

Let's Protect New Jersey's Rare Plants



Support the Creation of the **New Jersey Native Plant Protection Act**

Did you know that even though New Jersey has a list of rare and endangered plant species, these plants are *not* yet protected by state law?

What is New Jersey's Natural Botanical Heritage?

New Jersey is geographically and botanically diverse, with more than 2100 native plant species. Approximately 16% of these species are now at risk for extinction in the state and 39% are considered imperiled to some degree. At least 32 plant species have already been extirpated.

Thirty plant species are known from only a single population occurrence in the state and 52 species are globally rare. Some of these species exist *only* in NJ.

Threats to New Jersey's Rare and Endangered Plants:

Habitat loss or degradation through development and urbanization is the number one cause of rare and endangered plant decline in NJ. Other threats include agriculture, pollution, invasive species, overcollection, and ecological succession in the absence of natural disturbance processes (i.e. wildfires). Seventy-four percent of endangered plant species have populations located outside of state-protected lands, making them especially vulnerable.

Why Protect New Jersey's Rare Plants and Ecological Communities?

In addition to its inherent value to us and to our landscape, plant diversity is a critical component of overall biodiversity. Biodiversity drives the complex interactions within our ecosystem that provide us with food, maintenance of water and air quality, waste decomposition and soil generation, nutrient cycling, pollination services, natural pest control, climate stabilization, flood and erosion control, and medicines and pharmaceuticals. Losing just one or a few "parts" of an ecosystem could cause the cascading collapse of the whole.

Many other states have legislation protecting their native rare plants. New Jersey lags behind this trend.

To Support this Effort:

Visit <http://www.pinelandsalliance.org/protection/hotissues/ecological/rareplantprotection/> for additional details or call (609) 859-8860 ext.23.

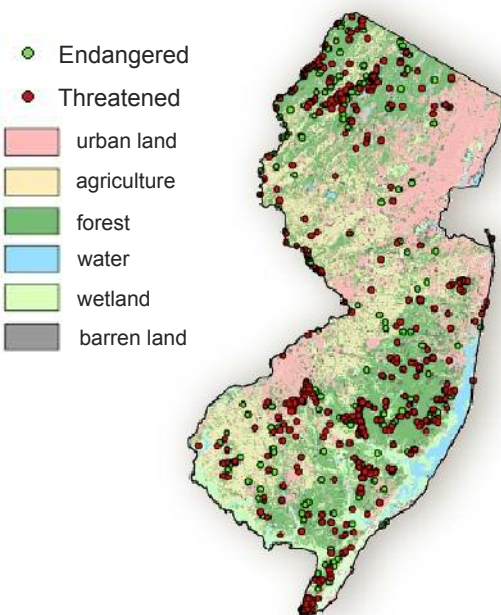
References:

Breden, T.F., J.M. Hartman, M. Anzelone and J.F. Kelly. 2006. Endangered Plant Species Populations in New Jersey: Health and Threats. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry, Office of Natural Lands Management, Natural Heritage Program, Trenton, NJ.

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry, Natural Heritage Program.

We Need a Better Law:

Current legislation requires that only a list be created of plants classified as "endangered" and "species of concern." It does not require that these plants be protected. Our plan calls for the creation of the **New Jersey Native Plant Protection Act**, in which endangered and threatened plant species, as well as rare ecological communities, are to be legally protected. This legislation will afford New Jersey plants protections similar to those already in place for wildlife.



Existing Endangered and Threatened Plant Populations

Adapted from Breden et al. 2006; NJDEP; Rutgers University

Organizations Supporting a New Jersey Native Plant Protection Act March 2014

Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions
American Littoral Society
Audubon Wildlife Society
D&R Greenway Land Trust
Ecological Solutions, LLC
Edison Greenways Group, Inc.
Environment New Jersey
Forked River Mountain Coalition
Friends for the Hamilton-Trenton-Bordentown Marsh
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space
Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association
Greater Newark Conservancy
Haddon Township Environmental Commission
Highlands Coalition
Jakes Branch County Park, Ocean County Dept of Parks and Recreation
Kingston Greenways Association
Little Gardens Club of Atlantic City
Master Gardeners of Burlington County
Musconetcong Mountain Conservancy
Musconetcong Watershed Association
New Jersey Audubon Society
New Jersey Conservation Foundation
New Jersey Sierra Club
North American Butterfly Association, North Jersey Chapter
NY/NJ Baykeeper
Pinelands Native Plant Nursery
Pinelands Preservation Alliance
Rancocas Conservancy
Rutgers University Ecology & Evolution Graduate Student Association
Saddler's Woods Conservation Association
South Jersey Land and Water Trust
The Native Plant Society of New Jersey
The Nature Conservancy
Toadshade Wildflower Farm
Union Forge Heritage Association
Washington Crossing Audubon Society
Wild Ridge Plants, LLC
Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge