



SPECIAL PLANTS OF  
NEW JERSEY

factsheet

## Sensitive Joint-Vetch

Scientific Name: *Aeschynomene virginica*

State-listed: Endangered

Federally-listed: Threatened

State Conservation Rank: S1

Global Conservation Rank: G2

**Description/Identification Tips:** Robust, annual herb in the legume family (Fabaceae), up to 2 m tall. Leaves pinnately compound with numerous leaflets that are slightly hairy and dotted with glands. Flowers about 1 cm long, pea-like, yellow with prominent red veins.

**Range:** MD, NC, NJ, VA; extirpated in DE and PA.

**Best Time to See:** Blooms July to September.

**Habitat:** Wet, sandy or muddy river banks and fresh to brackish tidal shores and estuarine-river marsh borders; peaty, sandy, or gravelly and sparsely vegetated substrates.

**Management:** Annual monitoring to determine long-term population trends and assess potential proximate threats to the population as well as control methods regarding invasive species such as *Phragmites australis*.

**Needs:** Studies on the impacts of nutrient loading, invasive species, and sea level rise. Fundamental information on pollinators and optimal conditions for most favorable growth and establishment.

**Comments:** The leaves of Sensitive Joint-Vetch respond to touch by slightly folding. Habitat alteration is the major threat to this species, including road construction, residential and commercial development, water pollution, and bank erosion from motorboat traffic. Only two populations of this species are estimated to remain in NJ.

**References:** Gleason and Cronquist 1991; Creveling and Allen 2005; Center for Plant Conservation 2010; NatureServe 2010; USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database 2011.

### — Ecological Interactions —

\* The flowers of Sensitive Joint-Vetch are likely pollinated by bumblebees, leaf-cutter bees, and the least skipper butterfly.

\* Like other members of the legume family, Sensitive Joint-Vetch may form root nodules containing symbiotic, nitrogen-fixing bacteria.



NJ Natural Heritage  
Program Data: August  
2008

Current and Historically  
Documented Records