



1½–4 ft

Nectar



Maryland goldenaster

Goldenaster (*Chrysopsis* spp.) is a member of the Asteraceae (daisy) family. Members of this genus range from the Northeastern U.S. to the southern Midwest and the entire Southeast. Florida has 11 native *Chrysopsis* species, eight of which are endemic. Look for them primarily in scrub habitats and well-drained pinelands.

## Description

Florida's goldenasters include species found nowhere else in the world, and several are listed by the state as rare or endangered. The most commonly encountered species are Maryland goldenaster (*Chrysopsis mariana*) and Coastalplain goldenaster (*C. scabrella*). Maryland goldenaster is found in well-drained pinelands throughout Florida, with the exception of the extreme south. Coastalplain goldenaster is a short-lived biennial, occurring in sandhills throughout the peninsula, except for the extreme southern portion.

Florida goldenaster (*C. floridana*) is naturally rare — endemic only to four counties in west Central Florida. However, it is often commercially available and easy to grow. It is more compact than other *Chrysopsis* species and is most attractive in late spring and early summer when not in bloom. Its beautiful silvery white foliage is reminiscent of lupine.

Goldenaster's clusters of yellow daisylike flowers are cheerful and profuse, with multiple buds at the end of each branch. Flowering usually peaks in late summer or early fall and lasts up to a month, depending on the species. All are deciduous, losing their foliage in winter and rising in spring from a basal rosette of soft wooly leaves covered with dense white "hairs."



Bumble bee on Coastalplain goldenaster

Coastalplain goldenaster can be leggy, with stalks that can reach up to 4 feet. Its blooms are limited to the crown of the plant. Maryland goldenaster grows more compactly than its cousins, standing up to 18 inches tall. Its leaves are elliptical and bright green, and its attractive foliage, along with its larger flowers, make it appealing for landscapes.

## Planting

Goldenaster is drought tolerant once established and performs best in full sun, but also adapts to high pine shade. Use it as a "mid-section" addition to gardens, planting it well behind the border. Because of some species' leggy growth, consider planting goldenaster among sturdy wildflowers that can help keep plants erect.

When planted in mass, goldenaster can be an eye-catcher when blooming — just keep in mind its deciduous nature.

*Chrysopsis* plants can be planted any time and should bloom within a year of planting. However, if plants are large and close to blooming when planted, they may not have time to become established



Florida goldenaster's silvery white foliage

well enough to yield an abundance of blooms.

## Seeds

Maryland goldenaster seeds are available from the Florida Wildflower Seed Cooperative. Sow in well-drained soil in late fall or winter. Seeds collected from plants should be sown immediately.

## Plants

Maryland goldenaster is the most-available species sold by native nurseries, while Florida and Coastalplain are occasionally available.

## Butterflies and bees

The plant's flower nectar is attractive to native butterflies, as well as to a variety of native bees with long tongues, including green metallic bees, sweat bees, leafcutter bees, bumble bees, mining bees and miner bees.

## Care

Goldenaster needs little, if any, grooming. Resist the temptation to nip back its stems when it sprawls; doing so will reduce its ability to flower. Let seeds ripen on stems once fall flowering is done, and you'll be rewarded with more plants the next spring. When stems die and become brittle, they may be trimmed from the plant.

## Site conditions

In general, goldenaster loves full sun and does best in well-drained sandy soils. Plant Coastalplain goldenaster in sandy, well-drained soil. Florida goldenaster does best in white, scrub-like sand. It is most likely to reseed in these conditions. Maryland goldenaster will tolerate wetter and more organic conditions than other *Chrysopsis* species. All commercially available species adapt well to sunny urban landscapes if not overwatered.

## Hardiness zones

Maryland goldenaster is suited to zones 8A–9B. Florida and Coastalplain goldenaster are best for zone 9.