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Tall Bugbane

Actaea elata var. elata

A member of the family Ranunculaceae ("buttercups"), this species was formerly identified under the genus Cimicifuga. Members of the genus Actaea are also known by the common name "baneberry", a group of plants whose waxy shiny red or white berries are highly toxic and cause damage to cardiac tissue when consumed by mammals, but are not toxic to birds which consume and disperse the seeds through their droppings.

Flower head & seed pods Brian Klinkenberg

Close up of flower head & seed pods Brian Klinkenberg

Leaves Brian Klinkenberg

Flower head Kym Welstead

Plant cluster Thomas N. Kaye

Close up of leaf & stem K. Welstead

Characteristics

COSEWIC: Endangered BC List: Red, Identified Wildlife

Height up to 2 m. Plants feature large compound leaves and numerous (50 to 900), tiny white flowers clustered on branched bottlebrush-like flower spikes (racemes). The alternate leaves are divided into threes, with 9-17 lobed leaflets, each up to 18 cm long. The flowers of tall bugbane lack petals and instead attract pollinators with numerous showy white stamens. Each flower is surrounded by five tiny sepals. Unlike other members of the genus *Actaea*, fruits are green pod-like structures (up to 1 cm long) that remain on the plant long after flowering and split open in fall or winter to release about a dozen reddish-brown seeds.

Resources

Tall Bugbane brochure Ministry of Environment Lower Mainland
Taxonomic assessment of Cimicifuga elata and its new variety alpestris in southern Oregon

Propagation and population re-establishment for tall bugbane (Cimicifuga elata) on the Salem District, BLM

For further information see

BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer: Species and Ecosystems Search

A source for authoritative conservation information on thousands of plants and animals and hundreds of ecological communities in BC. From here connect to all provincial and federal recovery plans (including the SARA Registry), COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada), Identified Wildlife guidance and conservation requirements for specific species and ecological communities of conservation concern impacted by forestry activities) and links to E-Flora and E-Fauna (the Electronic Atlas of the Plants and Wildlife of British Columbia).

British Columbia's Coast Region Species & Ecosystems of Conservation Concern

A joint venture resource providing comprehensive information on a range of species and ecological communities specific to the Coast Region of BC (including the South, Central and North Coast, Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii).

Develop With Care Guidelines (see Lower Mainland Region section)

Environmental guidelines for urban and rural land development in BC.

Species at Risk & Local Governments a Primer for BC

Learn what species are at risk in your area, search by name, habitat type, regional district and forest district.

E-Flora the electronic atlas of the Flora of BC

A volunteer-driven GIS-based biogeoclimatic atlas of the vascular plants, fungi, algae, bryophytes and lichens of BC.

Source URL: http://www.sccp.ca/species-habitat/tall-bugbane

Links

[1] http://www.sccp.ca/printpdf/96

[2] http://www.sccp.ca/sites/default/files/species-habitat/documents/tall_bugbane_id_pamphlet.pdf

[3] http://www.sccp.ca/sites/default/files/species-habitat/documents/inv-rpt-va-ciel-eug-rose-med-ump-taxonomy-interim-report-2007-10-29_0.pdf

[4] http://www.sccp.ca/sites/default/files/species-habitat/documents/tall%20bugbane_prop_and_reintroduction%20salem%20oregon.pdf

[5] http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/conservation-data-centre/explore-cdc-data/species-and-ecosystems-explorer

[6] http://www.geog.ubc.ca/biodiversity/factsheets/

[7] http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/devwithcare2006/develop_with_care_intro.html

[8] http://www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca/