



## Aster



Above image: Heath aster. Photo by E. Horn.

Aster flowers grace most regions and habitats across Canada, thriving in areas with cool and moist summers. They are commonly seen in fields and on roadsides, and they brighten fall gardens while little else is blooming.

Aster, meaning “star” in Latin, describes this flowers appearance, as they have a starry flower head with many long, thin petals. They have composite flower heads, meaning that each flower is actually a group of smaller flowers consisting of petals surrounding the centre. The centers of these flowers

tend to be yellow or burgundy, complimenting the vibrant blue, white, pink, purple, or violet petals. At times, the

stems of these flowers may be a striking purple.

When most flowering has finished in the fall, the aster’s pollen is beneficial to many insects and acts as an important fall food source for butterflies, moths, and bees. If asters are left to go to seed, birds will also enjoy a feast in the fall.

Asters have an interesting link to history. According to the authors of *Up North Again*, Ojibwe hunters were known to camouflage their scent by smoking aster rootlets to simulate the scent given off by deer. Indigenous people have also used different parts of the plant for the healing abilities that it possesses.

Today, the two most commonly seen asters that are native to Alberta are the “heath aster” and the “flat-topped white aster”. Both of these species are white, and the flat-topped white aster possesses a greenish-purple stem.

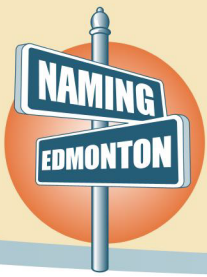
*Information compiled by: Danielle Ferchoff*  
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### CITATION ON FILE

Canadian Wildlife Federation, “Aster” Accessed 9 April 2014.  
<http://cwf-fcf.org/en/discover-wildlife/flora-fauna/flora/aster.html>

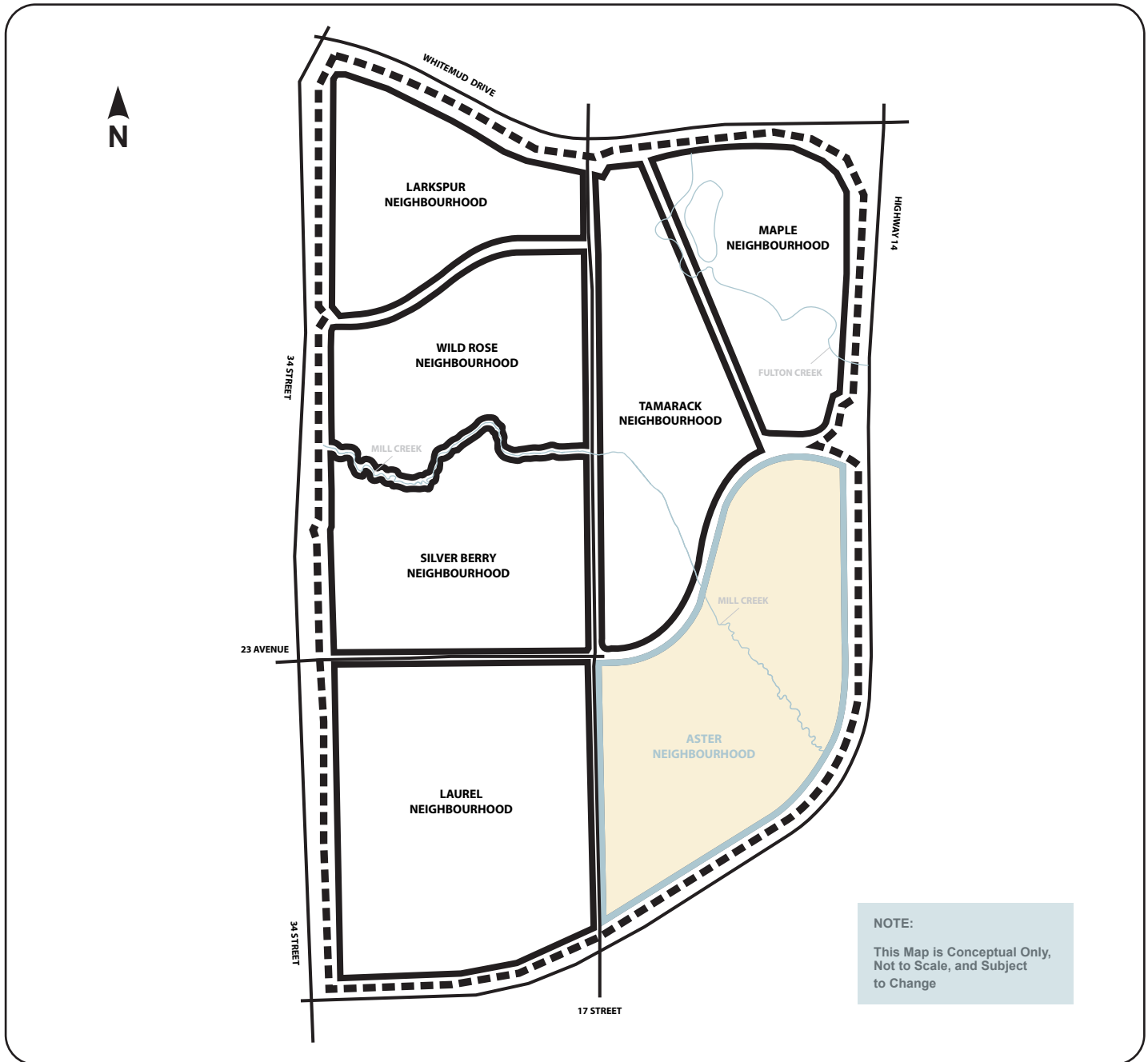
The national Gardening Association. “Aster” Accessed 9 April 2014.  
<http://www.garden.org/plantguide/?q=show&id=2031>

Great Plains Nature Center. “Heath Aster” Accessed 16 April 2014.  
<http://www.gpnc.org/haster.htm>



# Naming Committee

Honouring People and Places in Our City



**NOTE:**  
This Map is Conceptual Only,  
Not to Scale, and Subject  
to Change

## ASTER NEIGHBOURHOOD