

Goldenrod

Genus/species *Solidago canadensis* and other species of *Solidago*

Family Asteraceae

Distribution Throughout most of US except hot desert areas of Southwest

Comments Goldenrod is a familiar wildflower of the late summer and autumn, and it lends its bright yellow color to many fields, pastures and roadsides. There are over 100 species in the genus *Solidago*, and most are native to North America. Some are widespread, such as the Canada Goldenrod, while others are restricted to smaller areas, even individual mountaintops. Almost all species have yellow composite flowers (but at least one has whitish flowers), and they are borne on flower stalks that vary in height from a few inches up to some 7 feet (although most species seldom exceed half this height). Goldenrods are perennial plants that spread by rhizomes. The leaves are usually straplike, with the largest ones near the base of the plant and smaller ones arranged along the flower stalks that develop in mid-summer and produce their flowers heads afterward, usually near the top. The tiny seeds ripen after blooming and are distributed by wind. Pollination is achieved by various bees, butterflies and other insects that visit in search of nectar, and goldenrod is blamed for much human misery actually caused by ragweed which blooms about the same time. However, goldenrod occasionally causes human allergy, and it is important for canine allergy.

