

Penstemon, Hairy beardtongue

Penstemon hirsutus (L.) Wild

Group: Dicot

Family: Scrophulariaceae (figwort)

Growth Habit: Forb/herb

Duration: Perennial

U.S. Nativity: Native

Natural Enemies Attracted: Medium numbers of [Chalcidoidea](#) and [Orius insidiosus](#). Small numbers of [Braconidae](#), [Aeolothripidae](#), [Cynipoidea](#) and [Empididae](#).

Pests Attracted: Large numbers of lygus bugs. Medium numbers of thrips. Small numbers of root-maggot flies, froghoppers, aphids and leafhoppers.

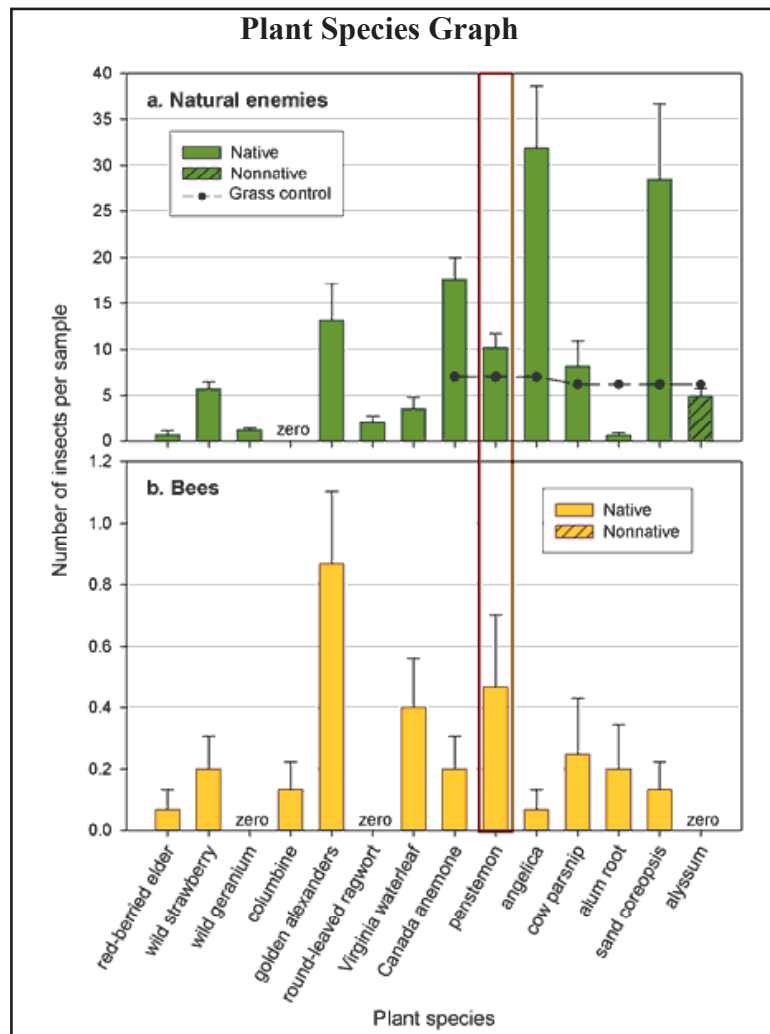
Bees attracted: Moderate numbers (between 1-5 bees per meter square in a 30 second sample) of bees including large carpenter bees, small carpenter bees, and bumble bees.



Species Notes: Bell-shaped pink to lavender flowers bloom in clusters on upright stalks. Flowers look like elongated snapdragons, but are closed. The species grows 1-2 ft tall, and foliage remains green through the summer. This plant bloomed from late May to mid-June. This was the fifth most attractive early season plant to natural enemies, with slightly more natural enemies than the grass control.

About the Plant Species Graph:

Average number of beneficial insects collected at each plant species the week before, during, and after peak bloom, for plant species blooming from mid-August through early October (+ standard error). Penstemon (*Penstemon hirsutus*) boxed in red. Bars for natural enemies are in green, bars for bees are in yellow. Bars for native plants are solid and nonnative plants are striped. The black line on the top graph shows the number of natural enemies in grass with no flowering plants (grass control). Plants are listed in order of peak bloom.



Habitat: Tolerance includes full sun to partial shade and average to dry moisture conditions. Naturally occurring on open, sandy, usually dry ground, in fields, roadsides, prairies, stream and riverbanks, rocky ground.

Cultivation and Management: Sown seed flowers in second or third year. Also can be grown from plug material (flowers in first or second year).

Availability: Species is available as seed, plug or container grown material from various native plant nurseries. See the Michigan Native Plant Producers Association.

For more information: View the online USDA-NRCS PLANTS database

