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common name	Lomatium or Biscuit Root
scientific name	<i>Lomatium caruifolium</i>
family	Apiaceae (carrot)
habitat	wet grassland
size	plant up to 1 foot tall, flowers in clusters 1 to 2 cm across

**fun facts** The common name Biscuit Root comes from the fact that Native Americans made a type of flour from the large [taproot](#).

**description** Member of the carrot family. The tiny (1-2 mm across) flowers have five petals. They are arranged in clusters called [umbels](#). The leaves have delicate fern-like divisions. The plant is generally long-lived and grows each year from a carrot-like taproot which stores energy.

*Lomatium* is the only yellow flowered member of the carrot family at Mather Field. It prefers locations in between the wet vernal pools and the dry mima mound tops.

**life cycle** *Lomatium* is a [perennial](#). The leaves generally die each year and new ones grow as soon as it rains in the fall. Biscuit Root blooms in March and early April.

**ecology** Biscuit Root is eaten by a number of animals. The roots are tasty and moisture-filled and are eaten by [rodents](#) during the summer. The leaves are eaten by rabbits. The large and oily seeds are a favorite food of some birds. Early settlers to California also used this plant as a herb for flavoring food.

investigate

*Lomatium* is closely related to a number of the herbs and spices used to flavor foods. Rub the leaves or seeds and then smell your fingers. Does it remind you of something you have tasted in spicy foods?

