

Corn snakeroot

(*Eryngium aquaticum*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms.

Corn snakeroot blooms vary in color from a pale whitish-blue to a rich lavender or cornflower blue. Flowerheads are about 1/2" to 1" in diameter, globular and are surrounded by spiny bracts. They are borne near the tops of multi-branched, erect stems. Leaves are sessile, linear and alternately arranged. Leaf margins are entire or may be finely toothed.

Corn snakeroot typically flowers summer through late fall. A variety of pollinators are attracted to its flowers. Corn snakeroot occurs naturally in sunny marshes and swamps, along pond edges and in ditches.

The common name snakeroot (also known as rattlesnakemaster, both of which are used to describe the *Eryngium* genus) may have come from its use in Native American culture as a remedy for snakebite.

Family: Apiaceae (or Umbelliferae) (Carrot or parsley family)

Native range: Eastern and central Panhandle, Santa Rosa County, several counties in north and central peninsula

To see where natural populations of Corn snakeroot have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Hardiness: Zones 7–9

Soil: Moist to wet, acidic soils

Exposure: Full sun to moderate shade

Growth habit: 3–5' tall

Propagation: Seed

Garden tips: In a home landscape setting, corn snakeroot may require a little more care than other wildflowers. It does not tolerate drought, so soil moisture must be maintained. As well, it is not a very prolific reseeder, so plants may need to be replaced periodically. Despite its maintenance needs, it is an interesting and beautiful addition to a mixed wildflower garden.

Corn snakeroot is sometimes available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit PlantRealFlorida.org to find a native nursery on your area.

For more on this and other *Eryngiums*, see "Interesting *Eryngiums*" by Claudia Larsen at flawildflowers.org/interesting-eryngiums/.



Photo by Stacey Matrazzo