

School-to-Nature



Black-Eyed Susan

Black-Eyed Susan is easy to identify, with its golden petals and brown/black center. In the wild, Black-Eyed Susan grows up to three feet tall, with two to three flowers on each long stem. Cultivated varieties for home gardens may have more flowers on each stem.

The wild prairie varieties that you see on Conservancy lands are biennial, sprouting the first year and blooming the second year. Black-Eyed Susan blooms any time from June to September in sunny places. They are found in the open, dryer areas of King's Corner and Trout Ponds Prairie.

The Latin name for this wildflower is *Rudbeckia Hirta*; the first word refers to its daisy-like appearance and the second word means "hairy" in English. That refers to the fine hairs on the plant stem. This flower is native to the eastern and central USA, but it has spread all over the US and Canada, and is now even found in China. It's a survivor!

Butterflies are attracted to this flower, and the plant serves as a host for several types of butterfly larvae. Native Americans used the leaves and petals of this plant to make a tea thought to fight colds, flu, and infections. The Ojibwa Indians used it as a poultice for snake bites and for treating intestinal worms.

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