



MULBERRY BEND TRAILS: COMMON PRAIRIE PLANTS



Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*)

Sometimes called “turkey-foot” due to the shape of its flowers, it is prince of the tallgrass prairie. This grass flowers in summer, reaching over 6’ in height and providing excellent habitat and forage for countless prairie species.



Narrow-leaved purple coneflower (*Echinacea angustifolia*)

This showy wildflower is frequent in Great Plains prairies. It is frequently included in seed mixes and is now most common on roadsides.



Wild four o'clock (*Mirabilis nyctangea*)

This large herb is common across MNRR and prevalent along the overlook trail. Less showy than its relatives, the small pink flowers are clustered in a large head above the clasping opposite leaves.

Common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)

This aggressive rhizomatous native is abundant all throughout the midwest. It is toxic to livestock and therefore increases with over-grazing. Its flowers provide excellent habitat for butterflies, bees, and beetles.



Shell-leaf penstemon (*Penstemon grandiflorum*)

Among the most beloved prairie wildflowers, this species was widely seeded in roadside plantings where it is common today. Its showy “beardtongue” flowers emerge in spring and last only briefly.



Side-oats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)

This upland grass thrives on well drained slopes. Look for its drooping flowers in summer.

Prairie Coneflower (*Ratibida Columnifera*)



This common Great Plains native is frequent on dry prairies and pastures. Look for it along the overlook trail in July.

Soapweed (*Yucca glauca*)

This member of the lily family once reminded explorers and pioneers that they were entering the “Great American Desert” Its large taproot allows it to survive long heat and drought

