

An Aster a Day, Almost

Members of the Aster Family (Asteraceae) in Maryland

by JIL SWEARINGEN

In Maryland, we have a bounty of “asters”, with three hundred and five species reported to occur in the state, according to Knapp and Naczi’s *Vascular Plants of Maryland, USA: A Comprehensive Account of the State’s Botanical Diversity*, published in 2021. Representatives of this ecologically important family occur from Maryland’s mountainous western counties to the eastern shore and Atlantic Ocean, in habitats including forests, shale barrens, serpentine barrens, bogs, grasslands, marshes, swamps, and sand dunes. In short, they’re just about everywhere!

The Maryland Native Plant Society chose the aster family (aka Compositae) for its Plant Taxa of the Year for 2023 to encourage members to become more familiar with this extensive and diverse family of plants and to improve their identification skills with them. Among the 305 species are 224 *native* (including 61 rare), 70 *non-native*, 8 *non-native invasive* or *noxious*, and 3 with *uncertain nativity*. State and global ranks for rare species are included. For a description of the Natural Heritage Ranking System and definitions for the state and global rankings, see p. 4 of *Vascular Plants of Maryland*.

The following list of species was obtained, with permission, from *Vascular Plants of Maryland*, and is grouped according to the Flora of North America’s tribes and subtribes. Brief FNA descriptions for each tribe are also provided. A *tribe* is a taxonomic rank above genus and below family, and is designated by the suffix “-eae”; a *subtribe* is a subcategory under tribe and is designated by the suffix “-inae.” Tribes and subtribes are used to further group species with similar features and genetic characteristics. Organizing Maryland’s asters in this way should help with recognition and identification. With several hundred highly diverse species to work with, we need all the help we can get!

Top right: Mouse-ear Hawkweed (*Hieracium pilosella*); Right: Short’s Aster (*Symphyotrichum shortii*) and a bee fly. Photos by R.H. Simmons.



Special notes:

1. According to Guy Nesom, taxonomists split the genus *Aster* in the 1990s, based on genetic information, into several genera including *Symphyotrichum*, which includes the majority of American species, and *Aster* which was determined to be more appropriately associated with Eurasian species. Other genera split from *Aster* include *Almutaster*, *Ampelaster*, *Canadanthus*, *Chloracantha*, *Doellingeria*, *Eucephalus*, *Eurybia*, *Oclemena*, *Oreostemma*, and *Sericocarpus*. *Aster ptarmicoides* has proved to be a white-rayed species of *Solidago* (goldenrod). Many of these now newly recognized genera were previously recognized at the subgeneric rank. Wes Knapp adds: “Many of these now newly recognized genera were previously recognized at the subgeneric rank. Fernald (1950) recognized groups under the names *Doellingeria* and *Ianthe* (now called *Ionactus*) and Gleason & Cronquist (1992) recognized *Sericocarpus*.”
2. Prairie Goldenrod, *Solidago rigidum* var. *rigidum*, has been changed to *Oligoneuron rigidum* var. *rigidum*.
3. Species previously in the genus *Prenanthes* have been moved to the genus *Nabalus*.

ASTERACEAE IN MARYLAND

Tribe **ANTHEMIDEAE**

FNA: Almost worldwide, mostly Old World.

Achillea borealis - American Yarrow

Tanacetum parthenium - Common Feverfew

Artemisia vulgaris - Common Wormwood

Anthemis arvensis - Corn Chamomile

Anthemis cotula - Mayweed

Artemisia abrotanum - Southern Wormwood

Artemisia absinthium - Absinthium

Artemisia annua - Annual Wormwood

Artemisia stelleriana - Hoary Sagebrush

Leucanthemum vulgare - Oxeye Daisy

Matricaria discoidea - Pineapple-weed Chamomile

Tanacetum balsamita - Coastmary

Tanacetum vulgare - Common Tansy

Tripleurospermum maritimum ssp. *maritimum* - Pineapple Weed

Tribe **ASTEREAE**

FNA: Almost worldwide, mostly temperate. Large genera such as *Erigeron*, *Symphyotrichum*, and *Solidago* all originated on the continent and subsequently spread to Eurasia or South America. A few genera entered North America from neighboring continents, such as *Aster* in the strict sense (from Eurasia) or *Baccharis* (from Central America). A majority of Astereae genera in the flora of North America are endemic to the continent (more so if Mexico were included).

