

Woodland strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*)

Family: Rose (Rosaceae)

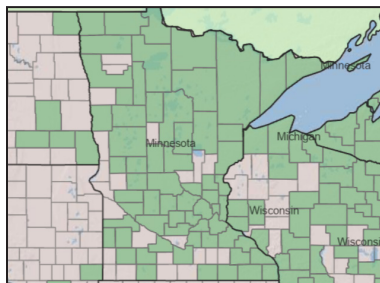
DESCRIPTION: This native perennial blooms from April to June, producing small, bright red berries that are sweet and slightly tart. It grows in a variety of habitats, including hardwood forests, mixed woods, swamps and rocky woodlands. Often referred to as the heart berry because of its resemblance to the human heart, strawberries are called “ode’imin” in the Anishinaabe language.

USES: To the Anishinaabe, strawberries are known as the first berries of spring and the first medicine. Available early in spring for traditional use, strawberry leaves and roots are used in teas to support digestion and immune health. A strong brew of the leaves can help with skin irritation and eczema. Crushed berries can be applied topically to help treat skin issues. Berries provide antioxidants and fiber.

REFERENCES:

[Minnesota Wildflowers](#)
[USDA Forest Service](#)

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants; Robin Wall Kimmerer



Range Map Credit: USDA Plants Database



Planting Recommendations

Woodland strawberries are fairly low-maintenance plants. Unlike many other strawberry varieties, they form tidy mounds that remain less than 1 foot tall. They work well as borders along garden beds and pathways or as colorful ground cover. Because woodland strawberries naturally grow in wooded and shaded environments, they are well suited to shaded garden locations with moist, well-drained soil where other plants may struggle to thrive. They can

also serve as an alternative to turfgrass or as a green mulch in gardens. Plant seedlings in spring after the risk of frost has passed. It takes a few visits from pollinators to thoroughly pollinate the flowers for the best results in berry production. Consider planting pollinator-friendly flowers nearby to attract beneficial insects. Borage, thyme and yarrow make good companion plants because they attract pollinators and deter unwanted pests.

Developed by Madison Bear, invasive species program manager for the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa



Photo Credit: Marcie O'Connor, [Prairie Haven blog](#)

STATEWIDE WETLAND INDICATOR

STATUS: GP,
MW, NCNE: UPL

ID: The plant grows between 6 to 12 inches tall and produces small white flowers in clusters of two to five on slender stems. Each flower has five round-to-oval petals surrounding a yellow center. Leaves are compound, with three toothed leaflets featuring prominent veins. Seeds protrude from the surface of the fruit.

SIMILAR

SPECIES: The seeds of the more common wild strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*) are embedded in the fruit, which is less conical. The central tooth of wild strawberries' leaves is shorter than those on either side.