

# Sweet Joe Pye weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*)

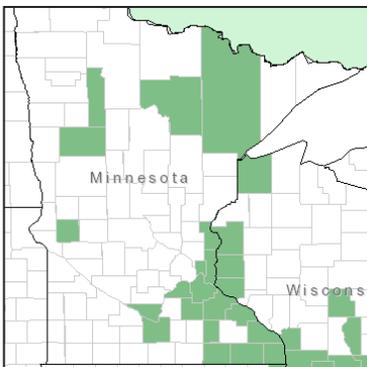
## Family: Aster (*Asteraceae*)

**DESCRIPTION:** A showy perennial that blooms July through September, sweet Joe Pye weed, AKA sweet scented Joe Pye weed, grows up to 7 feet tall. It can serve as a focal point in partially shaded stormwater plantings, pollinator plots and restorations. Tubular florets make up the abundant pink, dome-shaped flower clusters. Lanceolate with serrated edges, the whorled, dull-green leaves extend from the stem in groups of three to five.

**USES:** A source of pollen and nectar to bees, butterflies, skippers and moths that can access its tubular flowers, it's a favorite of the monarch butterfly, and valuable to caterpillars and other insects. Its height makes sweet Joe Pye weed a garden focal point, and a landscaping option in lieu of shrubs. Cut flowers work well in bouquets.

### REFERENCES:

[Illinois Wildflowers](#)  
[Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#)  
[Minnesota Wildflowers](#)  
[NRCS Plants Database](#)



Map Credit: NRCS Plants Database



Photo Credit: Tara Perriello, BWSR

## Planting Recommendations

Naturally occurring in oak savannas, open woodlands and at thickets' edges, sweet Joe Pye weed prefers partial shade. Too much sun may shrivel the leaves and turn them yellowish-green. It does best in nutrient-rich, loamy soil, and prefers moderately wet to wet conditions. The species can serve as an accent in large, partially shaded rain gardens and stormwater swales. Great blue lobelia, wild bergamot, fox sedge and asters make good companion plants. Containerized and bare-

root plants often are found at nurseries; starting from seed is another option. For quick results and less effort, containerized plants work best in smaller pollinator gardens. Seed is more cost-effective for larger pollinator meadows or restorations. Seeds require stratification to break their seed coat — either naturally over winter or artificially in a refrigerator to break dormancy. Seed can be broadcast and lightly raked into the soil in the fall.

**STATEWIDE WETLAND INDICATOR STATUS:** FAC

### SIMILAR SPECIES:

Spotted Joe Pye weed, *Eutrochium maculatum*, grows in full sun, reaching 4 to 5 feet tall. While sweet Joe Pye weed has small purple specks on its stem at the site of whorled leaves, this species has purple stems, or spots throughout the entire length of the stem.

### Developed by Akia Vang

A University of Minnesota student focused on environmental sciences, Vang strives to foster environmental health by restoring habitats such as native prairies and wetlands. Vang was among the summer 2020 Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC) fellows.

