

# Black henbane



# Black henbane

(*Hyoscyamus niger* L.)

Black henbane is a member of the nightshade family and is a non-native annual weed in North Dakota. Black henbane grows up to 5 feet tall. The plant has coarse, pubescent and often sticky leaves and branches. The leaves are large (6 by 8 inches), alternate, coarsely toothed, lobed and grayish green. Flowers are funnel-shaped, five-lobed, brownish yellow with dark purple veins. The seeds are contained in pineapple-shaped capsules and are gray brown to black. Black henbane can produce thousands of seeds per plant.

Seeds germinate and produce a rosette with a large whitish branched taproot the first growing season. The plant bolts and flowers from June until the first frost the second season. The plant has an unpleasant odor throughout its life-cycle. Black henbane contains alkaloids that can poison animals but is unpalatable and rarely eaten. All parts of the plant are toxic to humans. Even just smelling the flowers can cause headaches and nausea.

