

False Gromwell (*Onosmodium molle* var. *hispidissimum*)

Plant Species of Concern

State Rank: S1 (critically imperiled), Global Rank: G4G5T4 (apparently secure/secure)

Identification

False gromwell is a perennial herb that reaches up to 4 feet (1.2 meters) in height. Its woody base gives rise to several leafy stems that are coarsely hairy. The leaves are also hairy and grow on the stem in an alternate arrangement. They are narrowly oval, 3 to 4 inches (8-10cm) long, and attach without a leaf stalk. Lower stem leaves are smaller and fall early. The flowers appear from late June to early July and are held in leafy spikes that curl downward. Individual flowers are small, up to 5/8 inch (16mm), white or greenish, and tube-shaped, with 5 broadly- pointed lobes. Fruits are small, rounded nutlets that are constricted at the base.

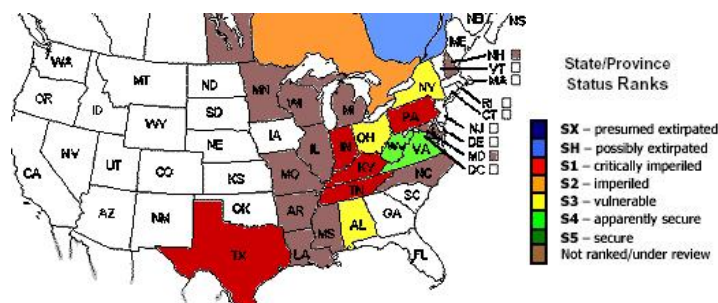


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Photo source: The Plants Database plants.usda.gov
Robert H. Mohlenbrock

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (2007)



Habitat

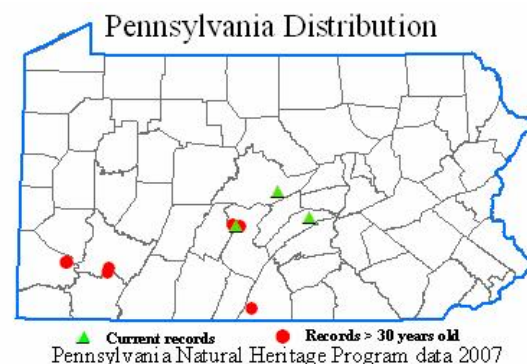
False gromwell occurs in the U. S. from New Hampshire and New York west to Minnesota and Texas. In Pennsylvania, it can be found growing on calcareous dry hillsides and in old pastures.

Status

The PA Biological Survey considers the false gromwell to be a species of special concern, based on the relatively few occurrences that have been confirmed and the very specialized habitat. It has been assigned a rarity status of Endangered. Throughout the range of this species, habitat loss, land conversion for development, and displacement by invasive species have all played a part in its decline. In some cases, the communities where this species grows are themselves rare or have succeeded into a different community types due to the overgrowth of woody species and invasive species.

Conservation

Maintenance of known populations and preservation of the rare communities where false gromwell grows will be crucial to its survival. Removal of overgrowth and invasive species with the integration of fire regimes, when appropriate, will help to preserve the integrity of the sites. The management of the known sites requires long term monitoring of populations. Potential sites for restoration should be evaluated.



References

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