

Salt-marsh Water-hemp (*Amaranthus cannabinus*)

Description

Salt-marsh Water-hemp is a perennial herb with a hairless stem that may grow up to 8 feet (2.5 meters) in height. The leaves are alternately arranged, lance-shaped, not toothed on the margin, up to 6 inches (15 cm) in length and 1.5 inches (4 cm) in width, with a well developed stalk at the base and pointed at the tip. The flowers, appearing from July to September, lack petals and are greenish in color, and are arranged in elongate spikes at the top of the stem. The male and female flowers occur on separate plants. The individual fruit is sac-like, to about 4 mm in length, and contains a single seed.

Distribution

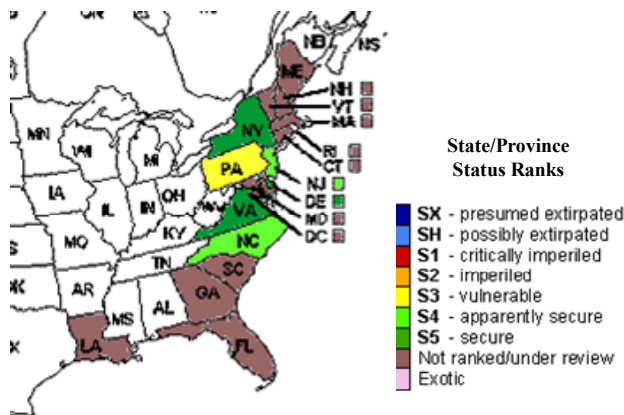
Salt-marsh Water-hemp has a distribution from Maine south along the coast into Florida and west into Louisiana. In Pennsylvania, it has been documented in a few southeastern counties along the Delaware River.



Photo source: PNHP

North American State/Province Conservation Status

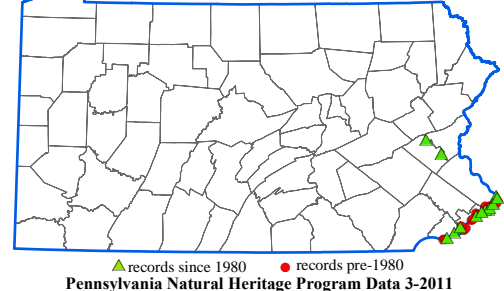
Map by NatureServe 2010



Habitat

Salt-marsh Water-hemp grows in intertidal marshes, mudflats, and river shores, where it is subjected to daily fluctuations in water levels.

Pennsylvania Distribution *Amaranthus cannabinus*



State Status & Conservation

The PA Biological Survey (PABS) has assigned Salt-marsh Water-hemp a rarity status of Rare. The species has a very limited state range and a specialized habitat, yet appears to be relatively successful in maintaining itself, and does not appear to be endangered or threatened with extirpation. The habitat of this species has threats from exotic species, dredging and filling, and water pollution.

NatureServe conservation status ranks

G5 —Globally Secure; **S3** — Vulnerable in Pennsylvania

References

- NatureServe. 2008. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.0. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available at <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>.
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- Rhoads, A. F. and W. M. Klein, Jr. 1993. The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania: Annotated Checklist and Atlas. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
- Rhoads, A. F. and T. A. Block. 2007. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual, Second Edition. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia

