

ROCK-ROSE FAMILY.

CISTACEAE.

Frost Weed. Rock-Rose.

Crocanthemum canadense.



Found in bloom during June on dry open hillsides and pastures.

The slightly branching, leafy stalk, which grows from 12 to 15 inches high, is woody-fibred, and slender, and rough to the touch with short stiff hairs; it is red or tawny in color.

The long narrow oval leaf is pointed at both ends; its edge is slightly rolled under, and the ribs are prominent and rough beneath; the texture is strong-fibred, and the surface is rough; its green is tawny. The leaves are set on short stems, with a pair of wings (“stipules”) at the junction with the stalk, and occur alternately.

The 5-petaled flower is shaped like a shallow cup of very fine and thin texture and a clear vigorous yellow color, which is in good harmony with the many orange-tipped stamens; the 5-pointed calyx is hairy, and its green is toned with tawny.

A very individual trait of this flower is the fact that the stamens almost always gather together to one side of the pistil, lying flat upon a petal, caused by the rude touch of a passing insect, it is said, so sensitive is this charming plant,—a quality further manifested by the swift fall of its petals if plucked. The flower never lasts more than a single day, and but few blossoms are borne on a plant. This is the first flowering of the Rock-Rose; though ripening the seeds now formed, there comes a second bloom in the fall whose blossoms are very small, with few or no petals, clustered in the angles of the leaves, and bearing but a few seeds. “Generally called ‘Beauties of the Sun’ by the ancients,—‘Sun-roses’ by the English folk.”

Photo credit: ©David G. Smith, <http://delawarewildflowers.org>



FROST WEED: *Crocanthemum canadense*.

Text and drawing excerpted from *Wildflowers from the North-Eastern States* by Ellen Miller and Margaret Christine Whiting, 1895
Nomenclature and Families updated.