

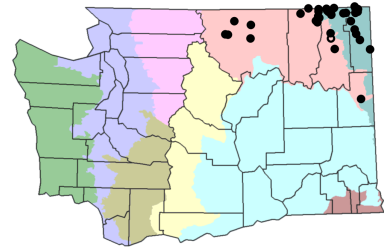
## *Sanicula marilandica* L.

black snake-root

Apiaceae - carrot family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S2



**General Description:** Perennial with a cluster of fibrous roots from a short simple caudex or crown; stems solitary, erect, 4-12 dm tall, generally branched only above. Basal and lowermost stem leaves long-petiolate, the blade 6-15 cm wide, palmately 5-7 parted or palmately compound, the segments or leaflets sharply toothed, sometimes shallowly lobed or deeply 2-lobed. Stem leaves usually several, gradually reduced upwards, becoming sessile.

**Floral Characteristics:** Ultimate umbels about 1 cm wide or less, subtended by a few minute narrow bractlets, with 15-25 greenish white flowers, the male flowers more numerous than the perfect ones, or some umbellets all male. Calyx lobes firm, lance-triangular, tapering gradually to a narrow tip, slightly fused at the base. Styles elongate, often persistent, longer than the prickles of the fruit.

**Fruits:** Ovoid schizocarps, 4-6 x 3-5 mm, somewhat compressed laterally and covered with numerous basally thickened prickles with hooked tips, the lower ones rudimentary. Identifiable June to mid-August.

**Identification Tips:** *S. marilandica* has fibrous roots and greenish white flowers, while other *Sanicula* species in our range have taproots and yellow or purple flowers. The leaves superficially resemble Carolina bugbane (*Trautvetteria caroliniensis*). The well-developed hook-tipped prickles and slight lateral compression of the fruits are useful for distinguishing the genus.

**Range:** Peripheral in WA, ID, B.C., east to Newfoundland, south to FL and NM.

**Habitat/Ecology:** Moist, low ground of meadows, riparian flood plains, moist woods, and marsh edges. Some WA occurrences are on calcareous substrates. Elevations in WA: 450-1100 m (1500-3600 ft). Associated species include Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*), black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera* ssp. *trichocarpa*), quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), water birch (*Betula occidentalis*), mountain alder (*Alnus incana* spp. *tenuifolia*), red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*), and wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*). *S. marilandica* probably withstands moderate flooding, given its occurrence within floodplain habitats.

**Comments:** This species is also rare in ID, WY, LA, KY, MD, DE, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island.



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