

American Vetch

(*Vicia americana*)



Native forb

American Vetch is a common herb species of the Northwest forest. The seeds were used as a food source by some North American Native peoples. The leaves were rubbed and applied to spider bites. Roots of the plant were considered as a good luck charm when held in their pockets.

Growth Habit

American Vetch has a vine like growth habit with stems growing 12 to 36 inches tall. Vines will grow forming tangled masses. It flowers in 3 to 9 loose clusters at stem tips (pea-like) and it has bluish to reddish purple petals appearing in early summer. Tap rooted with root extending 2-3 feet with the secondary roots in the upper 20 cm.

Adaptation

A native forb, American Vetch grows in fields, thickets, dry prairies, roadsides and open woods. It is widespread across our region, north and west to the Mackenzie Delta. It is drought tolerant, once established, and does best on sandy or coarse loamy soil conditions and disturbed ground soils. It is the most commonly used vetch in North America.

Reclamation Uses

American Vetch is a legume used primarily for soil improvement along roadsides and for bank stabilization. Well-nodulated vetch can enrich the soil with nitrogen through nitrogen fixation. Once established it provides enough cover to suppress weeds and protect soil. An excellent forage plant that is palatable to both livestock and wild life.

Quick Facts

Growth Habit	Flooding Tolerance	Drought Tolerance	Salt Tolerance	Soil pH	Soil Type	Vigor	Seeds per lb.
Tap root legume	Fair	Good	Poor	7.0	Sandy-Clay loam	Good	33000