Baccharis halimifolia - Eastern Baccharis

Boltonia asteroides var. *asteroides* - Susquehanna Doll's Daisy S1/G5TNR

Boltonia asteroides var. *glastifolia* - White Doll's Daisy S1/G5T4T5

Chrysopsis mariana - Maryland Goldenaster

Conyza canadensis var. *canadensis* - Canada Horseweed

Conyza canadensis var. *pusilla* - Fleabane

Doellingeria infirma - Appalachian Flat-topped White Aster S3/G5

Doellingeria umbellata - Northern Flat-topped White Aster

Erigeron annuus - White-top Fleabane

Erigeron philadelphicus - Philadelphia Fleabane

Erigeron pulchellus var. *brauniae* - Lucy Braun's Plantain S1/G5T4

Erigeron pulchellus var. *pulchellus* - Robin's Plantain

Erigeron strigosus var. *strigosus* - Daisy Fleabane

Eurybia compacta - Slender Aster

Eurybia divaricata - White Wood Aster

Eurybia macrophylla - Largeleaf Wood Aster

Eurybia radula - Rough Wood Aster S1/G5

Eurybia schreberi - Schreber's Aster

Eurybia spectabilis - Eastern Showy Aster S1/G5

Euthamia caroliniana - Carolina Goldentop

Euthamia graminifolia - Grassleaf Goldentop

Euthamia gymnospermoides - Texas Goldentop

Euthamia hirtipes - Marsh Goldentop

Ionactis linariifolia - Flaxleaf Aster

Oclemena acuminata - Whorled Aster

Oligoneuron rigidum var. *rigidum* - Prairie Goldenrod S1/G5

Pityopsis graminifolia var. *latifolia* - Narrowleaf Silk-grass

Sericocarpus asteroides - Toothed Whitetop Aster

Sericocarpus linifolius - Narrowleaf Whitetop Aster

Solidago altissima - Tall Goldenrod

Solidago arguta var. *arguta* - Cutleaf Goldenrod S1?/G5T4T5

Solidago arguta var. *caroliniana* - Atlantic Goldenrod S1?/G5T4

Solidago bicolor - White Goldenrod

Solidago caesia - Bluestem Goldenrod

Solidago canadensis - Canada Goldenrod

Solidago erecta - Slender Goldenrod

Solidago fistulosa - Pine Barren Goldenrod

Solidago flexicaulis - Broadleaf Goldenrod

Solidago gigantea - Smooth Goldenrod

Solidago harrisii - Shale Barren Goldenrod S3/G4

Solidago hispida - Hairy Goldenrod S3/G5T5

Solidago juncea - Early Goldenrod

Solidago latissimifolia - Elliott's Goldenrod S3/G5

Solidago nemoralis ssp. *nemoralis* - Gray Goldenrod

Solidago odora var. *odora* - Anise-scented Goldenrod

Solidago patula var. *patula* - Roundleaf Goldenrod S3/G5

Solidago puberula var. *puberula* - Downy Goldenrod

Solidago racemosa - Racemose Goldenrod S1/G5T3?

Solidago roanensis - Roan Mountain Goldenrod S3/G4G5

Solidago rugosa var. *aspera* - Roughleaf Goldenrod

Solidago rugosa var. *rugosa* - Roughleaf Goldenrod

Solidago rupestris - Rock Goldenrod S1/G4?

Solidago sempervirens var. *mexicana* - Southern Seaside Goldenrod

Solidago sempervirens var. *sempervirens* - Seaside Goldenrod

Solidago speciosa var. *speciosa* - Harper's Goldenrod S2/G5

Solidago squarrosa - Ragged Goldenrod

Solidago tarda - Late Goldenrod S1/G4?

Solidago uliginosa - Bog Goldenrod S3/G5

Solidago ulmifolia var. *ulmifolia* - Elmleaf Goldenrod S3/G4G5

Symphyotrichum concolor - Eastern Silvery Aster S1/G5

Symphyotrichum cordifolium - Heartleaf Aster

Symphyotrichum depauperatum - Serpentine Aster S1/G2

Symphyotrichum drummondii - Drummond's Aster S1/G5

Symphyotrichum dumosum - Bushy Aster

Symphyotrichum ericoides - White Heath Aster

Symphyotrichum laeve var. *concinnum* - Narrow-leaved Smooth Blue Aster S1?/G5T4

Symphyotrichum laeve var. *laeve* - Smooth Blue Aster

Symphyotrichum lanceolatum var. *lanceolatum* - Panicked Aster

Symphyotrichum lanceolatum var. *latifolium* - White Panicked Aster

Symphyotrichum lateriflorum - Starved Aster

Hooked-stem Aster (*Symphyotrichum prenanthoides*) and a bee fly.
Photo by R.H. Simmons.





Field Thistle (*Cirsium discolor*) and Metallic Sweat Bee (*Agapostemon virescens*).
Photo by R.H. Simmons.

Symphyotrichum lowrieanum - Fall Aster
Symphyotrichum novae-angliae - New England Aster
Symphyotrichum novi-belgii - Longleaf Aster
Symphyotrichum oblongifolium - Aromatic Aster
Symphyotrichum patens - Late Purple Aster
Symphyotrichum phlogifolium - Late Purple Aster
Symphyotrichum pilosum var. *pilosum* - White Heath Aster
Symphyotrichum pilosum var. *pringlei* - Pringle's Aster
Symphyotrichum praealtum - Willow Aster S1/G5
Symphyotrichum prenanthoides - Crooked-stem Aster
Symphyotrichum puniceum - Swamp Aster
Symphyotrichum racemosum - Small White Aster
Symphyotrichum shortii - Short's Aster S3S4/G5
Symphyotrichum subulatum - Annual Saltmarsh Aster
Symphyotrichum tenuifolium - Perennial Saltmarsh Aster
Symphyotrichum undulatum - Wavyleaf Aster
Symphyotrichum urophyllum - White Arrow Aster
Aster tataricus - Tartarian Aster
Bellis perennis - Lawn Daisy
Grindelia lanceolata - Narrowleaf Gumweed
Grindelia squarrosa - Broadleaf Gumweed
Heterotheca subaxillaris - Camphorweed Goldenaster
Oclemena nemoralis - Bog Aster

Tribe **CARDUEAE**

FNA: Mostly Old World, especially Mediterranean, some species widely introduced.

Cirsium altissimum - Tall Thistle
Cirsium discolor - Field Thistle
Cirsium horridulum var. *horridulum* - Yellow Thistle S3/G5
Cirsium muticum - Swamp Thistle S3/G5
Cirsium pumilum - Pasture Thistle
Carduus acanthoides - Spiny Plumeless Thistle
Carduus crispus - Curled Plumeless Thistle
Carduus nutans ssp. *macrolepis* - Musk Thistle
Cirsium arvense - Creeping Thistle
Cirsium vulgare - Bull Thistle
Arctium lappa - Greater Burdock
Arctium minus - Lesser Burdock
Centaurea cyanus - Garden Cornflower
Centaurea jacea - Brown Star-thistle
Centaurea nigra - Black Star-thistle
Centaurea nigrescens - Short-fringe Star-thistle
Centaurea solstitialis - Yellow Star-thistle
Centaurea stoebe ssp. *micranthos* - Spotted Star-thistle
Onopordum acanthium - Scotch Cotton-thistle

Tribe **CICHORIEAE**

FNA: Nearly worldwide, mostly in Old World, mostly at temperate latitudes, some species widely introduced.

