

# Purple Prairie Clover: *Dalea purpurea*



**Cultivation:** The preference is full sun and average to dry conditions. The soil can contain significant amounts of loam, clay, sand, or gravel – this plant is rather indifferent to the characteristics of the soil, to which it adds nitrogen. Foliar disease is not troublesome. Purple Prairie Clover is slow to develop, but is fairly easy to manage if the site is well-drained and there is plenty of sun. It is not common in areas that have been disturbed by modern development. Habitats include mesic to dry black soil prairies, gravel prairies, sand prairies, hill prairies, typical savannas and sandy savannas, limestone glades, and sandy hills or dunes near Lake Michigan. Recovery from occasional wildfires is good.

**Plant Structure:** This native perennial plant is unbranched and up to 3' tall. Older plants may tiller at the base and send up multiple stems, creating a bushy effect. There is no noticeable floral scent. The blooming period occurs from early to mid-summer, and lasts about 1-1½ months. The root system consists of a stout taproot that runs deep into the ground. The seeds travel only a short distance from the mother plant when the cylindrical spikes are shaken by the wind.