

School-to-Nature

Wild Cucumber Vine



- This vine has 5-pointed leaves much like the garden cucumber, and has delicate white flowers. It forms prickly, gourd-like fruits that appear similar to a cucumber, but they are NOT edible. Vines can reach 25 feet in length, and grow from a gnarly root mass that is huge and heavy.
- It grows well in wetland areas. It blooms and makes its fruits from July through autumn. It is found on Conservancy lands at Trout Ponds Prairie.
- Eating the fruit will cause stomach upset and diarrhea, but the roots have been used in folk medicine. Pulverized roots were used as a poultice for headaches, tea, or love potion; and roots were boiled as a tonic for stomach trouble, kidney problems, rheumatism, chills and fever. Seeds were used as beads.
- In areas of prairie fires, this plant is one of the first to re-seed. It's a survivor.