

October 2016 Plant of the Month



Solidago erecta Pursh, Showy or Erect Goldenrod

Plant of the Month for October is another native fall flowering composite. *Solidago erecta* is one of New Jersey native upland goldenrods. The plant is found throughout the Coastal Plain, as well as Hunterdon, Sussex, Bergen and Essex counties. Mary Hough (1983) lists all southern counties except Gloucester and Salem. Personal observations in the recent past indicates this omission was due to the lack of herbarium specimens. The plant is frequent on dry roads, field edges and thin woodlands in both counties.

This plant can be differentiated from its closest erect form goldenrod relative, *Solidago puberula*, by its smooth hairless leaves and stems; the "pointed" flower bracts, and larger, broad, smooth basal leaves with few, widely spaced teeth.

Native Americans often used concoctions using members of the genus *Solidago*, yet no specific use for this species has been listed ((Moerman, 1999). Members of this genus have been used for medicine by eastern tribes for ailments such as cold remedies, analgesics, bun and cramp treatments.

Erect goldenrod is now in full flower, and it can be seen on road edges throughout southern New Jersey. Be sure to watch the road edges for an erect small yellow flowered stalk when you traverse our southern counties on your fall botanical forays.

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