



Verbena hastata

blue vervain

Family Verbenaceae

Origin Native

WIS Code FACW CoC 4

DESCRIPTION

Biennial with erect, square, somewhat hairy stems to 1.5 m tall. Leaves (4 to 20 cm long) are opposite, narrow, lance-shaped with coarsely toothed margins, a short stalk and frequently two basal lobes. The upper surface is rough and the lower finely hairy.

FLOWERS AND FRUITS

June through September. Multiple slender spikes (5-15 cm long) arise from the upper leaf axils (where leaf meets stem). Flowers are blue to violet or rarely rose pink, with five petals fused at the base forming a short tube. Spikes elongate as the plants mature, with flowers blooming from the bottom progressing toward the tip and fruits forming below. Fruits are dark brown dry nutlets (1.5 to 2 mm).

HABITAT

Wet fields and meadows, marshes, floodplains, stream banks, exposed sand and gravel bars, ditches and roadsides.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Vernonia noveboracensis, New York ironweed, has round (not square) stems, alternate (not opposite) leaves, and branched flower heads in flat or domed arrangement (not spike-like). See the *V. noveboracensis* page for more details and images.



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