

Floating-heart

Nymphoides cordata

Description

Floating-heart is an aquatic herb that resembles a miniature water-lily. The basal part of the plant is anchored in the substrate of the lake or pond. A long stalk is produced, sometimes many feet in length, which produces a single heart-shaped floating leaf on the surface of the water. The leaf may be up to 3 inches (7.5 cm) in width, with a deeply-incised base, and often becomes reddish tinged in age. In some individuals, the long stalk from the base of the plant may also produce a group of tuberous roots and/or a cluster of flowers, and the roots, flowers, and leaf appear to be attached at the same point on the long stalk. The white or creamy flowers, which appear in summer, project above the water surface, are individually about 3/8 inch (5-10 mm) in width and have a 5 lobe-like appearance, with each petal-like lobe having a yellow gland at its base. The fruit is a many-seeded capsule about 3/16 inch (4 mm) in length.



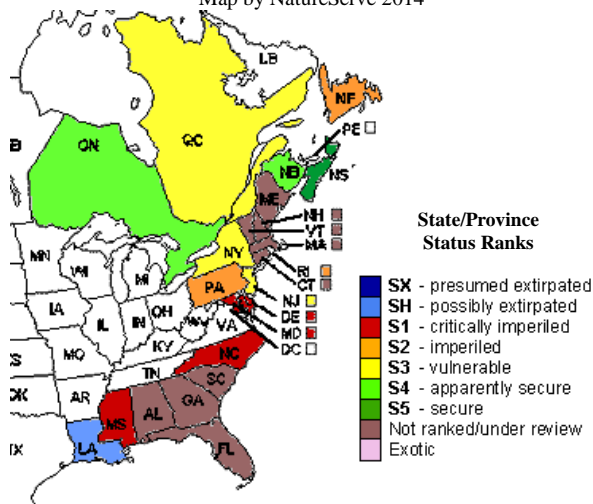
Photo source: Jeff McMillian @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

Distribution & Habitat

Floating-heart ranges from Newfoundland to Ontario and south into the Gulf Coast states. In Pennsylvania, it has been documented historically in a few northeastern counties. The species grows in lakes and ponds.

North American State/Province Conservation Status

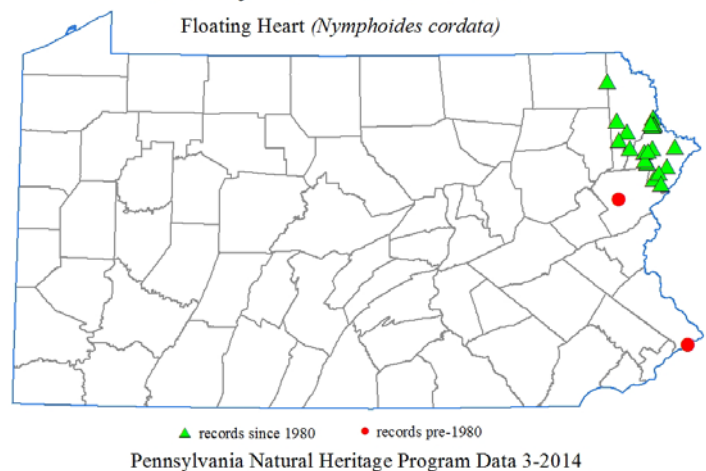
Map by NatureServe 2014



Current State Status

The PA Biological Survey (PABS) considers Floating-heart to be a species of special concern, based on the limited number of locations recently confirmed and the specialized habitat. It has a PA legal rarity status and a PABS suggested rarity status of Threatened.

Pennsylvania Distribution



Conservation Considerations

The viability of populations of Floating-heart and its habitat may be enhanced by creating buffers and protecting the natural hydrology around lakes and ponds, controlling invasive species, and avoiding indiscriminate use of aquatic herbicides.

NatureServe conservation status ranks

G5 – Globally secure; S2 – Imperiled in Pennsylvania

References

- NatureServe. 2014. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>.
- Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program. 2014.
- Rhoads, A.F. and W.M. Klein, Jr. 1993. The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Rhoads, A.F. and T.A. Block. 2007. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. 2nd edition. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program