

# Wild Rice

*Zizania aquatica*

-Wild Rice has always been an important emergent aquatic in the ecosystem and history of Wisconsin. People still work with push poles, rice sticks, and rice boats to harvest this wonderful plant. Wild Rice is the only annual that I have included in this whole listing. I included it because it is so important to Wisconsin's ecosystems and history.

-Wild Rice can grow to heights of 9 feet tall. It is a shallow rooted annual that sprouts from seeds each spring. The first leaves to grow in May and June are narrow, limp, and float on the surface of the water. They have a smooth surface and a pointed tip. This is known as the "floating leaf stage". By midsummer, flower stalks of 9 feet tall emerge. These stalks have wide, flat leaves. The flowering portion of the stalk is substantial. The female spikelets are tightly clustered in a whisk-broom-like arrangement on the upper portion of the stalk. Each female spikelet is one-flowered with a three-ribbed scale called a lemma that extends into a needle-like bristle. Most flowers produce a firm, rod-shaped grain, but some are sterile. Below the clusters of female spikelets, single-flowered male spikelets dangle on spreading stalks.



**What is moral is what you feel good after.**

**-Ernest Hemingway**