



Illinois Native Plant Society -
Southern Chapter

Guide to Summer Wildflower Hikes in Southern Illinois

All photos and text by Chris Benda and Chris Evans

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Cover photo: Spiderlily, *Hymenocallis caroliniana*, a beautiful wildflower that can be found in bloom in later summer in bottomland forests in southern Illinois
Back photo: Goat's rue, *Tephrosia virginiana*, a summer wildflower found in open woodlands and barrens across southern Illinois

Introduction

Summer is a great time to get outdoors in southern Illinois. You can find beautiful summer wildflowers growing in most habitat types in southern Illinois. As with spring wildflowers, rich, moist woods are home to many beautiful summer-flowering species. In addition, open habitats, such as barrens, woodlands, and glades are great places to see spectacular wildflower displays in the summer. Many of these sites are now being protected and managed by state or federal agencies and have been designated as state nature preserves or research natural areas. To help protect sensitive species and preserve the sites for the enjoyment of others, please remain on marked trails.

Through a grant from the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund, the Southern Chapter of the Illinois Native Plant Society has produced this guide to summer wildflower hikes in southern Illinois as a follow-up to the very successful Guide to Spring Wildflower Hikes in Southern Illinois (Evans and Benda 2013). This guide was designed to highlight the best summer wildflower viewing opportunities and the seven sites described are all on public lands, have well-marked trails and are relatively easily accessible.

The guide includes a written description of each trail, a list of notable summer wildflowers found at the site, trail distance, difficulty rating and a trail map. When multiple trails are shown on the map, we highlight the suggested trail in black. Driving directions are included in the text and coordinates for the trailheads are given for GPS users. On the trail maps, the hiking trails are marked with a gray dashed line and public land is beige in color.

While this is not a field guide, instructing the reader on how to identify the wildflowers, a small section is included to show fifteen of the most common wildflowers that you are likely to observe during the summer at any of the included locations. To learn more about the identification of summer wildflowers or just to enjoy our native plants in general, please consider getting involved with the Illinois Native Plant Society. The Southern Illinois Chapter is very active, hosting meetings and guided hikes throughout the year. Information on the Southern Chapter of the Illinois Native Plant Society can be found on our website at www.ill-inps.org or by sending us an email to southernillinoisplants@gmail.com. Also, please "like" us on facebook at www.facebook.com/southernillinoisplants.

A Note on Invasive Plants

Invasive plants, species not native to the natural ecosystems of southern Illinois, can have a devastating effect on our native wildflowers. Unfortunately, sometimes people unintentionally introduce these species into our natural areas through seeds on their clothing or in mud on their shoes. To help prevent this from happening, we ask that everyone hiking on these trails makes sure their clothing and footwear are free of any seeds or mud before taking the hike.