

*Iris virginica shrevei*  
BLUE FLAG (Iris Family)

in the **Peacock Prairie** at the **James Woodworth Prairie Preserve**



This native perennial plant is 2-3' (61-91 cm) tall. It produces clumps of vertical leaves that are sword-shaped and up to 2½' tall. ... . The flowering stalks are sparingly branched and up to 3' tall. Each stalk produces a few leafy bracts and 1-3 flowers. The violet-blue flowers are up to 3½" across, consisting of 3 sepals and 3 petals. The sepals are larger than the petals and spread outward from the center of the flower. Each sepal is divided into a lower and upper lip. The lower lip functions as a landing pad for visiting insects, and has fine purple lines spanning a white or violet-blue background. There is a patch of bright yellow at the base of this lower lip, and there are no hairs. The upper lip of the sepal is shorter and flares upward towards its tip. ... . They are violet-blue and often have fine lines that are a darker shade of color. ... . At the Peacock/Woodworth Prairie, blooms begins about the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May.

Text adapted from <http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/wetland/plants/blueflag.htm> Photos by Frank Mayfield at **black sweater art, inc.**