

Dotted blazing star (*Liatris punctata*)

Family: Aster (*Asteraceae*)

DESCRIPTION: Grouped in spiky clusters, rose-to-purple flower heads bloom from the top down. Plants grow 1 to 2 feet tall; grasslike leaves grow up to 4 inches long. One plant can contain many upright stems and several flower heads that open from July to September. Found throughout much of Minnesota's prairie region, dotted blazing star provides pollinator habitat.

USES: A rich nectar source for monarchs, flowers attract insects including other butterfly species, hoverflies and native bees. Blazing stars are hosts for two types of flower moths. An attractive addition to gardens with sandy soils, the flowers also add interest to floral arrangements. Historically, the plant was used to reduce swelling and treat stomachaches.



Photo Credit: Prairie Moon Nursery

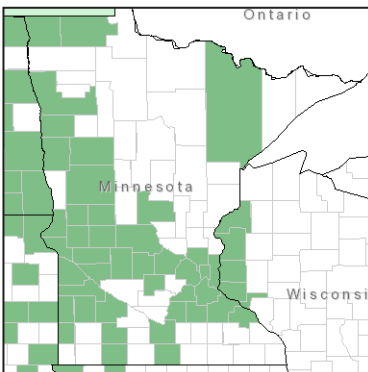
STATEWIDE WETLAND INDICATOR STATUS: None

ID: Circular, rose-to-purple flower heads are composed of three to eight disk flowers. Bracts have long, white hairs along the edges. Dotted resin covers the lance-shaped leaves, which are shorter near the top of the plant, and edged with short white hairs.

SIMILAR SPECIES: The number of disk flowers and characteristics of bracts help to distinguish blazing stars that grow in dry prairies. Rough blazing star (*Liatris aspera*) has 25 to 40 disk flowers with round bracts. Mainly found in southeastern Minnesota, the shortest native species, cylindrical blazing star (*Liatris cylindracea*), has brown to purple bracts and tubular flowers with antennalike protrusions coming from the center.

REFERENCES:

[Minnesota Wild lowers](#)
[Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#)



Range Map Credit: NRCS Plants Database

Developed by Jenna Benson,
a College of St. Benedict
junior pursuing a degree in
environmental studies.

Planting Recommendations

Dotted blazing star flourishes in full sun and sandy soils. In prairies or roadsides, it is often found on south-facing slopes. This perennial may be started from seed or grown from containers available at native plant nurseries. Because seeds need cold, moist stratification to germinate, it's easiest to broadcast them by hand, and then lightly rake them into the soil in late fall. Be patient; blazing stars tend to grow only a couple of inches the first year while roots develop. Those roots can grow nearly 3 feet long. The underground

corms can be divided in spring or fall, and then replanted. Dotted blazing star has a high fire tolerance, and a controlled burn can expand its population. Seeds are a good option to include in pollinator meadow and prairie restoration mixes. Container plantings work well in native pocket gardens. Complementary native plants include prairie dropseed grass (*Sporobolus heterolepis*), hoary vervain (*Verbena stricta*), pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*) and prairie Junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*).