

Seneca snakeroot *Polygala senega*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Polygalales

Family: Polygalaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

This plant has multiple stems and may grow to about 20 inches tall. Flowers develop on a stalk at the tip of the central stem. Flower color is white or green. Flowers are similar in shape to those of pea plants. Leaves are arranged alternately along the stem. The fruit is a capsule with two seeds.

BEHAVIORS

There are two varieties of Seneca snakeroot in Illinois: one lives in prairies and dry woods in the northern three-fourths of the state; the other variety is rare and grows in woods in the northern one-half of Illinois. Blooming occurs from May through September. Native bees are attracted to the flowers.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; marshes; peatlands; rivers and streams; wet prairies and fens; lakes, ponds and reservoirs

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; dolomite prairie; gravel prairie; shrub prairie

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