

Rattlesnake Master

Photo and article by : Sumathy Vannarth 6/24/2020



Location: Perennial Bed near entrance to Secret Garden

Scientific Name: *Eryngium yuccifolium*

It is documented in 1700s this plant's sap was used to prevent snake bite during ceremonial rattlesnake dance. The roots of this plant were used to treat rattlesnake bites. It is stated that the Native Americans used fibrous leaves of this plant for weaving baskets and sandals.

Rattlesnake Master plants are perennial, grow in zone 4-8, four to six feet tall, grows in sun and moist soils, but tolerates clay or rocky soil. The plants have yucca-like leaves, deep tap root and rigid stem bears thistle-like globular flower heads with greenish white flowers. Sticky honey like scent attracts bees, wasps, flies, skippers, moths and butterflies. Blooms appear mid to late summer. The plants work well as an accent in perennial beds. The plant does not transplant well due to deep tap root. The plant is easily propagated from seed. When the seed heads turn brown, seeds may be collected and stored in refrigerator in sealed container. The seeds are treated with cold moisture for 1 to 2 months before planting in spring or seeds are planted outdoor in fall.

The plant leaves die back after blooms and offsets develop. No serious insects or disease problem with this plant.