

GENTIANA VILLOSA L.
Sampson's Snakeroot

FAMILY: Gentianaceae

HABIT: Erect herbaceous perennial, (1) 2-6 dm.; flowering late August-October; fruiting October-November.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Gentiana villosa* is one of two white-flowered gentians in Ohio. *G. villosa* can be distinguished from *G. alba* by leaf color and shape. The leaves of *G. villosa* are dark green above and widest above the middle, those of *G. alba* are light yellowish green above and widest near the base. The seeds of *G. villosa* are wingless, while those of *G. alba* are winged.

TOTAL RANGE: s. NJ to s. OH and s. IN, s. to GA, n. FL, and LA.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Adams, Jackson, Lawrence, and Scioto counties.

HABITAT: Mesic woodlands, pinelands, dry ravines, and roadsides.

HAZARDS: Unknown, possibly overgrowth by woody species through succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown. It appears able to tolerate moderate disturbance, but is limited by its range to extreme southern Ohio.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: For accurate identification, flowers are needed. Leaf color should be noted on living material. When making a permanent collection, a flower should be cut longitudinally and pressed in such a way that the shape and width of the calyx lobes, corolla lobes, and corolla plaits are visible. Gentian flowers are susceptible to insect infestation. Care should be taken to rid the flowers of insect larvae by applying a topical poison to the flowers. Over-collecting should be avoided.

COMMENTS: The general state range of this plant is probably accurately known. However, it may be more frequent than records indicate. It should be sought in suitable habitats throughout its range.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Gleason, H.A., and A. Cronquist. 1991. Manual of vascular plants of northeastern United States and adjacent Canada. New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York. 910 pp.

Pringle, J.S. 1967. Taxonomy of *Gentiana*, section *Pneumonanthae* in eastern North America. *Brittonia* 19:1-32.

Wood, C.E., Jr. and R.E. Weaver, Jr. 1982. The genera of Gentianaceae in the southeastern United States. *J. Arn. Arb.* 63: 441-487.



Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Created: 1/1984 Barbara K. Andreas