

Red Clover

Genus/species *Trifolium pratense*

Family **Papilionaceae (=Fabaceae in part)**

Distribution **Throughout most of US; naturalized from Eurasia**

Comments This clover is a conspicuous short-lived perennial of many fields, pastures and roadsides because of its dark pink or magenta flower heads nearly an inch in diameter and comprised of as many as 125 florets. It may grow to be as tall as 2 feet in height. Red clover can survive in much of the country but reaches its best growth in cool, moist climates, especially in fertile, well-drained clay soils. In hot climates, this species may become dormant after a spring blooming period. There are several cultivars used in different regions. Cross-pollination is essential for seed production, and bumble bees and honey bees (the latter being especially useful late in the season) are effective pollinators. Each of the three oval leaflets of this clover typically has a whitish “V” on the upper surface. This species is of much greater importance for veterinary allergy, particularly for horses, than for human allergy.

