Solidago of the Chicago Region, USA

Common Goldenrods of the Chicago Region

The Field Museum – Division of Environment, Culture, and Conservation

Produced by: Rebecca Schillo, Conservation Ecologist, The Field Museum [http://fieldmuseum.org/explore/department/ecco]

version 1: 09/2011

GROUP 1: Flower heads (inflorescence) flat or flattish-topped

1 ***S. rigida***
STIFF GOLDENROD: stiff, upright plant. Leaves and stems densely pubescent (hairy); upper leaves clasping the stem, lower leaves with long petioles (leaf stalks). Common in moist to dry prairies.

2 ***S. riddellii***
RIDDELL'S GOLDNEROD: leaves and stems glabrous (smooth, without hairs); leaves linear, 3-nerved, folded along the mibrib. Uncommon, in wet-calcareous to mesic prairies.

3 ***S. ohioensis***
OHIO GOLDENROD: leaves and stems glabrous (smooth, without hairs); leaves flat, never 3-nerved. Rare, restricted to wet, calcareous habitats.

GROUP 2: Woodland goldenrods with axillary flower heads (inflorescences)

4 ***S. caesia***
BLUE-STEMMED GOLDENROD: stem glacous (covered by a white waxy coating); leaves lanceolate, toothed, tapering to a sessile (stalkless) base. Common, found in savannas and woodlands.

5 ***S. flexicaulis***
ZIG-ZAG GOLDENROD: stem zig-zags; leaves broadly ovate, toothed, on a winged petiole (leaf stalk). Frequent in shaded habitats.

GROUP 3: Flower heads (inflorescences) arranged on one-sided, terminal, arched, branches.

Stem leaves approximately the same size upward along the stem.

6 ***S. canadensis/altissima***
TALL and CANADA GOLDENROD: bushy, weedy species. Stems hairy below the inflorescence; leaves narrow, slightly toothed, 3-veined, sessile (stalkless). Abundant in degraded habitats.

7 ***S. gigantea***
LATE GOLDENROD: stem glabrous (without hairs), at least below the inflorescence; leaves 3-veined. Common in moist to wet habitats

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GROUP 4:
Flower heads (inflorescences) arranged on one-sided, terminal, arched, branches.

Stem leaves reduced in size upward along the stem.

8 ***S. juncea***
EARLY GOLDENROD: Blooms in mid-July, earlier other goldenrod species in the Chicago region. Stems and leaves glabrous (smooth, without hairs). Basal leaves (usually more than 2.5 cm wide) present at flowering time. Stem leaves sessile (stalkless). Frequent in open, dry habitats and disturbed sites.

9 ***S. patula***
SWAMP GOLDENROD: Stem wing-angled; basal leaves large with winged petioles (leaf stalks). Leaves with a rough sand-paper texture. Restricted to fens, borders of ponds, swamps, and bogs.

10 ***S. sempervirens***
SEASIDE GOLDENROD: Stems and leaves glabrous (smooth, without hairs). Leaves fleshy with entire (toothless) edges. Introduced from the Atlantic or Golf coastal regions. Found along highways and in waste ground. Salt tolerant.

11 ***S. rugosa***
ROUGH GOLDENROD: Leaves rugose (wrinkled) and rough to the touch. Often found along edges of marshes in dune areas and sandy soils.

12 ***S. ulmifolia***
ELM-LEAVED GOLDENROD: Inflorescence branches arching; leaves ovate to elliptic or lance-elliptic with coarsely toothed edges. Common in open woodlands.

GROUP 5:
Rod or plume shaped terminal inflorescences (flower heads)

13 ***S. nemoralis***
OLD-FIELD GOLDENROD: Inflorescence a plume. Stem covered with fine gray hairs; basal leaves with a fine sand-paper texture; upper stem leaves with axillary tufts. Common in prairies, dunes, savannas, and old-fields

14 ***S. speciosa***
SHOWY GOLDENROD: Flower heads arranged spirally around the branch; stem glabrous (smooth, without hairs); leaves numerous, thick, usually toothless to remotely toothed. Frequent in sandy oak savannas and dry prairies.

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GROUP 5:
Rod or plume shaped terminal flower heads (inflorescences)

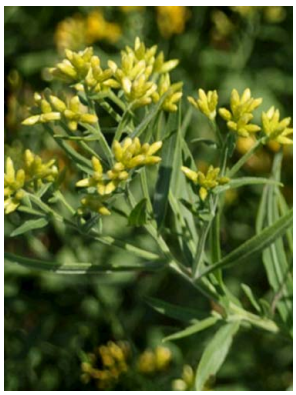
(continued from pg. 2)

15 ***S. uliginosa***
BOG GOLDENROD: Lower stem leaves with petioles (leaf stalks) clasping the stem; upper leaves sessile (stalkless) and reduced in size. Local in bogs and fens.

16 ***S. racemosa var. gillmanii*** *(S. simplex)*
DUNE GOLDENROD: Stem glabrous (smooth, without hairs); leaf edges with shallow, broad teeth or almost toothless. Rare in Chicago region, restricted to dunes in IN and MI.

GROUP 6:
Grass-leaved goldenrods. Leaves all similar, narrowly linear.

Flower heads in flat or flattish-topped, corymbifrom inflorescences



17 ***S. graminifolia* (*Euthamia graminifolia*)**
COMMON GRASS-LEAVED GOLDENROD: Leaves more than 4 mm wide, toothless, with tiny, shiny resinous dots often with a black fungus; Common in moist to dry prairies.

18 ***S. gymnospermoides (Euthamia gymnospermoides)***
VISCID GRASS-LEAVED GOLDENROD: Stem leaves 2- 4 mm wide. Found in dry, sandy prairies.

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- Rebecca Schillo (1a, 7a, 8a, 9a, 10a, 13a, 14a, 14b, 17b, 18a, 18b)
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GOLDENROD CHARACTERISTICS

- Alternate leaves
- Both ray and disk flowers present (except in a few species)
- Pappus of numerous long, soft hairs
- Overlapping but unequal phyllaries (bracts at the base of the flower head)
- Relatively small flower heads
- Yellow ray flowers
- Yellow-green foliage
- Crushed leaves smell slightly like carrots

RESOURCES

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