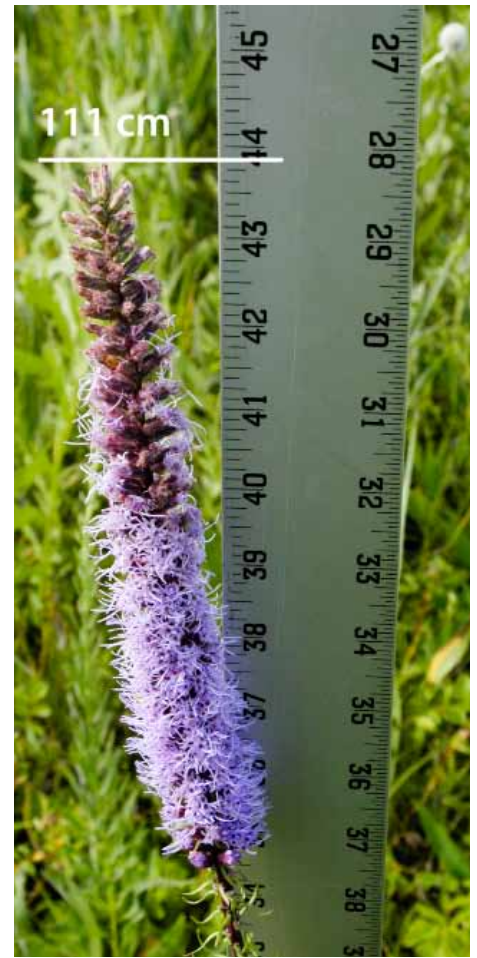
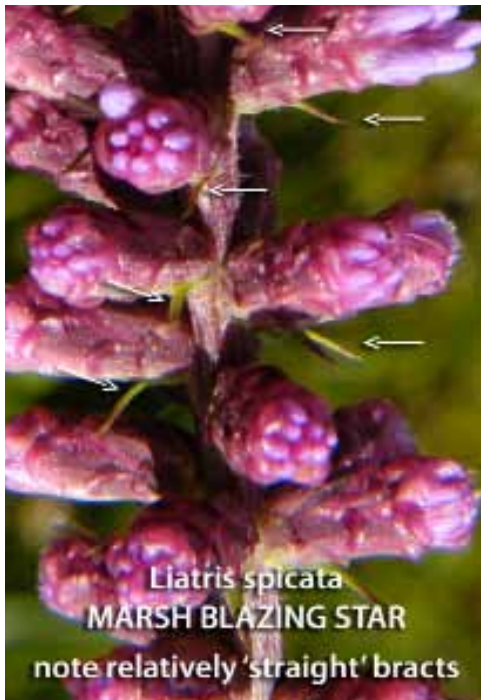


Liatris pycnostachya

PRAIRIE BLAZING STAR (Composite Family)

in the Peacock Prairie at the James Woodworth Prairie Preserve



This native perennial plant is up to 5' tall (152 cm) and unbranched. The central stem is fairly stout, with numerous small longitudinal ridges. It is usually covered with scattered white hairs. The leaves near the base of the plant are up to 10" long and 1/2" wide, but become progressively smaller as they ascend the stem. They are linear, and quite numerous as they alternate around the stem. Their margins are smooth, and each leaf has a prominent central vein. The underside of the leaves and the central stem are sometimes whitish green in appearance. The central stem terminates in an inflorescence that consists of a long spike of sessile flowerheads. The flowerheads individually have 5-10 pink to purplish pink flowers. Each flowerhead is about 1/4-1/2" across and subtended by green or reddish bracts whose tips recurve sharply outward. Each small flower has 5 lobes that spread outward from the corolla tube, from which emerges 2 long curly styles. At the Peacock/Woodworth Prairie, blooms about the 2nd week of July through the 4th week of August. (The easiest way to tell MARSH BLAZING STAR from PRAIRIE BLAZING STAR is by examining their bracts.)

Text from http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/prairie/plantx/pr_blazingstarx.htm Photos by Frank Mayfield at black sweater art, inc.