

**A KEY TO THE GOLDENRODS OF
SUSSEX, WARREN, & MORRIS COUNTIES**

(N = Newcomb Guide page; P = Peterson Guide page)

- A) Flower rays whitish; flower arrangement cylindrical - **Silverrod (*Solidago bicolor*)**
Typical size: short
Abundance: common
Habitat: dry woods & openings
N = 382; P = 58
- AA) Flower rays yellow; flower arrangement various ----- (go to B)
- B) Flowering stems branched at the top such that the
flower arrangement appears flat-topped or gently
convexly rounded ----- (go to C)
- BB) Flower arrangement appearing other than flat-
topped or convexly rounded ----- (go to D)
- C) Mid-level leaves long and narrow with parallel
veins ----- **Lance-leaved G.**
(*Euthamia graminifolia*)
Size: medium
Abundance: common
Habitat: open places, often moist
N = 450; P = 202
- CC) Mid-level leaves more or less elliptical with
branching veins ----- **Stiff G. (*Solidago rigida*)**
Typical size: short
Abundance: extremely rare
Habitat: dry limestone rocks & openings
N = 450; P = 202
- D) Flowers produced on just one side of the often-
curved branches ----- (go to E)
- DD) Flower branches not normally one-sided or curved -- (go to O)
- E) Stems densely hairy at mid-level ----- (go to F)
- EE) Stems hairless or with just a few scattered hairs ----- (go to H)
- F) Plant only about 2–3' high; stem hairs dense, but very
short (use hand lens); leaves obscurely toothed,
somewhat rounded at tip, and widest in the outer
half; tiny leaflets present in axils of upper leaves ----- **Gray G. (*Solidago nemoralis*)**
Typical size: short
Abundance: abundant
Habitat: dry open areas, esp. old fields
N = 446; P = 194

FF) Plant typically taller; stem hairs longer, thus more obvious, especially to the touch; leaves more noticeably toothed and pointed ----- (go to G)

G) Leaves with nearly parallel veins (typically 3) running lengthwise, and without obvious branching from them ----- **Canada G. (*Solidago canadensis*)**

Typical size: medium to tall
Abundance: abundant
Habitat: dry open areas, esp. old fields
N = 448; P = 190
Note: Tall G. (*S. altissima*), also in N & P, is now considered a variety of Canada G.

GG) Leaves with 1 obvious midvein; other veins branching from it along its length -----

Rough-stemmed G. (*Solidago rugosa*)

Typical size: medium to tall
Abundance: abundant
Habitat: dry open areas, esp. old fields
N = 448; P = 192

H) Leaves very rough above, but nearly smooth below; stem with sharp angles (feel it), rather squarish -----

Rough-leaved G. (*Solidago patula*)

Typical size: medium to tall
Abundance: uncommon
Habitat: open wetlands & swamps
N = 446; P = 196

HH) Leaves various, but never extremely rough above; stems round even though an occasional groove or angle can be felt ----- (go to I)

I) Mid-level leaves untoothed, rather long & narrow, often with just one main vein, usually exhibiting translucent dots, and smelling of licorice when crushed -----

Sweet G. (*Solidago odora*)

Typical size: medium
Abundance: rare; common s. NJ
Habitat: dry woods & openings
N = 448; P = 190

II) Mid-level leaves toothed, obviously multi-veined, and without translucent dots ----- (go to J)

J) Leaves with nearly parallel veins (typically 3) running lengthwise, and without obvious branching from them -----

Late G. (*Solidago gigantea*)

Typical size: medium to tall
Abundance: common
Habitat: open places, often moist
N = 448; P = 190

JJ) Leaves with 1 obvious midvein; other veins branching from it along its length ----- (go to K)

K) Basal leaves hardly bigger than upper stem leaves; leaves usually soft-hairy, at least below; flower arrangement of widely curving branches -----

Elm-leaved G.

(Solidago ulmifolia)

Typical size: short to medium
Abundance: common
Habitat: dry woods & openings
N = 446; P = 196

KK) Basal leaves much larger than upper ones ----- (go to L)

L) Basal and lowermost stem leaves rather abruptly narrowed to the leaf stalk ----- (go to M)

LL) Basal and lowermost stem leaves gradually tapered into to the leaf stalk ----- (go to N)

M) Leaves essentially hairless; stem often purple; disk flowers number 8-20 -----

Sharp-leaved G.

