



Photo by Nelson DeBarros, USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

Seaside goldenrod

Seaside goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*) is generally the most available of the four native goldenrods that are grown commercially. This plant blooms in very showy masses on dunes, in swales and brackish marshes, on sandy soils in coastal areas, and occasionally inland throughout the state, except for the Keys.

Goldenrod is often mistakenly blamed for triggering allergies, but it is ragweed, which blooms heavily around the same time, that is to blame.

Goldenrods have been used medicinally since Roman times or earlier. Seaside goldenrod was used by the Seminoles to treat wounds.

Description

Seaside goldenrod has golden-yellow tubular blooms that densely cover the long wand-like inflorescences on the tips of the stem in summer and fall in most of the state, and also in the spring in South Florida. This perennial retains its long strap-shaped, somewhat-fleshy basal leaves year-round. Leaves gradually become smaller as they ascend stems. Plants are 4- to 6-feet tall in flower and spread by rhizomes to make large colonies over time. Plant it where it can make a big show in the garden, or allow it a large space in the landscape.

Planting

Because of its large size, space plants 3 feet or more apart and allow to fill in over time. It spreads by rhizomes to make dense stands with stout stems and is easy to retain in the landscape.



Photo by Mary Keim

Bees on goldenrod

Seeds

Collect seeds after flowers are spent and fluffy tufts of hairs occur. These are called "pappus" and are attached to the end of seeds. Seeds also are available commercially.

Plants

Plants are available in quart, 1-gallon and 3-gallon containers. It can be propagated using division.

Butterflies and bees

A variety of butterflies and other pollinators are attracted to Goldenrod as a nectar plant. The plants also attract birds searching for insects.

Care

This plant performs best in harsh conditions with no watering after establishment. To reduce height, cut back plants in mid-summer before blooms start to form, and cut back to basal rosettes after blooming. There is no need for cold protection. Seaside goldenrod also is fairly disease-free.

Site conditions

This plant needs lots of sun to bloom prolifically, but it will tolerate some shade. Although it can occur in moist to wet areas naturally, it is important to plant it in sandy, well-drained soils for best performance in landscapes. This keeps its height in check, keeps plants from falling over or needing staking, and produces more showy blooms. Seaside goldenrod is salt tolerant.

Hardiness zones

Seaside goldenrod is best suited for zones 8A–11.

Other species

Wand goldenrod (*Solidago stricta*) blooms in the fall with lavender blazing stars in wetter flatwoods and prairie communities throughout Florida. It has the same slender wand appearance of the blazing star, but its flowers are golden yellow. This 2- to 4-foot perennial has small basal leaves and very small appressed leaves on its flowering stems, which die back after seeds mature.





Pinebarren goldenrod (*Solidago fistulosa*) is Florida's most common goldenrod, found on disturbed sites and in pine flatwoods, wetter soils, and dry upland habitats throughout Florida. The panicles of its golden flowering heads are found on the ends of stems reaching 3 to 5 feet. It spreads through rhizomes to cover large areas, so it should be carefully placed in the landscape.

Chapman's goldenrod (*Solidago odora* var. *chapmanii*) likes the dry sandy soils of sandhills and open hammocks in the peninsula and a few areas in the central Panhandle. It does not spread by rhizomes, and is a relatively slender branching plant that reaches 3 to 4 feet tall — shorter than most other species. Its typical golden flowers bloom in late summer to early fall and are found on the tips of downward-bending branches.



Photo by Ryan Brown

Pinebarren goldenrod





3–4 ft
Nectar