

Kalamazoo Valley Museum

[Marsh Blazing Star](#) ([Iris *Liatris spicata*](#))



These terminal spiked, fluffy beauties are amazing. Their closely-set flowers are stemless and are attached to the base. The flowers open from the top down. The base is clump forming and should be divided every 3 or 4 years. The flowers have a vanilla scent and are pollinator magnets. They attract native bees and bumble bees along with hummingbirds and butterflies. Numerous insects feed and raise their young on the foliage. Plants can live up to 40 years. They are deer, pest, and disease resistant and humidity and heat tolerant. They are great in potpourri and as cut flowers. A florist's favorite.

Fun facts: Native peoples used the plant for medicinal purposes and as an antiseptic wash. The name represents satisfaction, bliss, and happiness.

Grows in: full sun

Soil: mesic, wet-mesic, wet

Why plant MI native plants? Native plants bring diversity to your yard, increase the diversity of insects, and therefore create a more diverse food chain. They help create a full "circle of life" for insects and hence birds and other animals in the food chain. Native plants use a minimal amount of water, require minimal maintenance, require no chemicals, provide beautiful landscapes, and build a natural wildlife habitat.