



## The Aster Family: Identification and Ecology

Discover the beauty and diversity of the largest flowering family in North America – named after the familiar asters, you might be surprised to know that the family contains plants as diverse as lettuce, artichokes and even a common shrub of the East Coast. The Asters include many familiar favorites from coneflowers and sunflowers to black-eyed Susan and blazing stars but also many notorious weeds and invasives. Suitable for beginners and immediate students, this class will guide you in the identification of these tricky flowers. We will also look at the ecological roles of these important flowers that support specialist bees, many butterfly and moth species, galls and more. We will focus on Asteraceae found in the Eastern US but the patterns can be applied to other regions.

**August 17, 19, 24, 26, 31**  
**7PM–9PM ET**  
**\$225**

*Participants need to have a Zoom account (<https://zoom.us> sign up for zoom is free). You will receive a secure link to join the instructor before each class. Classes will be recorded so participants can review them or make up missed ones.*

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**[GENERAL INFO](#)**

**Dr. Clare Walker** ([clarewalker@verizon.net](mailto:clarewalker@verizon.net)) moved to the US twenty years ago from the UK and had to teach herself how to start identifying the 1000s of new plants that are native to the Mid-Atlantic (while also raising a family) so focused on finding the most effective ways to distinguish plant species. She has worked for the Maryland Park Service, as an educator for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Irvine Nature Center. As an instructor on the Natural History Field Studies Certificate Program, Clare teaches plant identification for the Audubon Naturalist Society (now Nature Forward) and for the Maryland Natural History Society. She gives talks about plants and their roles in the ecosystem for the US Botanical Gardens and Virginia Native Plant Society among others. Clare is passionate about sharing with all audiences the connections between plants, animals and people, and helps to propagate and install native plants at the USGS Bee Monitoring and Inventory Lab.