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41. © Propagation protocol of Culver's root *Veronicastrum virginicum*. Sullivan, J. and Kujawski, J. Native Plants Journal 11(2):138-140, 142. 2010.



PROPAGATION PROTOCOL FOR

CULVER'S ROOT

Veronicastrum virginicum

| Jude Sullivan and Jennifer Kujawski

ABSTRACT

Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum* (L.) Farw.), a member of the figwort family (Scrophulariaceae), is a summer-blooming native perennial propagated from seeds by Project Native nursery in Massachusetts. Seeds are collected in early to mid-fall and sown in December to mid-January. Sown seeds are given a natural stratification period outdoors under winter cover. Seed trays brought into a polyhouse in April germinate within a month, and seedlings are transplanted into plugs and 3.8-l (1-gal) containers during the first growing season. Project Native staff prefers to over-winter first-year plants outdoors under protective cover before selling more fully developed plants during the second growing season.

Sullivan J, Kujawski J. 2010. Propagation protocol for Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*). *Native Plants Journal* 11(2):138–140, 142.

KEY WORDS

Scrophulariaceae, germination, native plant nursery, wildflower

NOMENCLATURE

USDA NRCS (2010)

One standout in the native perennial garden is Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum* (L.) Farw. [Scrophulariaceae]), both for its floral spires and its overall height. Standing 1.5 to 1.8 m (5 to 6 ft) tall with sturdy stems and dark green whorled foliage, Culver's root stoutly anchors the back of a garden bed until it blooms in mid- to late summer. Then, with its gracefully arching flower stalks, it becomes a focal point to draw the visitor's attention. Typically white in the wild, but occasionally found in shades of pink and lavender, the blooms of Culver's root attract butterflies and bees.

Culver's root is a member of the figwort family and is native to the eastern half of the US as well as to the Canadian provinces of Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Manitoba. It is commonly found in damp soil in sunny locations, sometimes in wetlands (although in the northeastern US it is classified as a facultative upland species [USDA NRCS 2010]). Although it thrives in moist, rich, acidic soils, once established it will

Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum* (L.) Farw. [Scrophulariaceae]). Photo by Joseph G Strauch Jr