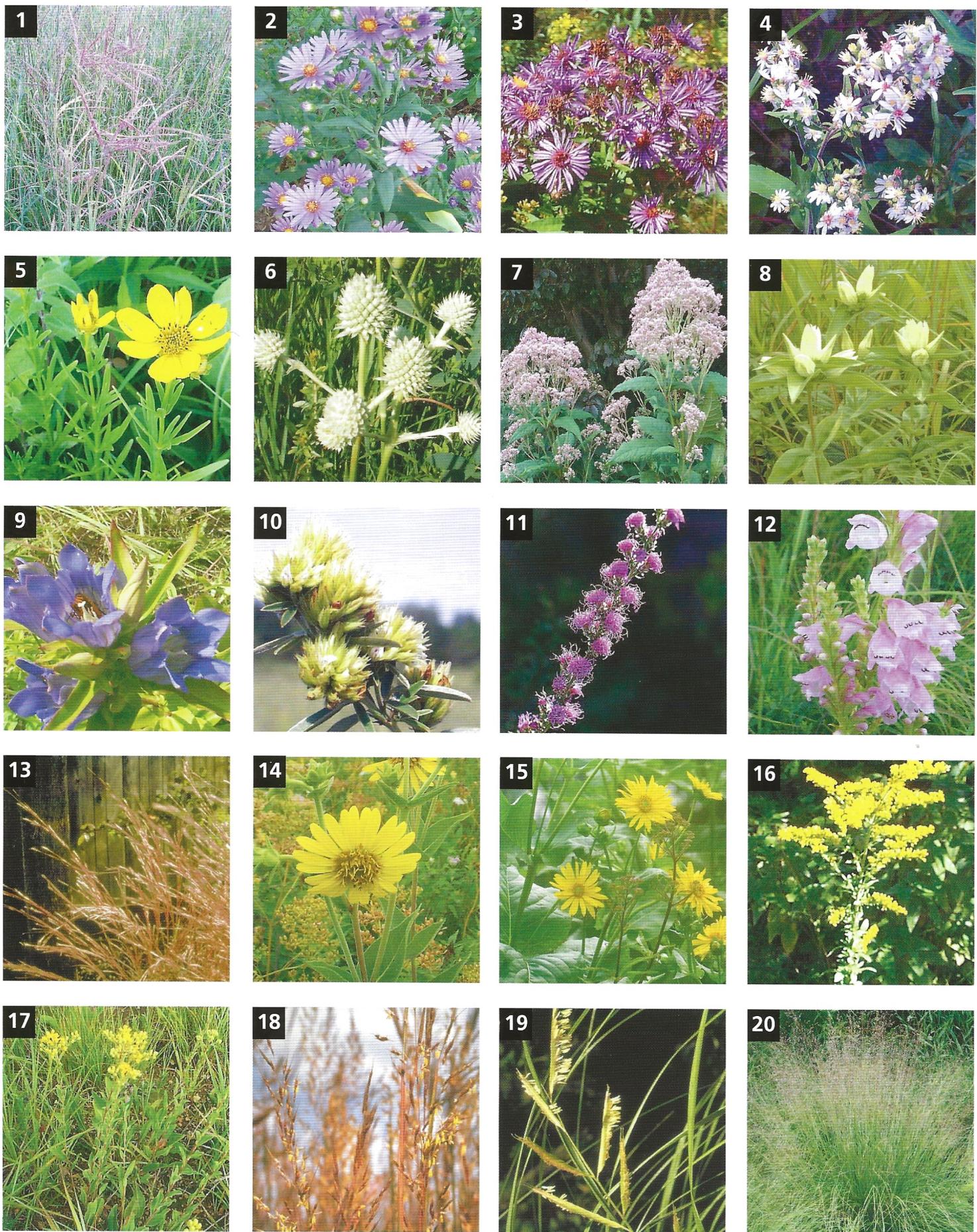


Late Summer & Autumn Prairie Plants



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1 **Big Bluestem** (*Andropogon gerardii*) – The classic grass of the tallgrass prairie. It grows 5 to 8 feet tall. In late August it produces its distinctive 3-parted flower inflorescence, which resemble a turkey's foot. In autumn, the lustrous green leaf-blades turn reddish-brown lasting long into winter.

2 **Smooth Blue Aster** (*Sympotrichum laeve*) – Smooth, narrow, blue-green leaves clasp around the 2 to 4 foot tall stems. Clusters of individually stalked, lavender flowers appear on the upper half of the plant. Flowers attract butterflies.

3 **New England Aster** (*Sympotrichum novae-angliae*) – Large, 4-inch long, bristly-haired leaves clasp 4 to 6 foot tall stems. Each showy flower head supports up to 40 deep purple, petal-like ray flowers surrounding an orange-center disk. Important nectar source for butterflies.

