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*Eryngium yuccifolium*

[Synonyms : *Eryngium aquaticum*, *Eryngium yuccaefolium*]

**RATTLESNAKE MASTER** is an evergreen perennial. Native to eastern North America it has yucca-like silvery-green leaves, and thistle-like blue maturing to greenish-white flower heads framed with large leaf-like bracts.

It is also known as Button eryngo, Button snakeroot, Merrye-curvee, and Snakeroot.

Warning – authorities believe it can cause slightly increased heart rate, vertigo, depression, headache and constipation.

The flowers are pollinated by bees, flies and beetles.

*Yuccifolium* is made up of *Yucca* (genus name) and Latin *-folia* (leaved) components meaning ‘with yucca-like leaves’.

In earlier times the leaves and fruit featured in rattlesnake dances and rituals performed by the Meskwaki North American Indian tribe.

For several North American Indian tribes the plant provided a source of medicine. Records show that the Meskwaki appear to have made particular use of it as authorities have noted that it was employed by them in the treatment of blood problems, spleen disorders, kidney ailments, venereal disease, urinary problems, rheumatism and toothache and that they also prescribed it as a sedative. The Cherokee used it for whooping cough, and they and the Meskwaki also employed it for treating snake bites. It was used to cure dysentery by the Natchez Indians and they also used the stems and leaves to stem nosebleeds.

Rattlesnake master is believed to have been introduced to England in 1699.

Today rattlesnake master is popular as an ornamental plant.