

## Familiar Wild Flowers

By B. DeVRIES, Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan

### No. 4 THE GOLDEN-RODS



Sketch by  
B. DeVries

These well known fall flowers of the genus *Solidago* belong to the large and varied Compositae, a family of the Dicotyledons. The Golden-rods are perennial herbs with thickened roots. In height they range from as low as eight inches in *Solidago mollis* Bartl. to over three feet in *Solidago dumetorum* Lunell.

Usually they are unbranched or only slightly branched, with undivided toothed or entire leaves which are alternate and varied in form. Some plants have leaf stalks, for example the basal leaves of *Solidago rigida* L., others have

stalkless leaves, for example *Solidago serotina* Ait.

The flower heads are numerous and small. They are borne in terminal panicles or in dense corymbose clusters. The individual heads bear many small flowers of two kinds. The central tubular or disc flowers have the task of producing seeds. The ligulate or ray flowers attract the insects for cross pollination. They are usually of a bright yellow color. Each fertile floret produces one seed in its inferior ovary. The fruits are distributed by means of a rough hairy pappus, which renders the achene light enough to be carried by the wind.

In the fall these Golden-rods give a colorful display along the roadsides and in wooded areas of our province. These flowering plants often grow with Asters for they both grow in a wide variety of soil types. They bloom from mid-summer until frost. Sometimes the tufted fruits are to be seen well into winter.

## Some More Interesting Cypress Hills Plants

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In the accompanying sketch are three more plants which are peculiar in Saskatchewan to the Cypress Hills. First is the Squaw-root, Yamp or Yampa, *Perideridia Gairdneri* (H. and A.) Mathias. This is a slender stemmed erect plant of the Parsley family, from one to three feet in height with umbels of tiny white flowers. The pinnate leaves bear very narrow leaflets from two to six inches long and, except for the inflorescence, the plant is not very conspicuous. The roots are fleshy and generally bear a fascicle or cluster of small, aromatic tubers. These tubers formed one of the favourite farinaceous foods of the Indians, sometimes eaten raw for their nutty flavour but more often cooked. This plant is found plentifully from the Rocky Mountains and their foothills westward to the Pacific Coast, but

is found on the prairies only in the Cypress Hills. Other scientific names under which this plant has been listed include *Atenia montana*, *Carum Gairdneri*, and *Carum erythrorhinum*.

Occasionally, in the pine forest of the Cypress Hills one comes across a peculiar, pinkish-purple stem from one to three feet high, with small scale-like leaves. These stems are sticky and eventually bear at the top a raceme of white, urn-shaped flowers about a quarter of an inch long. These produce flattened, round capsules containing numerous seeds. This is Pine Drops, or Giant Birds' nest, *Pterospora Andromedea* Nutt, a saprophytic plant, one that derives its nutriment from decaying parts of other plants. Although found sparingly in coniferous woodlands from the Atlantic to the Pacific, it