

Gentiana andrewsii Bottle Gentian

The closed, bottle-shaped flowers of *Gentiana andrewsii* (Bottle Gentian) provide unique late-summer interest to streamside, pond edge, or rain gardens. Best known for the clusters of violet blue, upright flowers that never open, Bottle Gentian sparks curiosity and wonder in the garden. Flower clusters bloom tightly along the length of the stem at the base of the leaves, ending in a large terminal cluster. Plants boast a month-long blooming time between August and October. Bumblebees and other large-bodied bees are strong enough to force open the petals to access the nectar and pollinate the plant. The glossy, deep green leaves are oval-shaped, oppositely arranged in pairs along a light green or purple stem. In fall, leaves turn a rich scarlet red. Growing only 1-2' tall and nearly as wide, this short-statured plant is native to floodplain forests, wetlands, and fen habitats. It prefers alkaline soils, though it does well in nearly any soil provided it has ample moisture. This plant is not drought tolerant. Plants prefer part shade, but can tolerate full sun with adequate moisture.

Botanical Name: *Gentiana andrewsii*

Common Name: Bottle Gentian

Family: Gentianaceae

Nativity: Great Lakes Native

USDA Zone: 3 to 7

Light Type: Full Sun to Part Shade

Soil Type: Loam, Sand, Clay

Soil Preferences: Best grown in moist, rich, alkaline, well-drained soil

Soil Moisture: Medium

Typical height (ft): 1'-2'

Typical width (ft): 1'-1.5'

Foliage: Dark green, shiny leaves

Bloom Time: August, September, October

Bloom: Blue, Purple

Ecological features: Attractive to bees and bumblebees

Tolerance of: Clay soil; moderate tolerance of deer

Additional notes: Native to floodplain forests, wetlands, and fens; plants have taproots and do not spread vegetatively; not browsed heavily by herbivores but deer may bite off the young tops, causing branching.

Companion plants: New England Aster (*Aster novae-angliae*), Obedient Plant (*Physostegia virginiana*), Dense Blazing Star (*Liatris spicata*), Turtleheads (*Chelone* spp.), Ferns, *Lobelia* spp.

For more information see:

<https://www.prairiemoon.com/gentiana-andrewsii-bottle-gentian-prairie-moon-nursery.html>

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=k320>

https://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/prairie/plantx/bt_gentianx.htm

Images of *Gentiana andrewsii*



GentianaAndrewsii.jpg

Leaves and flowers



<https://www.luriegarden.org/plants/bottle-gentian/>
Leaves in spring



<https://www.luriegarden.org/plants/bottle-gentian/>
Bottle Gentian in fall



<https://1tyc1t48mpo83mcau8ri1khu-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/bottle-gentian-Lurie-Garden-9.2015.png>
Upright form in Lurie Garden



https://gardeninacity.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/dsc_0163.jpg
Combined with other plants



<https://naturallycuriouswithmaryholland.wordpress.com/2014/09/18/bottle-gentians-pollinators/>

Bottle Gentian with bee

Image choices for narrative:

GentianaAndrewsii.jpg - Leaves and flowers

Bottle Gentian with bee <https://naturallycuriouswithmaryholland.wordpress.com/2014/09/18/bottle-gentians-pollinators/>