

September 2017 Plant of the Month



Rhexia mariana L., Maryland Meadow Beauty

September's *Plant of the Month* is a member of a large family well represented in tropical America. The genus, *Rhexia*, has three species representatives in New Jersey. Our Plant of the Month, in one of these meadow beauties. *Rhexia mariana* is found on the moist acidic lowlands from Massachusetts to Florida, west to Kansas. New Jersey's population is limited to Coastal Plain land south of the fall line.

Rhexia mariana has two varieties in addition to the typical form. *Rhexia* authorities Kral and Bostick identify *Rhexia mariana* var. *interior* as a taller variety, and as the name implies, is found in continent's interior focused around the central Mississippi River drainage. *Rhexia mariana* var. *ventricosa* is a rare coastal plain species, which extends north into Cape May and recently extended into Gloucester County. The most common variety in New Jersey is the typical variety.

Rhexia mariana flowers from July through August and early September. The delicate pink petals give way to urn shaped capsule that are visible throughout the winter. Remnants of this season's flowering period are still visible. Now is the time to see this beauty before all signs of the flowering fades into the fall of the year.

JRA, 9/2017