(Solidago arguta)

Typical size: medium to tall
Abundance: common
Habitat: open woods & edges
N = 446; P = 192

MM) Leaves hairy, at least on main veins below; disk flowers number 4-7 -----

Elm-leaved G.

(Solidago ulmifolia)

see (K) above

N) Flower arrangement typically much higher than wide; no tiny leaves in the axils of upper leaves -----

Bog G. (*Solidago uliginosa*)

Typical size: short to medium
Abundance: uncommon
Habitat: limestone wetlands, esp. fens
N = 452; P = 194
Note: N has this as *S. pushii*. His Swamp G. (p. 446) is another variety of *S. uliginosa* and is uncommon to our south

NN) Flower arrangement typically about as wide as high; upper leaves usually with tiny leaflets in axils -----

Early G. (*Solidago juncea*)

Typical size: short to medium
Abundance: abundant
Habitat: dry open areas, esp. old fields
N = 446; P = 192

- O) Stem decidedly hairy ----- **Downy G. (*Solidago puberula*)**
 Typical size: short
 Abundance: uncommon; common s. NJ
 Habitat: mainly dry, rocky open areas
 N = 452; P = 200
- OO) Stem hairless or with a few scattered hairs ----- (go to P)
- P) Tiny bracts around each individual flower head
 very obviously curved outward ----- **Stout G. (*Solidago squarrosa*)**
 Typical size: short to medium
 Abundance: uncommon
 Habitat: dry woods & openings
 N = 452; P = 198
- PP) Tiny bracts around each individual flower head
 lying flat against the head ----- (go to Q)
- Q) Flowers arranged in axils of the stem leaves ----- (go to R)
- QQ) Flower arrangement a showy cluster, higher than
 wide, and at the top of the plant ----- (go to S)
- R) Stem leaves widely oval; stem often somewhat
 zig-zag and angled ----- **Zig-zag G. (*Solidago flexicaulis*)**
 Typical size: short
 Abundance: common
 Habitat: woodlands
 N = 450; P = 196
- RR) Stem leaves more lanceolate; stem often arching,
 round, and purplish, bluish, or greenish with a
 whitish bloom ----- **Blue-stemmed G.
 (*Solidago caesia*)**
 Typical size: short
 Abundance: abundant
 Habitat: woodlands
 N = 450; P = 200
- S) Basal leaves 7–15 times longer than wide, leaf
 stalks of basal leaves clasp the stem ----- **Bog G. (*Solidago uliginosa*)**
 See (N) above
- SS) Basal leaves less than 7 times longer than
 wide, not clasping the stem ----- (go to T)
- T) Flower arrangement narrowly cylindrical; flower
 rays small; middle stem leaves lanceolate, seldom
 more than 2 cm wide ----- **Slender G. (*Solidago erecta*)**
 Typical size: short
 Abundance: rare; common s. NJ
 Habitat: dry woods & openings
 N = 452; P = 200

TT) Flower arrangement tending to be large and wider in the middle; flower rays large and showy (for a goldenrod); middle stem leaves broadly oval, usually more than 2.5 cm wide -----

Showy G. (*Solidago speciosa*)

Typical size: medium to tall

Abundance: uncommon

Habitat: dry open areas, esp. roadsides

N = 452; P = 198

Although they have occurred here, and I have put them in this key, Sweet, Downy, and Slender Goldenrods are much more characteristic of the sandy soils of southern New Jersey. In addition, the Coastal Plain hosts six species not found at all (natively) in northwestern NJ. They are:

Elliott's G. (*Solidago elliotii*)

N = 448; P = 194

Pine Barrens G. (*Solidago fistulosa*)

N = omitted; P = 194

Seaside G. (*Solidago sempervirens*)

N = 446; P = 198

Note: occasionally found inland in northern NJ where sandy fill (esp. along highways) has been brought from the coast. The plants do not normally persist long. The fleshy, toothless leaves should make for an easy ID, even if so far out of normal habitat.

Wandlike G. (*Solidago stricta*)

N = 452; P = 200

Goldenrod (*Solidago tarda*)

N = omitted; P = omitted

Slender-leaved G. (*Euthamia tenuifolia*)

N = 450; P = 202