

Common name: **Common Yarrow**

Genus Species: ***Achillea millefolium***



Photo credit: Dave Powell, USDA Forest Service Bugwood.org

Description: Common yarrow is an erect, perennial, herbaceous plant growing 8-40" tall, often having several plants joined by underground stems. Its tiny, white (or sometimes pink) flowers occur in small flower heads with many disk flowers and five ray flowers; these small flower heads are then grouped into showy, flat-topped clusters at the top of the plant.

Habitats: Common yarrow is found on slightly disturbed, well-drained soils, mostly in grasslands and dry meadows, canyon bottoms, open forests, and roadsides.

Phenology highlight: You may see various native bee species and other insects foraging on open yarrow flowers.

Species facts

- Yarrow flowers are pollinated by bees, flies, and beetles.
- Common yarrow, which was often used by Native Americans, has been used as a medicinal plant for over 3,000 years, and is still used today.
- Medicinal uses include applying the crushed plant to wounds and burns, and using dried leaves as a tea to soothe colds, fever, and headache.
- During the Civil War, yarrow was widely used to treat wounds and became known as "soldiers' woundwort."



Photo credit: Mary Ellen (Mel) Harte, Bugwood.org



Why observe this species? Common yarrow is a USA-NPN regional plant species. Regional species are ecologically or economically important but are distributed more locally than calibration species. The USA-NPN integrates these observations to understand better plant responses within the different geographic regions of the nation.

Tip for observing this species: The unripe fruit phenophase is difficult to assess for this species. Focus on looking for the ripe fruit phenophase when the tiny fruits turn tannish in color and readily drop from the plant.

Map credit: USDA, NRCS. 2016. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>, 9 April 2016).. National Plant Data Team, Greensboro, NC 27401-4901 USA

For more information about phenology and the New York Phenology Project (NYPP), please visit the NYPP website (www.nyphenologyproject.org) and the USA-NPN website (www.usanpn.org).

Common Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

Note: flower and fruit phenophases are nested so you may need to record more than one phenophase in each group; for example, if you record **Y** for "open flowers" you should also record **Y** for "flowers or flower buds."

Photos needed! Help fill in the empty photo boxes on this species profile. Contact New York Phenology Project (nyphenologyproject.org) to submit photos. Thank you!

Initial Growth New growth is visible after a period of no growth (winter or drought) with green shoots breaking through the soil. Growth is "initial" on each shoot until the first true leaf has fully unfolded.



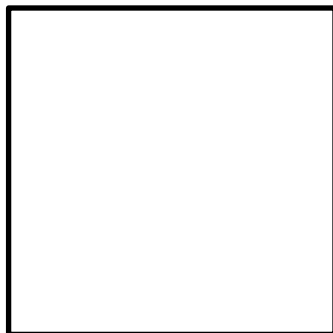
Leaves One or more live, fully unfolded leaves are visible on the plant. For seedlings, consider only true leaves not the two small leaves (cotyledons) found almost immediately after the seedling germinates. Do not include fully dried or dead leaves.



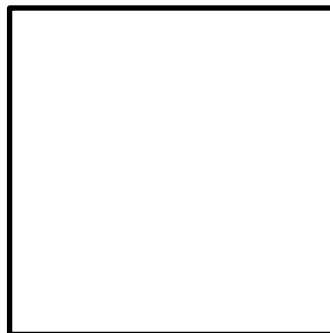
Flowers or flower buds One or more fresh open or unopened flowers or flower buds are visible on the plant. Include flower buds that are still developing, but do not include wilted or dried flowers.



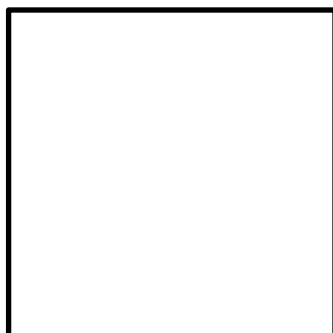
Open flowers One or more open, fresh flowers are visible. Flowers are "open" when the reproductive parts (male stamens or female pistils) are visible within open flower parts. Do not include wilted or dried flowers.



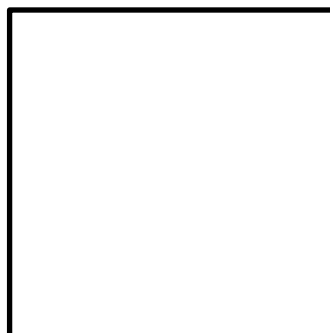
Fruits One or more fruits are visible on the plant. Common yarrow fruit is very tiny and seed-like and is crowded into a tiny spent flower head. Do not include empty flower heads that have already dropped all of their fruits.



Ripe fruits One or more ripe fruits are visible on the plant. Common yarrow fruit is ripe when it has turned tannish and readily drops from the spent flower head when touched. Do not include empty flower heads that have dropped all fruits.



Recent fruit or seed drop One or more mature fruits or seeds have dropped or been removed from the plant since your last visit. Do not include obviously immature fruits that have dropped before ripening or empty flower heads.



Pollinator garden plant Yarrow attracts butterflies, bees, and other insects, and both native and hybrid plants can be included in pollinator gardens. This species can become weedy, though, since it spreads easily and tolerates disturbed soils.

All phenophases pictured