

Wood anemone (*Anemone quinquefolia*)

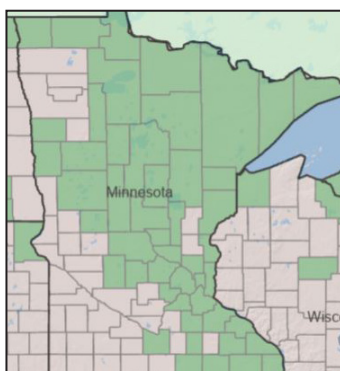
Family: Buttercup (*Ranunculacea*)

DESCRIPTION: Among the first to bloom each spring as more light reaches the forest floor, wood anemone is a perennial wildflower commonly found in deciduous and mixed deciduous-coniferous forests. The low-growing ground cover spreads by rhizomes, often forming patches. Wood anemone flowers from April to June and holds its leaves until mid-summer, when the plant dies back. The plant spreads at a slow to moderate pace.

USES: Wood anemone makes an attractive ground cover in woodland and shade gardens. Flowers are pollinated by small bees and flies, and seeds are dispersed by ants. The plant can cause dermatitis and is poisonous if eaten in large quantities.

REFERENCES:

[Minnesota Wildflowers](#)
[Friends of the Wild Flower Garden](#)
[Illinois Wildflowers](#)
[USDA Forest Service](#)



Range Map Credit: NRCS Plants Database



Photo Credit: Susan Nelson

Planting Recommendations

Wood anemone thrives in partial shade and moderately moist, humus-rich soils. Seeds and plants are available from native plant nurseries. Seeds require alternating cold and warm treatments to germinate. This can be done artificially indoors, or as occurs naturally when planted directly outdoors in fall. It can take two years for seedlings to emerge from direct outdoor plantings. Artificial treatments involve 60 to 90 days of cold-moist stratification, followed by 60 to 90 days of warm treatment, and then another cold treatment. Divisions from established patches of wood

anemone in cultivated gardens can be transplanted to start new colonies. In a woodland restoration, wood anemone may re-emerge if viable seeds or rhizomes remain and are free of competition from invasive plants. Take care to note the genus and species name when purchasing seeds or plants; the European species *Anemone nemorosa* is also sold as wood anemone. While similar in appearance, the European species may not offer the same ecological benefits, such as providing food for pollinators. Good companion plants include trillium, Solomon's seal, rue anemone and false rue anemone.

Developed by BWSR and Susan Nelson, a botanist with more than 40 years of experience studying Minnesota's flora



**STATEWIDE
WETLAND
INDICATOR
STATUS:** FAC

ID: Two of the three palmately divided, pointed leaflets are deeply incised. A whorl of light to dark green leaves appears below a single flower measuring about 1 inch wide, typically with five white or, rarely, pink sepals and many stamens with white anthers. Plants grow 4 to 7 inches tall. Leaves and stems are hairy.

SIMILAR

SPECIES: Rue anemone and false rue anemone are distinguished by their yellow anthers, hairless leaves and stems, and leaflets that are divided but neither sharply toothed nor pointed.