

Boneset

Eupatorium altissimum

Look for Boneset in open, natural areas, especially on Roxbury and along Shakespeare.

This plant gets its name from American Indians who wrapped Boneset leaves into the bandages around splints to successfully heal broken bones.

Brewed as a tea, Boneset induced profuse sweating to break a fever, was used as a remedy for all types of respiratory congestion, and eased the pain of sore muscles, arthritis, and rheumatism. Boneset has been shown to stimulate the immune system and contains chemicals that have antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and antimicrobial benefits.

Boneset is a perennial plant of the aster family, is 3'-4' tall, and has stems covered with white hairs and dark green leaves up to 5" long. The rather flat flower cluster comprises numerous small, dull white flowers (1/8"). Although the flowers emit little or no floral scent, their nectar attracts many kinds of insects and butterflies; and the caterpillars of several moths feed on various parts of the plant. Boneset is a perfect plant for Avenbury Lakes because it can tolerate full sun, is drought resistant, and adapts well to clay soil. This plant provides some white color to our fall landscape that is generally dominated by yellow flowers and brown dried-out grasses.

Boneset blooms from July through October.

