

Black Henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*)

POISONOUS

Description

A biennial plant that is covered with soft, sticky hairs with an unpleasant smell. It has a thick, fleshy cylindrical root. Stems can reach to 115 cm high. Leaves soft and dull; the upper side dark green; the underside lighter, grayish, fluffy-haired, especially along veins and leaf margin. Basal leaves long-stemmed and stalk leaves are sessile, half-enclosing the stalk, leaf edges are shallowly lobed and veins are conspicuous. Flowers sessile, massed in zigzagged arrangement on inflorescence at the stalk end. Bracts sessile, mostly oblong or narrowly-lanceolate, with few teeth or entire. Calyx 10-22 mm in length, cup-shaped, with 5 pointed tips. Flower of 5 petals, is up to 4.5 cm in length, funnel-shaped, pale yellow with netted purple veins and purple-violet in the throat. Fruit is a capsule with a prominent cover. **CAUTION:** Plant contains several alkaloids, and it has caused rare poisoning in humans, cattle, poultry, and swine.

Key Identifiers

- ✓ Pale yellow flowers, with purple netted veins and purple throat
- ✓ Persistent fruit capsules with 5 pointed papery cover
- ✓ Zigzagged flowers that are along one side of inflorescence

Location in Canada

Black Henbane has been reported in Alberta across to Prince Edward Island in Canada.

Resources

<http://www.invasiveplants.ab.ca/Downloads/FS-BlackHenbane.pdf>

http://www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/pp/ppack.info?p_psn=185&p_type=all&p_sci=sci

Similar species

Black henbane is unlikely to be confused with other species because of its distinctive flowers and fruits.

