



CASTLETON TOWER PRESERVE

FACT SHEET

Resource Inventory & Management Plan

Sacred Datura (*Datura wrightii*)



Image Credit: inaturalist.com

OVERVIEW

If you’ve spent any time traversing trails in the deserts of Southern Utah, you’ve probably come across a large, smelly, trumpeted white flower. Sacred Datura is a common flower often found along roads, ditches, and sandy washes, typically from 1,000 to 6,000 feet in elevation. The flowers of the plant can be from 6-7 inches long and 5 inches wide. The flowers are white and fragrant, but can also sometimes be tinted with purple. The fruit presents as a greenish capsule covered in spines.

These plants are poisonous because they contain toxic alkaloids, extracts of which can be narcotic and if ingested, potentially lethal. These narcotic properties have been known and used in religious ceremonies since before recorded history by southwestern native peoples.

Sacred Datura is a perennial flower, often grown domesitcally as an annual, which blooms from April to October throughout its range. The large flowers contain rich nectar and attract moths and other pollinators. Stanley Welsh, author of “A Utah Flora”, says this about Datura: “The flowers are the largest of any native plant in Utah, and are sweetly scented. The herbage smells like a wet dog”.

Additional Resources about theSacred Datura:

https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/beauty/Sky_Islands/plants/Datura_wrightii/index.shtml

[https://calscape.org/Datura-wrightii-\(Toluaca\)?srchr=sc567d9522678c1](https://calscape.org/Datura-wrightii-(Toluaca)?srchr=sc567d9522678c1)

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=dawr2

TAXONOMY

Kingdom:	Plantae
Clade:	Tracheophytes
Clade:	Angiosperms
Clade:	Eudicots
Clade:	Asterids
Order:	Solanales
Family:	Solanaceae
Subfamily:	Solanoideae
Tribe:	Datureae
Genus:	Datura

SPECIES RANGE

