foot**. Flowers violet; 5-lobed disc florets that resemble ray florets; stem leaves present.

5. *Eupatorium perfoliatum*, **Common Boneset**. Flowers white, disc florets only; leaves opposite, encircle stem.

6. *Eurybia divaricata*, **White Wood Aster**. Flowers with 5-12 white ray florets and a smallish yellow central disk; leaves alternate, heart-shaped, stalked; stems dark.

7. *Helenium autumnale*, **Sneezeweed**. Flowers with 13-21 yellow, wedge-shaped, 3-lobed ray florets; dark yellow central disk; leaves alternate, stems winged.

8. *Heliopsis helianthoides*, **Oxeye Sunflower**. Flowers with 8-12 yellow 3-toothed ray florets surrounding a raised brownish-yellow center of disk florets; phyllaries green, 2 lengths; leaves opposite and toothed.

9. *Solidago ulmifolia*, **Elmleaf Goldenrod**. Flowers yellow with 3-6 ray florets and 4-7 disk florets in arching one-sided sprays; basal and stem leaves; stem leaves elliptic to lance-shaped.

10. *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*, **New England Aster**. Flowers with 40-100 narrow purple ray florets and a yellow center of disk florets; leaves lance-shaped with auricles that hug the stem.

11. *Vernonia noveboracensis*, **New York Ironweed**. Flowers purple, disc florets only; phyllaries long, filamentous, and stick out.

12. *Verbesina alternifolia*, **Wingstem**. Flowers with 2-10 yellow ray florets, globular center of numerous yellow to green disk florets; leaves alternate, stems winged.

Plant Match was created by Jil Swearingen with inspiration from Clare Walker's fantastic Nature Forward Asters class.