Hieracium gronovii - Hairy Hawkweed
Hieracium marianum - Maryland Hawkweed
Hieracium paniculatum - Panicked Hawkweed
Hieracium scabrum - Rough Hawkweed

Hieracium traillii - Shale-barren Hawkweed
Hieracium venosum - Rattlesnake Hawkweed
Krigia dandelion - Potato Dwarf Dandelion S2S3
Krigia virginica - Virginia Dwarf Dandelion
Lactuca biennis - Tall Blue Lettuce Blake
Lactuca canadensis - Canada Lettuce
Lactuca floridana - Woodland Lettuce
Lactuca hirsuta var. *sanguinea* SU
Nabalus (Prenanthes) altissimus - Tall Rattlesnake-root
Nabalus (Prenanthes) autumnalis - Slender Rattlesnakeroot S1/G4G5
Nabalus (Prenanthes) crepidineus - Nodding Rattlesnake-root
Nabalus (Prenanthes) serpentarius - Lion's-foot
Nabalus (Prenanthes) trifoliolatus - Three-Leaved Rattlesnake-root
Pyrrhopappus carolinianus - Carolina False Dandelion
Youngia japonica - Oriental False Hawksbeard
Chondrilla juncea - Rush Skeletonweed
Cichorium intybus - Chicory
Hieracium aurantiacum - Orange Hawkweed
Hieracium caespitosum - Meadow Hawkweed
Hieracium pilosella - Mouse-ear Hawkweed
Hypochaeris radicata - Spotted Cat's-ear
Krigia cespitosa - Opposite-Leaved Dwarf Dandelion
Lactuca saligna - Willowleaf Lettuce
Lactuca serriola - Prickly Lettuce
Lapsana communis - Common Nipplewort
Sonchus arvensis - Field Sowthistle
Sonchus asper - Spiny-leaf Sowthistle
Sonchus oleraceus - Common Sowthistle
Taraxacum erythrospermum - Red-seeded Dandelion
Taraxacum officinale ssp. *officinale* - Common Dandelion
Tragopogon dubius - Meadow Goat's-beard
Tragopogon porrifolius - Purple Goat's-beard
Tragopogon pratensis - Meadow Goat's-beard
Youngia thunbergiana - False Hawksbeard

Tribe **EUPATORIAEAE**

FNA: Mostly subtropics, tropics, and warm-temperate New World, also in Old World.

Ageratina altissima var. *altissima* - White Snakeroot
Ageratina aromatica - Lesser Snakeroot
Brickellia eupatorioides var. *eupatorioides* - False Boneset
Conoclinium coelestinum - Blue Boneset
Eupatorium album - White Thoroughwort

Eupatorium altissimum - Tall Boneset S3/G5
Eupatorium capillifolium - Small Dog-fennel Thoroughwort
Eupatorium godfreyanum - Godfrey's Eupatorium
Eupatorium hyssopifolium var. *hyssopifolium* - Hyssopleaf Thoroughwort
Eupatorium leucolepis - White-bract Boneset S2S3/G5
Eupatorium perfoliatum - Common Boneset
Eupatorium pilosum - Vervain Thoroughwort
Eupatorium rotundifolium - Hairy Boneset
Eupatorium rotundifolium var. *rotundifolium* - Roundleaf Boneset
Eupatorium serotinum - Late-flower Thoroughwort
Eupatorium sessilifolium var. *sessilifolium* - Upland Boneset
Eupatorium torreyanum - Fringed Boneset
Eupatorium vaseyi - Vasey's Boneset
Eutrochium dubium - Joe-pye Thoroughwort
Eutrochium fistulosum - Hollow Joe-pyeweed
Eutrochium maculatum var. *maculatum* - Spotted Joe-pyeweed SU/G5
Eutrochium purpureum - Sweet Joe-pyeweed
Liatris helleri - Heller's Blazing Star SH/G3
Liatris pilosa - Shaggy Gayfeather
Liatris scariosa - Devil's Bite
Liatris spicata var. *spicata* - Dense Blazing Star S1/G5T5
Liatris squarrosa var. *squarrosa* - Scaly Blazing Star S1/G5
Mikania scandens - Climbing Hempweed
Sclerolepis uniflora - One-flowered Sclerolepis S2/G4
Ageratum conyzoides - Yerba de Cabrio

Tribe GNAPHALIEAE

FNA: Nearly worldwide, with centers of concentration in southern Africa and Australia, in both Old World and New World, the greater numbers of genera and species in the southern hemisphere.

