

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.

ILLINOIS RANGE



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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