

Lance-leaf figwort (*Scrophularia lanceolata*)

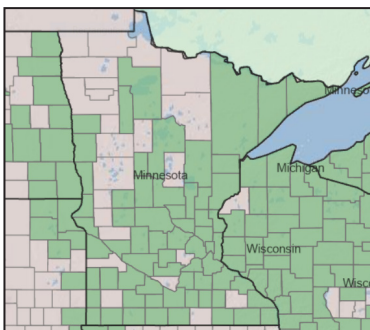
Family: Scrophulariaceae
(Figwort)

DESCRIPTION: Widespread across Minnesota, lance-leaf figwort, also known as early figwort, prefers average to moist loamy soils in partial shade to sun. In the wild, it is often found in meadows, forest edges, along roadsides and in the dappled shade of open woods. Its small, understated, nectar-rich flowers are excellent for pollinators, hummingbirds and beneficial predatory wasps. Compounds in the plant make it unpalatable to deer and rabbits.

USES: The species is well-suited for rain gardens and partial shade gardens. In the 1880s, beekeepers planted solid stands, claiming a single acre of figwort could produce 400 to 800 pounds of honey. The scientific name refers to its historic use in treating “scrofula” (tuberculosis-related infections). Modern herbalists use figwort to treat burns, wounds, swelling, sprains and thyroid issues.

REFERENCES:

[Minnesota Wildflowers](#)
[Minnesota Seasons](#)
[Xerces Society](#)



Range Map Credit: USDA Plants Database



Photo Credit: Prairie Moon Nursery

STATEWIDE WETLAND INDICATOR STATUS:

GP: FAC
MW: FACU
NCNE: FACU

ID: Plants grow 3 to 6 feet tall with green-to-red, square, stiff stems. Lance-shaped leaves are opposite and sharply toothed. Small, reddish-brown tubular flowers bloom from May to July. Flowers have two petals that extend over the rest, resembling a tiny fist with index and middle fingers extended or a lidded honey pot.

SIMILAR SPECIES:

Until flowers appear, lance-leaf figwort can resemble stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), but the figwort leaves are hairless. Maryland figwort (*Scrophularia marilandica*) has longer leaf stalks, up to 2.5 inches, a heart-shaped leaf base, and a stem that is four-sided with rounded edges.

Planting Recommendations

Lance-leaf figwort plants and seeds can be found commercially, but are not always readily available. Seeds should be harvested when the teardrop-shaped seed pods are brown and dry. Harvest the pods and rub them lightly to separate the seeds. Keep seeds in a cool location until planting. Seeds should be sown directly on the soil surface during late

fall or winter. Plants can grow in moderately dry, sunny areas, but thrive in partial shade with average to damp loamy soils. They make a great component of a large planting or can be used as a backdrop or planted in clumps in a smaller landscape, as they do not need staking. They are most valuable to pollinators when planted in large clusters.

Developed by Kristy Cowdin, a Great River Greening ecologist, who has been working in habitat restoration for more than 20 years