Anaphalis margaritacea - Pearly Everlasting S3/G5
Antennaria howellii - Howell's Pussytoes
Antennaria neglecta - Field Pussytoes
Antennaria parlinii - Parlin's Pussytoes
Antennaria plantaginifolia - Plantain-leaf Pussytoes
Antennaria solitaria - Single-head Pussytoes S2/G5
Antennaria virginica - Shale Barren Pussytoes
Gamochaeta purpurea - Purple Cudweed
Pseudognaphalium helleri - Catfoot
Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium - Fragrant Cudweed
Filago vulgaris - Common Fluffweed
Gamochaeta pensylvanica - Pennsylvania Everlasting
Gnaphalium uliginosum - Low Cudweed

Tribe HELIANTHEAE

FNA: Almost wholly New World, mostly subtropical, tropical, and warm-temperate.

Subtribe AMBROSIIINAE

Ambrosia artemisiifolia - Annual Ragweed
Ambrosia trifida var. *trifida* - Great Ragweed
Iva annua - Sumpweed
Iva frutescens ssp. *frutescens* - Bigleaf Marsh Elder
Parthenium integrifolium - American Feverfew S1/G5
Xanthium strumarium - Rough Cocklebur
Xanthium spinosum - Spiny Cocklebur

Subtribe CHAENACTIDINAE

Arnica acaulis - Leopard's-bane S1/G4

Subtribe COREOPSIDINAE

Bidens bidentoides - Maryland Bur-marigold S3.1/G3G4
Bidens bipinnata - Spanish Needles
Bidens cernua - Nodding Beggar-ticks
Bidens comosa - Strawstem Beggar-ticks
Bidens connata - Purplestem Beggar-ticks
Bidens discoidea - Swamp Beggar-ticks
Bidens frondosa - Devil's Beggar-ticks
Bidens laevis - Smooth Bur-marigold
Bidens polylepis - Ozark Tickseed Sunflower
Bidens trichosperma - Northern Tickseed Sunflower S3S4/G5
Bidens vulgata - Tall Bur-marigold
Coreopsis rosea - Rose Coreopsis S1/G3
Coreopsis tripteris - Tall Tickseed S1/G5
Coreopsis verticillata - Whorled Coreopsis S3/G5
Bidens aristosa - Tickseed Beggar-ticks
Coreopsis grandiflora - Large-flowered Tickseed
Coreopsis lanceolata - Sand Coreopsis
Coreopsis tinctoria - Golden Tickseed
Cosmos sulphureus - Sulphur Cosmos

Subtribe ECLIPTINAE

Borrchia frutescens - Sea Oxeeye SH/G5
Chrysogonum virginianum var. *virginianum* - Green and Gold S3/G5T5
Heliopsis helianthoides var. *helianthoides* - Smooth Oxeeye
Silphium asteriscus var. *trifoliatum* - Threeleaf Rosinweed S3/G4?
Verbesina alternifolia - Wingstem
Verbesina occidentalis - Yellow Crownbeard
Echinacea pallida - Pale Purple Coneflower
Echinacea purpurea - Eastern Purple Coneflower
Eclipta prostrata - False Daisy

Subtribe GAILLARDIINAE

Helenium autumnale var. *autumnale* - Common Sneezeweed
Helenium flexuosum - Purple-head Sneezeweed
Gaillardia pulchella var. *pulchella* - Common Blanketflower

Left: Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*) and Ailanthus Webworm (*Atteva aurea*). Photo by R.H. Simmons.