4 **Arrow-leaved Aster** (*Sympotrichum sagittifolium*) – A common aster found in oak savannas. The stem is 3 to 4 feet tall with toothed, arrowhead-shaped lower leaves with winged stalks. Small clusters of pale blue to lavender flower heads are pyramidal-shaped.

5 **Tall Coreopsis** (*Coreopsis tripteris*) – Abundant in moist to dry prairies. Individual flower heads occur on erect, slender, 4 to 5-foot tall stalks. Flower heads are 1 to 2 inches wide, bright yellow, with a brown central disk.

6 **Rattlesnake Master** (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) – Long, blue-green, spiny-edged leaves resemble a yucca. The unique, globular clusters of fragrant, white flowers may have once been considered an antidote to rattlesnake venom. Grows 2 to 3 feet tall.

7 **Purple Joe Pye Weed** (*Eutrochium purpureum*) – A moisture-loving, clump-forming perennial, reaching 5 to 7 feet tall. Widely spaced, coarse leaves are whorled. The large domes of massive, 12-inch, smoky pink flower heads are excellent for attracting butterflies.

8 **Yellowish Gentian** (*Gentiana alba*) – An uncommon gentian found in prairies, ravines, and woodlands. The creamy-white flowers are clustered close to the top of unbranched, 18-inch tall stems. Leaves are pointed and attached without leaf stalks.

9 **Downy Gentian** (*Gentiana puberulenta*) – Found in dry, upland prairies and open savannas. The 5-petaled, deep blue, cup-shaped flowers are clustered at the top of 12 to 18-inch stalks. One of the last flowers to appear in autumn.

10 **Round-headed Bush-Clover** (*Lespedeza capitata*) – Compound leaves are divided into 3 leaflets and covered with fine, silvery hairs. Small, creamy-white, pea-shaped flowers occur in rounded heads. Reddish-brown seedpods remain attractive throughout winter. Grows 3 to 4 feet tall.

11 **Rough Blazing Star** (*Liatris aspera*) – Usually a plant of dry prairies with slender, grass-like leaves. Each 3-foot tall flower spike is comprised of small, tightly bundled heads of lavender flowers. A favorite for attracting monarch butterflies. Dried fruits are a favorite of goldfinch.

12 **Obedient Plant** (*Physostegia virginiana*) – Plants can be 3 to 4 feet tall and have long, narrow, waxy green leaves. Each pinkish-lavender, snapdragon-like flower can be moved laterally around spiked stems and remains “obediently” where it is placed.

13 **Little Bluestem** (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) – The attractive bluish-green leaf-blades grow about 12 inches tall. Fluffy seed heads appear on 2 to 3-foot tall stalks in August. In autumn the leaf-blades turn attractive shades of reddish-brown, remaining effective all winter.

14 **Rosinweed** (*Silphium integrifolium*) – Three-inch yellow, daisy-like flower heads appear atop 3 to 5-foot tall stout stems. The large leaves can be variable in shape but are rough and sandpapery. Fruits (seeds) attract birds.

15 **Cup Plant** (*Silphium perfoliatum*) – A stately 5 to 8-foot tall plant with opposite leaves joined to form a cup around a thick square stem. This reservoir holds rainwater that is used by insects and birds. Several yellow, daisy-like flowers comprise the flower head.

16 **Tall Goldenrod** (*Solidago altissima*) – One of the most common goldenrods of the savanna and prairie edge. Large, vivid, yellow flower heads are borne 1-sided on spreading recurved branches. Plants grow 3 to 5 feet tall.

17 **Stiff Goldenrod** (*Solidago rigida*) – A 3 to 5-foot tall, clump-forming goldenrod with flat-topped, yellow flower heads that attract butterflies. The greenish-yellow leaves add interest throughout the growing season. Fruit heads are a goldfinch favorite.

18 **Indian Grass** (*Sorghastrum nutans*) – Fast growing, blue-gray leaf-blades form upright, 5 to 7-foot tall clumps. Feathery large plumes of yellow flower inflorescence are held above the foliage, turning golden brown in the fall. The hairy fruits have twisted bristle tips about 1/2 inch long.

19 **Prairie Cord Grass** (*Spartina pectinata*) – Graceful, arching leaf-blades reach 4 to 6 feet tall and turn a bright yellow in early fall. Each branched inflorescence is 8 to 16 inches long with hundreds of tiny purple blooms arranged one-sided, like a comb.

20 **Prairie Dropseed** (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) – Fine-textured clumps of fountain-like, emerald green leaf blades turn reddish-orange in the fall, fading to a soft copper winter color. Small inflorescence is held 2 to 3 feet above the foliage with an unmistakable popcorn fragrance.