

# Primrose

*Oenothera biennis*

Commonly known as common evening primrose, is a biennial herbaceous plant native to North America, widely recognized for its medicinal properties and, in some contexts, as an aggressive weed. While it is a valued, showy wildflower in native plant gardens, its ability to produce thousands of seeds and tolerate poor, dry soils allows it to colonize disturbed areas rapidly.

## Identification

**Life Cycle:** Biennial. The first year, it forms a low, flat rosette of lance-shaped, hairy leaves (6–30 cm long). The second year, it sends up a tall, erect, often reddish-tinged stem (50–200 cm tall) to flower.

**Leaves:** Alternate, lance-shaped, with wavy or slightly toothed margins.

**Flowers:** Lemon-scented, bright yellow flowers (2.5–5 cm diameter) with four petals. They possess a unique behavior of opening quickly at sunset and closing by the following noon.

**Fruit/Seeds:** Produces numerous 2–4 cm long, hairy cylindrical capsules that split into four sections to release small (1–2 mm), reddish-brown seeds.

**Roots:** Deep, fleshy taproot.

## Control

**Manual/Mechanical:** Hoeing or pulling is effective, particularly in the first-year rosette stage. Mowing before seed set is necessary to prevent future infestation.

**Cultural:** Maintaining dense vegetation to compete for light and space can prevent its establishment.

**Chemical:** Herbicides containing dicamba and glyphosate have proven effective against it.

