



# Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

## *Ratibida columnaris*

Educating people about the environmental necessity, economic value, and natural beauty of native plants

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[www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)

### Common name

Mexican hat

### Range

Mexican hat is common throughout the state except for the far eastern region. *Ratibida columnaris* is the most common of the three species in the *Ratibida* genus found in Texas (*R. peduncularis* and *R. tagetes* being the other species).

### Life cycle

Perennial with a taproot

### Bloom period

Late spring through July; often into August and September if moisture is available, sometimes until frost. In mild winters it may remain evergreen.

### Soil preference

Prefers calcareous soil but can be found in a variety of well-drained soils, including sand, loam, clay, caliche and limestone, from the coastal areas to altitudes above 7,000 feet.

### Exposure

Partial shade to full sun

### Propagation

*R. columnaris* grows readily from seed, which is available commercially or can be collected in late summer. Collect seed from several plants to increase the spectrum of color. The flower colors can vary from plant to plant. If possible, collect seed from plants with solid yellow ray petals to contrast with plants with reddish-brown ray plants.

As with most Texas wildflowers, a fall seeding is recommended. Be sure the seed is in good contact with the soil by lightly raking it into loose topsoil.

### Seeding rate

Two to four pounds per acre or 1 oz. per 100 sq. ft. There are approximately 1,230,000 seeds per pound.



### Maintenance

Supplemental watering may be required if the winter and spring are unusually dry. Watering in summer often extends the flowering period also. Plants will be susceptible to mildew if overwatered, or if planted in the shade in moist clay soil.

After flowering ceases, allow seed to completely mature (let cones become dry and brown) before mowing for reseeding or collecting seed to plant in another area.

### Miscellaneous

*R. columnaris* is an excellent species to include in a wildflower mix as it flowers in the late spring through the early summer. It makes a nice cut flower.