

Polygonatum biflorum


Solomon's-seal or Smooth Solomon's Seal

Tried and True

Native Plant Selections

for the Mid-Atlantic

Common in moist woods throughout much of the Mid-Atlantic, this [native](#) understory plant boasts graceful arching stems, dainty bell-like flowers, and prominent leaf veins. Its common name may come either from resemblance of rhizome scars (from break-away stalks) to the ancient Hebrew seal of King Solomon or from purported “wound sealing properties.”



Perennial	Colony, Flowers, Fruit, Fall Foliage
Height: 1–3 feet	
Spread: 1–1½ feet	
Bloom Color: White or pale green	
Characteristics	
Upright, mounding herbaceous <a href="#">perennial</a> with arching, unbranched <a href="#">stems</a> up to 5 feet long	
<a href="#">Opposite</a> , simple, <a href="#">parallel-veined</a> , yellow-green leaves turn an attractive yellow in fall	
Greenish-white, 6-petaled, tubular, <a href="#">hypogynous</a> flowers dangle (usually) in pairs along stalk April–June	
Blue to black <a href="#">berries</a> follow flowers	
Distinctive scars left when leaf stalks break away	
Slow spreading <a href="#">rhizomes</a> may form colonies	
Attributes	
Tolerates wet <a href="#">soil</a> and erosion; no serious pests or diseases; <a href="#">deer</a> occasionally severely damage	
Sometimes confused with false Solomon's seal, which has upright flowers	
Berries are poisonous; only roots (digging rhizomes up kills plant) and young shoots are edible boiled	
Attracts butterflies to nectar and birds to fruit	
Growing and Maintenance Tips	Excellent Replacement for
<a href="#">Soil Requirements</a> : Rich, acidic	Hosta - Hosta, Plantain Lily
<a href="#">Light Requirements</a> : Partial Shade, Shade	Non-native ferns
<a href="#">Water Requirements</a> : Dry, Moist	
Use in woodland gardens or naturalized areas; mix with ferns at the base of trees	
<a href="#">Hardiness</a> : USDA Zones 3-8	
developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria	

Images by Elaine Mills, Thomas Jefferson Community Center (top), Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, and Native Plant Garden at The Nature Conservancy