

SILENE NIVEA (Nutt.) Otth.
Snowy Campion

FAMILY: Caryophyllaceae

HABIT: Erect or leaning, herbaceous, rhizomatous perennial, 2-7 dm.; flowering June, July; fruiting July, August.

SIMILAR SPECIES: This species has distinctive characters that set it apart from the similar *Silene noctiflora* and *Lychnis alba*. *S. nivea* has mostly glabrous to puberulent stems, long, narrowly-lanceolate leaves, a few-flowered, leafy inflorescence with the leaves appearing axillary, a tubular-campanulate calyx, and slightly notched petals. *L. alba* has coarsely pubescent stems, glandular above, lanceolate to broadly elliptic leaves, a much-branched inflorescence with foliar primary bracts, a tubular calyx, and deeply-bilobed petals.

S. noctiflora has coarsely hirsute stems, ovate-lanceolate to elliptic-lanceolate leaves, a loosely-branched inflorescence, an ovoid-campanulate calyx, and deeply-bilobed petals.

TOTAL RANGE: PA, MD, and VA, w. to TN, MN, SD, NE, and MO.

STATE RANGE: There are post-1960 specimens from Butler County, and a dubious collection from Wood County. There are pre-1960 records from 3 other counties of southwest Ohio: Clermont, Greene, and Hamilton.

STATE STATUS: 1980-1981: Presumed Extirpated, 1982 to present: Threatened.

HABITAT: Rich woods and alluvium, disturbed floodplains and streambanks.

HAZARDS: Drying of habitat; soil compaction; casual picking of conspicuous flowers.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but possibly good, as evidenced by its occurrence in disturbed situations.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect mature flowering or fruiting material with a small portion of the rhizome; avoid over-collecting.

COMMENTS: This species should be sought throughout southwest Ohio. It may be overlooked because it resembles other white-flowered campions (see Similar Species).

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Hitchcock, C.L. and B. Maguire. 1947. A revision of the North American species of *Silene*. Univ. Wash. Pub. Bio. 13: 1-73.

Kruckeberg, A.R. 1964. Artificial crosses involving eastern North American *Silenes*. *Brittonia* 16: 95-105.



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