



photos: Dan Jaffe

# BLUE FLAG IRIS

*Iris versicolor*

This spring stunner has sword-shaped blue-green leaves and produces 3–4” wide bluish-purple flowers with yellow and white stripes. It grows naturally in wet areas and spreads by rhizomes.

## Benefits for Wildlife

- Flowers attract hummingbirds, butterflies, bees, and other beneficial insects
- Flower petals act as a landing platform for bees, and stripes point to the source of the nectar

Host to 14 caterpillar species, including: (*common names*) Whitemarked Tussock Moth; American Ear Moth; American Crescent Borer; Iris Borer Moth; Rosy Rustic; Virginia Ctenucha; Spotted Beet Webworm; Darker Moodna; Dot-and-Dash Swordgrass Moth; Verbena Bud Moth

## Benefits for People

- The common name “flag” comes from the middle English word meaning reed
- The leaves may be trimmed back to 1” after fall frost
- This plant will naturalize to form colonies

## Growing Information

<i>Sunlight</i>	Full sun to partial shade
<i>Soil Type</i>	Moist to wet soils to shallow standing water
<i>Height</i>	2–2.5’
<i>Width</i>	1-3’
<i>Flowering calendar</i>	May to June

## Natural Habitat

- Marshes, swamps, and shorelines

