

Veronicastrum virginicum

Culver's-root

Tried and True
Native Plant Selections
for the Mid-Atlantic

Elegant, adaptable, easy-to-grow Culver's-root inhabits stream banks and moist meadows in the eastern* U.S. and around the Great Lakes region. Striking, candelabra-like inflorescences add vertical structure, and whorled leaves horizontal lines, to the landscape. Flowers attract myriad pollinators for about a month in summer, followed by spires of seed capsules.



Perennial	Clumps, Flowers w/ Pollinators,** Seedheads
Height: 3–6½ feet	
Spread: 2–4 feet	
Bloom Color: White (usually), blue, purple, pink	
Characteristics	
Clump-forming, upright herbaceous perennial	
Finely toothed, lanceolate leaves in whorls of 3–7	
Tiny tubular flowers with exserted stamens densely borne on branched, candelabra-like, 6–9-inch spikes or spikelike racemes bloom June to August	
Spires of brown capsules provide winter interest	
Spreads mostly by rhizomes	
Attributes	
Tolerates some sand or clay soils; some drought; no serious pests or diseases; deer rarely damage	
Ethnobotanical uses; good in fresh flower bouquets	
Attracts bees, wasps, syrphid flies, butterflies, moths; larval host to ~2 lepidopterans	
Growing and Maintenance Tips	Excellent Replacement for
Soil Requirements : Well-drained, average	Buddleia davidii - Butterfly Bush
Light Requirements : Sun (preferred), Partial Shade	Lythrum salicaria - Purple Loosestrife
Water Requirements : Moist, Wet (occasionally)	Lythrum virgatum - European Wand Loosestrife
Divide early spring or late fall; stems may flop over and need staking in shadier areas or on slopes	Veronica spicata - Speedwell
Pinch back mid-to-late May to control height/delay blooms (this may alter architectural effect of foliage); deadhead spent flowers to extend bloom time	*It is native to DC. It is rare in DE. In MD, it is concentrated in the Piedmont. It is present in PA, except for some of the northern and central counties. In VA, it is infrequent in the mountains and the Piedmont. In NoVA, it is not reported in Arlington County and in Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax cities.
Use as accent plant; in border, cottage, cutting, rain, & pollinator gardens; with meadow flowers/grasses	**Pollinators are common eastern bumble bees (middle left), two-spotted bumble bee (middle right), and long-legged hoverfly (bottom left).
Hardiness : USDA Zones 3–8	NOTE: Inflorescences bloom from the bottom up (not the top down as erroneously stated on some websites).

developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria

Images by Alyssa Ford Morel (clump), Rodin Museum grounds, PA, by Elaine Mills (flower & fruit spires), Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, and by Mary Free (flowers with pollinators), Simpson Park Demonstration and private gardens, NoVA