



***Polygonatum biflorum* – Solomon's Seal**

COMMON NAME: Solomon's Seal

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Polygonatum biflorum* – meaning many (*poly*) knobby knees (*gony*) from the knobby jointed roots. *Biflorum* means two flowers.

FLOWER: Yellowish-white, greenish

BLOOMING PERIOD: May to July

SIZE: 1 – 5 feet tall.

BEHAVIOR: Fleshy underground roots (rhizomes) inch forward, sending up one leafy stem each year.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Dry to medium woods and prairies, but plant in reasonably shady wooded areas with moist soil for the best growth.

NATURAL RANGE: Atlantic coastal states and inland to Iowa and Nebraska including most of Wisconsin.

SPECIAL FEATURES: The flowers hang down along the long arching stalk that easily distinguishing it from Solomon's plume and Starry Solomon's Plume. The small tubular flowers are arranged in small clusters (often two together), are loved by bumblebees and then mature into 1/4 inch blue berries in mid-summer. After the leaves die back in the fall, a scar is left on the rhizome that supposedly resembles the "Seal of King Solomon" from the Bible.

SUGGESTED CARE: Transplant in early spring if there are abundant plants. Sow seeds (whole or mashed berries) in fall. This plant is attractive planted along with ferns.

COMPANION PLANTS: prairie trillium, wild geranium, thimble weed, shooting star, mertensia, jack-in-the-pulpit, bellwort.

SPECIAL NOTE: The North American Solomon's Seal is closely related, if not the same, as plants known in Europe and Asia. For centuries the rhizomes have been used for various ailments. Both Native Americans and early settlers ate rhizomes as food. The berries are poisonous, but with a low toxicity.