

Virginia mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum virginianum*)

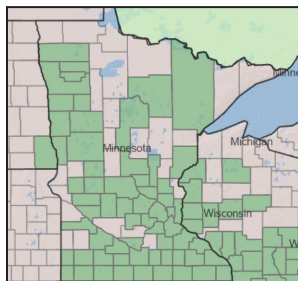
Family: Mint (Lamiaceae)

DESCRIPTION: Strongly scented foliage helps Virginia mountain mint deter deer, rabbits and other herbivores. This adaptable native plant grows in a variety of conditions, including prairies, bluffs, fens, wetlands and along streambanks. It produces nectar-rich flowers from July to September that attract a variety of pollinators.

USES: Well-suited to home gardens, Virginia mountain mint grows in a variety of landscapes. Its leaves are edible and can be used fresh in salads or brewed for tea. Its flowers attract insects including bees, wasps, beetles, butterflies and ants.

REFERENCES:

[Minnesota Wildflowers](#)
[Illinois Wildflowers](#)
[Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#)
[Tallgrass Prairie Center](#)



Range Map Credit: USDA
Plants Database



Photo Credit: Becca Krasky

Planting Recommendations

Virginia mountain mint prefers medium to moist soil conditions, grows in a wide range of soil types, and thrives in part shade to full sun. Once established, the plant is drought tolerant. It can be grown from seeds, planted as plugs, transplanted as a mature plant or propagated from stem cuttings. Seeds are easily collected by snipping dried seed heads in the fall. Because the tiny seeds require light to germinate, they should be scattered on the soil surface, not buried.

Seeds can be directly sown outdoors in the fall, allowing natural winter conditions to break dormancy, or they can be cold, moist stratified in a refrigerator for 30 days before sowing. Virginia mountain mint spreads by both rhizomes and seed, eventually forming colonies, and needs ample space in a garden. It pairs well with other mesic to moist prairie species, including rattlesnake master, heart-leaved golden Alexanders, swamp milkweed and meadow blazing star.

Developed by Becca Krasky, Monarch Joint Venture urban agriculture and community conservation coordinator



STATEWIDE WETLAND INDICATOR STATUS:

GP: FAC; MW & NCNE:
FACW

ID: Virginia mountain mint produces 1-inch clusters containing up to 50 small, white, two-lipped flowers, often marked with light purple spots. Its opposite, tapered leaves grow up to 2 ½ inches long and a half-inch wide; when crushed, they release a strong, minty fragrance. The square stems are green to reddish-green with white hairs along the ridges. Mature plants grow up to 3 feet tall, often forming bushy clumps with multiple stems.

SIMILAR SPECIES:

Narrow-leaved mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*), which is native to surrounding states, is less aromatic, bears slightly larger flowers and lacks white hairs on its stems. Its leaves are typically less than a quarter-inch wide. Grass-leaved goldenrod (*Euthamia graminifolia*) has similar foliage, but its leaves do not have a minty scent, its stems are round and it has yellow flowers.