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**Large-leaved Aster** (*Eurybia macrophylla*) – **Bigleaf of the Forest Floor**

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**Did you Know?**

- Was formerly placed in the Genus *Aster*.
- It is an introduced plant in northern Europe.
- The Latin name refers to the large leaves, macro meaning large and phylla meaning leaf.

Photo : 2013 Brian Popelier

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**Habitat** – This species prefers relatively undisturbed deciduous or mixed forests.

**Size** – 30-120 cm tall

**Range** – Eastern North America

**Flowering Date** – mid-late August to October (depends on location)

**Status** – S5, Secure

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**Identification:**



The leaves begin quite large and heart shaped at the base of the plant and diminish in size up the stem. They have toothed edges, are rough to the touch and arranged alternately on the stem. The flowers are in a flat topped arrangement and usually have 9-20 violet to white petals. The centre disk starts off as yellow and turns purple with age.

Photo : 2013 Brian Popelier



**Bruce Trail**  
**CONSERVANCY**



### **Interesting Facts**

The large leaves can be cooked and eaten. Traditionally the plant has been used this way by Native American cultures. The root has also been used as a blood medicine and to treat bowel problems and venereal disease.

The nectar and pollen attract a wide variety of insects. Others feed off the leaves, stem and juices of the plant. The seeds and foliage are also enjoyed by Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, rabbits and deer.

It can be confused with the uncommon Schreber's Aster (*Eurybia schreberi*). This species is found in the Carolinian forest zone and always has white flowers. Other fine characteristics need to be examined to tell the two species apart.

### **Large-leaved Aster on the Niagara Escarpment**

Large-leaved Aster are widespread in Ontario. They are commonly found all along the Bruce Trail under the towering Maples and Beeches that compose the majority of the Escarpment forests. Often they can be found growing in the same areas as Enchanters Nightshade, White Snakeroot, grasses and sedges. BTC ecologists continually observe these woodland asters on almost every property the Bruce Trail stewards.

The Bruce Trail Conservancy is continually acquiring and protecting land along the Niagara Escarpment, often including land that contains significant forests that are perfect habitat for the Large-leaved Aster.