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GOLDENROD

My prairie wildflower meadow has been a sea of yellow for the past many weeks, much to the happiness of the many bees and butterflies that flick and flutter about it. Goldenrod is a late summer flowering native perennial. Its large clumps of bright yellow blossoms seem to reflect the rays of the lower, late summer sun. It is also a nice contrast to the asters that also dot the edges of the meadow.

Goldenrod is a member of the composite family along with the daisy, coreopsis, sunflower and gaillardia. Its Latin name



'*Silidago*' means to make whole or heal, which describes its use in herbal medicine. With its showy, bright yellow flowers, it has gotten a bad rap for causing allergic reactions when it is actually the



common ragweed with its small nondescript flowers that is the culprit. *S. Bigelowia* is a native of the southeastern United States. Another species, *s. Nemoralis*, called old field or prairie goldenrod is found in all states east of the Rocky Mts.



Goldenrod grows from rhizomes which have the tendency to clump and spread, sending up new growth. The seeds may also be carried by the wind or disturbed by the many finches that feed on them.

Since it easily flourishes along roadsides and open areas, it is often considered a weed, though many varieties and hybrids may be found

in the native plant section of garden centers.

Since acquiring the prairie wildflower meadow with our move, I have come to appreciate the beauty of goldenrod as it closes the summer blooming season.

