

Prairie alumroot (*Heuchera richardsonii*)

Family: Saxifrage (Saxifragaceae)

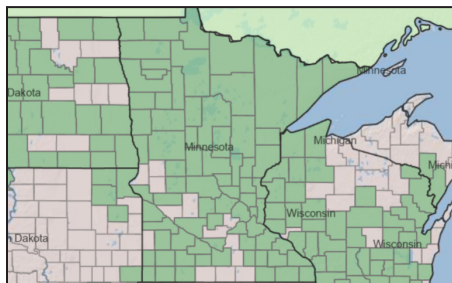
DESCRIPTION: Prairie alumroot, also known as Richardson's alumroot, is an early flowering perennial that blooms from May to July along slender stalks that rise from a basal rosette of curly leaves. It can be found in prairies, open woods and along Lake Superior's rocky North Shore.

USES: Adding this tidy, clump-forming plant to a garden can attract butterflies, hummingbirds and other native pollinators, including one of Minnesota's specialist bee species, **Andrews' cellophane bee** (pictured). A 2026 study found that females of this species are entirely dependent on prairie alumroot for pollen. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources classifies the bee as a vulnerable species in Minnesota, meaning it faces a moderate risk of disappearing from the state. Planting prairie alumroot can support the bee by providing an essential pollen source and contributing to conservation of the species. The plant also helps stabilize soil, making it useful for erosion control.

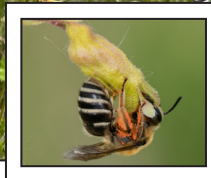
REFERENCES:

[Minnesota Wildflowers](#)

Pollinators of Native Plants: Attract, Observe and Identify Pollinators and Beneficial Insects With Native Plants; Heather Holm; Pollination Press LLC



Range Map Credit: USDA Plants Database



Planting Recommendations

Prairie alumroot can tolerate a wide range of conditions, but thrives in dry, sunny sites. It can be grown from seed or plugs. Because the seeds are very small, surface sow them. The plant is prone to root rot, so it does best in well-drained, sandy or gravelly soils, making it a good choice for rock gardens. Its relatively shallow

root system benefits from winter mulch to protect the roots. Once established, prairie alumroot is durable and low maintenance. Clumps can be divided every few years. Avoid planting it near large, tall sunlight-blocking perennials. Good companion plants include harebell, wild lupine, prairie phlox and Ohio spiderwort.

Developed by Nina Gropp, Minnesota GreenCorps member, Lawns to Legumes coach and University of Minnesota pollinator ambassador



Photo Credits: Heather Holm

STATEWIDE WETLAND INDICATOR

STATUS: GP, MW,
NCNE: FACU

ID: The heart-shaped basal leaves have wavy, toothed edges. Younger plants may have white- or red-hued leaves. Hairs cover leaves' undersides, the outer flower surfaces and flower stalks, which grow up to 3 feet tall and bear short branches of pale green, tubular flowers about a half-inch long. Long stamens extend beyond the flowers, exposing bright orange pollen. Depending upon sun exposure, flowers range from yellow to red.

SIMILAR SPECIES:

Bishop's cap (*Mitella diphylla*) also has hairy, heart-shaped basal leaves, but it blooms in April. Its flower stalks have a single pair of opposite leaves and unbranched flower clusters with white, feathery petals.