

Asarum canadense L.
Wild Ginger

Asarum canadense is a very low growing plant of very moist woodlands and floodplains. Rarely attaining a height greater than six inches it is a slowly spreading ground cover type plant that most would overlook as being rather uninteresting. Unlike its European relative that has glossy leaves, wild ginger's leaves are quite dull. However, I find this plant to be quite interesting for a number of reasons. First, its fleshy rhizome (horizontal stem) is very fragrant and actually can be used as a ginger substitute (which I would not do or recommend). Second are the flowers which appear early in the spring. They are borne right at ground level and have the color and sometimes the odor of rotting flesh. Little wonder that they are pollinated by flies and beetles.

Plant wild ginger in constantly moist soil in partial to full shade. Mostly pest free.



This is one that would appeal only to those who are looking for the unusual as it has little to offer in the way of showiness.