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About DACFAnimals & PlantsForestGeologyRecreationFarmingPlanningLicensing & RegulationsBureaus & Programs

DACF Home → Bureaus & Programs → Maine Natural Areas Program → Communities, Plants, and Animals → Rare Plants → Sanguisorba canadensis

About MNAP
Focus Areas
Communities, Plants and Animals
Natural Communities and Ecosystems
Rare Plants
Invasive Plants
Ecological Inventory and Monitoring
Rare Animals
State and Global Rarity Ranks
Survey Forms
Maps, Data, and Technical Assistance
Ecological Reserves

Maine Natural Areas Program

Sanguisorba canadensis L.

Canada Burnet

- State Rank: S1
- Global Rank: G5
- State Status: Threatened

Habitat: Peaty or boggy soils. [Conifer forest (forest, upland); Non-tidal rivershore (non-forested, seasonally wet)]

Range: Newfoundland and Labrador to Manitoba, south to New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana.

Aids to Identification: Canada burnet is a perennial herb which arises from a thick rhizome. It has alternate, pinnately compound leaves, with 7-15 sharply toothed leaflets. Its small white flowers are clustered in a dense spike, 3-12 cm long. The flowers have 4 petal-like sepals, which are only 2-3 mm long, and each flower has 4 stamens that are much longer than the sepals. The similar *S. officinalis* has purple sepals and is a cultivated species that would not be found in similar habitats.



Ecological characteristics: Grows in areas kept free of dense trees or shrubs by natural or human disturbance. The populations known along northern rivershores are typically very small.

Phenology: Flowers July - September.

Family: Rosaceae

Synonyms: None noted.

Known Distribution in Maine: This rare plant has been documented from a total of 8 town(s) in the following county(ies): Aroostook, Hancock, Oxford, Somerset.

Reason(s) for rarity: Disjunct from principal range.

Conservation considerations: Naturally occurring populations along rivershores are maintained by hydrologic disturbance. One population along a woods road is maintained by infrequent grading.

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