

Golden Corydalis (*Corydalis aurea*)

Plant Species of Concern
State Rank: S3 Global Rank: G5

Identification

Golden corydalis is an annual or biennial herb with upright or trailing, fleshy stems that are ½ to 2 feet (1.5-6 dm) long. This spring wildflower belongs to the same family as bleeding-heart. The leaves grow both from the base of the plant and alternately along the stems. The leaves are pale green, smooth and finely divided. The flowers are yellow and ½ to ¾ inch (12-20 mm) long. They are irregular, made of 4 unequal petals that are partly fused near the base. The uppermost petal has a sac-like projection near the base and is not crested at the tip. Flowers are held in small clusters and bloom from May to July.

Habitat

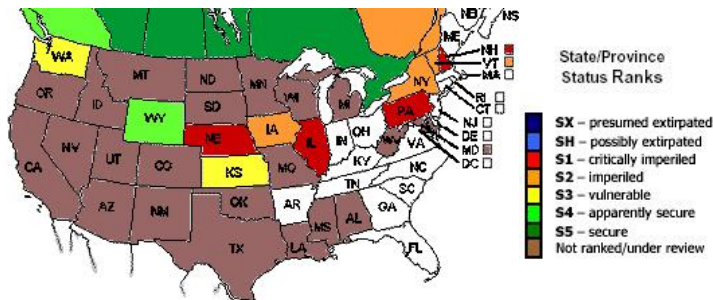
Golden corydalis occurs throughout the western United States. In the eastern U. S. its range extends from Vermont and New Hampshire south to West Virginia. It grows in rocky or sandy soil in open woods or along roadsides.



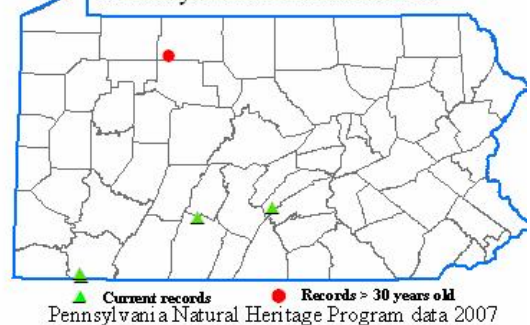
photo source: Derek Anderson
Robert W. Freckmann Herbarium

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (2007)



Pennsylvania Distribution



Status

The PA Biological Survey considers golden corydalis to be a species of special concern, based on the very few occurrences that have been confirmed and the specialized and infrequent 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 golden corydalis grows will be crucial to its survival. Removal of overgrowth and invasive species will help to preserve the integrity of the sites. Management of known sites requires long term monitoring of populations. Potential sites for restoration should be evaluated.

References

- NatureServe. 2007. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 6.2. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: September 4, 2007).
- 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. 2000. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.

