

Scientific Name: *Senna hebecarpa*

Family: Caesalpinaceae

Common Name: Northern Wild Senna

Native Habitat: Moist, open woods, stream banks or roadsides of most of central and southern United States.

Hardiness Zone: Zones 3-9

Exposure: Prefers full sun, but can handle part shade.

Form: Herbaceous perennial.

Soil Requirements: Moist to moderately dry. At Stonecrop, *S. hebecarpa* grows in the dry Gravel Garden and flourishes.

Growth Rate: Medium to fast.

Height: Anywhere from 3 to 7 feet.

Leaf: The leaves of *Senna hebecarpa* are alternate and are found on long petioles that are often perpendicular to the main stem giving a tiered look. Each petiole holds 10 to 20 pairs of smooth, oblong leaflets approximately 1 to 2 inches in length.

Flower: The flowers are bright yellow and are located on axillary racemes which extend right to the top of the stems. The 10 stamens with dark brown anthers stand out against the 5-petaled, regular flowers. Flowers from late July to mid-August and looks remarkably like a pea.

Seed: Once done flowering, a long, thin, bean pod is produced. These pods are 2 to 4 inches in length, pendulous and linear. As the pod dries it turns jet black and becomes quite ornamental.

Senna hebecarpa lights up the Gravel Garden in late July at Stonecrop Gardens. It is a long bloomer, and once the last flower fades, it adds more interest to the garden with its showy seedpods. *S. hebecarpa* is often confused with *Senna marilandica*, the “Southern Wild Senna,” and differs only from its southern relative with more flowers, long hairs on the ovary, and a more northern range in its natural habitat.

Transplanting or dividing is not recommended, but *Senna hebecarpa* is easily propagated from seed and is offered each year in Stonecrop’s Index Seminum.

