



NRCS Species for Plant Collections

Ratibida columnifera

Scientific Name:

Ratibida columnifera (Nutt.) Woot. & Standl.

Common Name:

Prairie coneflower

Mexican hat

Long headed coneflower

Upright prairie coneflower

Morphological Characteristics:

Habit- Prairie coneflower is a native perennial forb which grows about one and a half feet tall. The plant usually has a taproot and regrows from a woody base each year.

Leaves- The alternately arranged leaves are two to four inches long and divided into five to nine narrow segments. The leaves and stems are rough; however, the upper one third of the stem is bare.

Seedhead – Showy flowers surround a tall center cone about one to two inches long and gray-green. The flowers vary in color from bright yellow to brown and sometimes reddish maroon. As the seed cone matures in fall, it turns brown.

Habitat and Range: This forb is found along right of ways, roadsides, and disturbed areas. It is adapted to a variety of soils including loams, rocky or gravelly sandy textures from slightly acidic to alkaline pH.



Alan Shadow USDA/NRCS East Texas PMC



Conservation Use:

Why collect this plant? Mexican Hat has been identified as a suitable species for wildlife habitat. Texas Plant Materials Centers have identified this plant as having potential benefits to the following conservation practice standard: 645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management, 550 Range Planting, 327 Conservation Cover, and 342 Critical Area Planting. Your assistance in collecting this plant helps support the NRCS conservation practice standards which are employed daily to conserve the natural resources of Texas!

Center Requesting Seed: East Texas Plant Materials Center

How to Collect Seed:

1. Identify native plant stands in your area. You can go to the following websites for helpful photos <http://www.plants.usda.gov> , <http://www.noble.org/imagegallery/index.html> or www.wildflower.org
2. Determine if seed is mature. The cone shaped center should be brown.

3. Collect the cone shaped center and deposit them in a brown paper sack. Collect seed cones from a minimum of 30 to 50 plants.
4. Label each collection as it is made so collections do not get mixed up. Information required includes: Collector's name, number of plants collected, location (parish, city, highway, GPS coordinates), site description (soil type, slope, and plants growing in association).
5. Complete NRCS-ECS-580; Plant Collection Information Form and mail with collected seeds to the NRCS Plant Materials Center requesting the species.

East Texas Plant Materials Center
6598 FM 2782
Nacogdoches, TX 75964
Physical Location:
SFA Experimental Forest

Helpful Tips:

Look for superior plants that display differences in color, height, or foliage abundance and record observations. Differences in growing site or location should be made into separate collections if they are separated by more than 1 mile between sites.

Other Photos:



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, Large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.