A mature specimen of this native perennial plant ranges from 6-12’ tall (183-366 cm). The central stem is thick, light to medium green, and has conspicuous white hairs. There is some branching into flowering stems in the upper part of the plant. The basal leaves are 12-24” long and about half as wide. They are covered in fine white hairs, broadly lanceolate in overall shape, but deeply lobed or pinnatifid. The leaves become much smaller as they ascend up the stem. The inflorescence is very tall and elongated, with yellow composite flowers about 3-4” across. They resemble wild sunflowers in overall size, shape, and structure. However, like other Silphium spp., the small tubular disk florets are sterile, while the ray florets are fertile. There is little floral scent. A mature Compass Plant has 6-24 of these composite flowers. This plant can live up to 100 years. At the Peacock/Woodworth Prairie blooms start the 3rd week of June through the 4th week of August.