**Verbena hastata**

**blue vervain**

- **Family**: Verbenaceae
- **Origin**: Native
- **WIS Code**: FACW CoC 4

**DESCRIPTION**
Biennial with erect, square, somewhat hairy stems to 1.5 m tall. Leaves (4 to 20 cm long) are opposite, narrow, lance-shaped with coarsely toothed margins, a short stalk and frequently two basal lobes. The upper surface is rough and the lower finely hairy.

**FLOWERS AND FRUITS**
June through September. Multiple slender spikes (5-15 cm long) arise from the upper leaf axils (where leaf meets stem). Flowers are blue to violet or rarely rose pink, with five petals fused at the base forming a short tube. Spikes elongate as the plants mature, with flowers blooming from the bottom progressing toward the tip and fruits forming below. Fruits are dark brown dry nutlets (1.5 to 2 mm).

**HABITAT**
Wet fields and meadows, marshes, floodplains, stream banks, exposed sand and gravel bars, ditches and roadsides.

**SIMILAR SPECIES**
*Vernonia noveboracensis*, New York ironweed, has round (not square) stems, alternate (not opposite) leaves, and branched flower heads in flat or domed arrangement (not spike-like). See the *V. noveboracensis* page for more details and images.