ABSTRACT: Solanum nigrum complex is a group of plant species used as indigenous vegetables and also a source of traditional medicine in Kenya and other parts of the world. There are many species in the S. nigrum complex which include S. villosum, S. scabrum, S. nigrum and S. americanum among others. This study was carried out in order to determine the species of the S. nigrum complex found in Western Kenya. Samples were collected from Eldoret, Kisumu, Kakamega, and Bungoma. The plants were then pressed and sent to a taxonomist at Egerton University for classification and identification. The samples collected were found to belong to three different species namely; S. nigrum, S. scabrum and S. villosum; which all belong to the S. nigrum complex. The vegetative features exhibiting variations included colour and size of the berries, size of leaves and colour and shape of the stems. S. scabrum was found to be the most common in the study region and this was associated to the popularity of the species as food based on the large size of the leaves, and the taste of the leaves as cooked vegetables.

Key words: Solanum nigrum complex, S. nigrum, S. scabrum, S. villosum, County.

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