

Elliott's aster

(*Symphyotrichum elliottii*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms.

Elliott's aster is an herbaceous perennial wildflower that produces a coronet of blooms. Its compound flowers consist of many lavender ray florets surrounding yellow disk florets. Leaves are linear to lanceolate with finely serrated margins. They are alternately arranged.

Elliott's aster typically flowers in late fall. It occurs naturally in roadsides ditches, wet flatwoods, swamps, and marshes. It is a wonderful plant for attracting butterflies, bees and other pollinators due to its many fragrant blooms.



Photo by Ron and Diane Bynum

Family: Asteraceae (Aster, daisy or composite family)

Native range: Nearly throughout Florida, except western Panhandle

To see where natural populations of Elliott's aster have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Hardiness: Zones 8–11

Soil: Moist, sandy, loamy or clay soils

Exposure: Full sun

Growth habit: 4 feet+ tall

Propagation: Seed, division

Garden tips: Elliott's aster works well in moist and wetland gardens and in containers. If planted in shady areas, it tends to lean or fall over, so plant in full sun for best results.

Note: Elliott's aster suckers aggressively — it can even escape a container — so you'll want to keep a sharp eye on it to prevent it from taking over. See Craig Heugel's post on this species for more information on incorporating it into your home landscape (HawthornHillWildflowers.blogspot.com.)

Elliott's aster seeds are often available from the Florida Wildflowers Growers Cooperative at www.FloridaWildflowers.com. Plants are occasionally available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit PlantRealFlorida.org to find a native nursery on your area.