

# Nat Theo Club

## FIELD NOTES

ISSUE #45



### Frostweed

HERBACEOUS PLANT

#### HABITAT & DIET

Frostweed, *Verbesina virginica* (scientific name), is also known as Iceplant or Iceweed. It grows in the Midwest and the South eastern U.S. states along forest edges and roadsides.

#### FUN FACT

Frostweed is known for the ice that comes out of its stems when the weather drops below freezing.



## HOW DO PLANTS SURVIVE FREEZING?

Annual plants only survive one season, but their seeds survive the winter chill and grow into new plants the following year. Perennial plants are also affected by cold. They lose stems, leaves, and flowers to freezing air temperatures, but their roots are insulated from the cold because they are underground.

Annual: One season of growth

Biennial: Two seasons of growth

Perennial: Lives for many years

Frostweed is a perennial plant that grows year after year. In the winter, water is drawn up through the roots into the hollow, dead stems, where it freezes. As the ice expands, it causes the stems to split, allowing the ice to exit as ice ribbons. I look forward to seeing this amazing spectacle every winter along roadsides.

This year, on a sunny winter day at my local park, I found frostweed with intact ice ribbons. These plants were sheltered from the sun's warmth in a shady low spot. I picked up the beautiful but delicate ribbons of ice and experienced the artistry of God's handiwork.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 says "He (God) has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end." We were the only creation that God gave eternal life. As His children, we will live forever with Him exploring the wonders and beauty of Heaven.

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