Subtribe GALINSOGINAE

Galinsoga parviflora - Small-flowered Quickweed

Galinsoga quadriradiata - Fringed Quickweed

Subtribe HELIANTHINAE

Helianthus angustifolius - Swamp Sunflower

Helianthus decapetalus - Thinleaf Sunflower

Helianthus divaricatus - Woodland Sunflower

Helianthus giganteus - Tall Sunflower

Helianthus hirsutus - Hairy Sunflower S1/G5

Helianthus laevigatus - Smooth Sunflower S1/G4

Helianthus occidentalis ssp. *occidentalis* - Fewleaf Sunflower S1/G5

Helianthus strumosus - Pale-leaf Sunflower

Helianthus annuus - Common Sunflower

Helianthus debilis ssp. *cucumerifolius* - Cucumberleaf Sunflower

Helianthus maximiliani - Maximilian Sunflower

Helianthus mollis - Ashy Sunflower

Helianthus tuberosus - Jerusalem Artichoke

Helianthus grosseserratus - Sawtooth Sunflower

Subtribe POLYMNIINAE

Polymnia canadensis - White-flowered Leafcup

Subtribe RUDBECKIINAE

Rudbeckia fulgida var. *fulgida* - Orange Coneflower S3/G5

Rudbeckia hirta var. *hirta* - Black-eyed Susan

Rudbeckia laciniata var. *bipinnata* - Greenhead Coneflower

Rudbeckia laciniata var. *humilis* - Blue Ridge Cutleaf Coneflower

Rudbeckia laciniata var. *laciniata* - Common Greenhead Coneflower

Rudbeckia triloba var. *triloba* - Brown-eyed Susan S3/G5

Rudbeckia hirta var. *pulcherrima* - Showy Black-eyed Susan

Tribe INULEAE

FNA: Introduced; Old World, especially Eurasia and northern Africa, some species widely introduced and established in local floras.

Inula helenium - Elecampane

Pulicaria dysenterica - Meadow False Fleabane

Tribe PLUCHEEAE

FNA: Mostly tropical and subtropical areas of Central America, South America, Africa, Asia, and Australia, some species are widely introduced and established in local floras.

Pluchea camphorata - Marsh Fleabane S1/G5

Pluchea foetida var. *foetida* - Stinking Camphorweed

Pluchea odorata var. *odorata* - Scented Conyza

Legend: Native taxa / Native rare species / Invasive or noxious weeds / Taxa not native to Maryland / Nativity uncertain

Key to Tribes of Asteraceae: floranorthamerica.org/Asteraceae#Key_to_Tribes_of_Asteraceae



Upland Ironweed (*Vernonia glauca*) and Metallic Sweat Bee (*Agapostemon virescens*). Photo by R.H. Simmons.

Tribe SENECTIONEAE

FNA: Almost worldwide, mostly temperate to subtropical.

Arnoglossum atriplicifolium - Pale Indian-plantain

Arnoglossum reniforme - Great Indian-plantain SH

Erechtites hieraciifolius - American Burnweed

Packera anonyma - Small's Ragwort

Packera antennariifolia - Cat's-paw Ragwort S3/G4

Packera aurea - Golden Groundsel

Packera crawfordii - Crawford's Ragwort

Packera obovata - Roundleaf Groundsel

Packera paupercula - Balsam Ragwort S3/G5

Packera tomentosa - Woolly Groundsel

Senecio suaveolens - Sweet-scented Indian-plantain S1/G4

Ligularia dentata - Orangequeen

Senecio vulgaris - Old-man-in-the-spring

Tussilago farfara - Colt's-foot

Tribe VERNONIEAE

FNA: Mostly tropics and warm-temperate regions of New World and Old World.

Elephantopus carolinianus - Carolina Elephant's-foot

Elephantopus nudatus - Smooth Elephant's-foot

Elephantopus tomentosus - Tobaccoweed S1S2/G5

Vernonia gigantea - Giant Ironweed SU/G5

Vernonia glauca - Broadleaf Ironweed

Vernonia noveboracensis - New York Ironweed

Vernonia arkansana - Arkansas Ironweed

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