

SWEET FLAG

Acorus calamus

AKA Calamus root, rat root, sweet sedge, flag root, sweet calomel, sweet myrtle, sweet cane, sweet rush, beewort, muskrat root, pine root



Description: A semi-aquatic grass-like, rhizome forming, perennial resembling an iris. It inhabits perpetually wet areas like the edges of streams and around ponds and lakes, in ditches and seeps. It often shares habitat with the common cat-tail. Its leaves have a lemony scent. Blooms - brown, horn-like flowers in early spring late summer

midsummer.

Size: 24- 36" tall

Growth Rate: Slow

Light: Sun to full shade

Planting and Care: These plants will grow almost anywhere as long as there are adequate amounts of water present, and ample, full sunshine. Plants can be divided in the Fall for Spring transplanting. Lift and divide congested colonies every 3-4 years in spring

Landscape Usage: suitable for bogs and water gardens

Commercial/Traditional Uses: Native tribes used it to treat a cough, made a decoction as a carminative and as an infusion for colic. The whole plant was used, making aromatic garlands from the leaves and using the root as a tea for bowel pains, or rubbed the chewed root on the skin for a general illness cure. It was also known to many early American settlers and used for a number of folk remedies. Walt Whitman even wrote poetry about his beloved herb in "Leaves of grass".