Downy Skullcap
(Scutellaria incana)

2-3' x 1-2' strong upright bushy clump, forming an open vase.
"Skullcap" refers to the skull, or helmet, shaped flower calyx, that holds the seeds.

Native New York south, found in rocky open woods, clearings, on wooded slopes, wood's edges, pinelands, shaded upland meadows, on dry bluffs, ravines, along streams and rivers, in sunny meadows, sandy areas, thickets, and shaded roadsides.

Upper stems have branched loose 3-6" spikes of numerous small showy tubular deep-blue-violet flowers, each with a flared lower lip with a conspicuous white patch, and with a rounded hooded upper lip. The 2 lips are fused, and are covered with fine soft "downy" hairs. Blooms July to September, about 4-6 weeks.

2-4" x 1.5" toothed ovate deep-gray-green leaves, on dark square stems covered with tiny white hairs

Seedpods shaped like two little saucers stacked one upon the other, with a lip around the edges; tan with violet/purple lips at maturity.

Sun to filtered shade.
Average, moist to dry, well-drained soil.
Prefers moist rich soil. Tolerates drought (once established), and clay or sand.
Easily grown, low maintenance.
Can form tight colonies of plants, from underground rhizomes.
Can snip off the seed heads after flowering, for neater appearance

Use in borders, meadows, along paths, open woodlands, cottage gardens, rock gardens.
Lovely for accents, groupings, mass plantings.

Flowers pollinated by native bumblebees.
Attracts skippers, small butterflies.
Mammals avoid the bitter-tasting and possibly toxic leaves, so deer resistant.

Photos 1, 6: North Creek Nurseries
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