COMMON JUNIPER (*Juniperus communis* L.)

Cypress Family (Cupressaaceae)

Pennsylvania Plant Species of Concern

State Rank: S2 (imperiled), Global Rank: G5 (secure)

SIGNIFICANCE

The common juniper has been given a status of Undetermined on the Plants of Special Concern in Pennsylvania list by the Pennsylvania Biological Survey and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, based on the relatively few recent records that have been documented in the state. More field work is needed to determine the status of this species in Pennsylvania. Based on past collection records, it appears to have declined in numbers of populations from historical levels.

DESCRIPTION

The common juniper is a low growing, twisted, evergreen shrub that grows to a couple feet in height. The leaves are scale-like, arranged in groups of three, taper to a very sharp point, and are whitish on one surface. Female plants may bear blue, berry-like fruits that often persist after maturing. It is easily recognized at any time of the year.

HABITAT

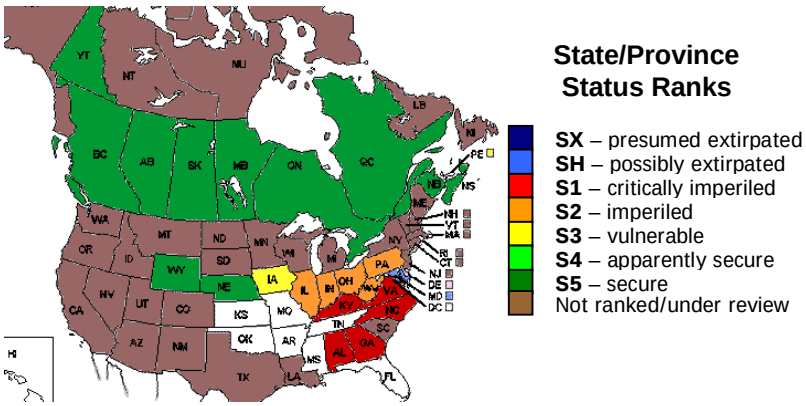
The species grows in well-drained and usually rocky soil, in openings, clearings and on rocky slopes and outcrops.

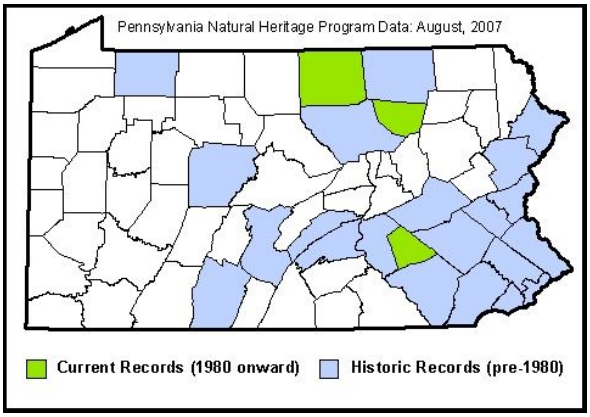
RANGE

The common juniper is widely distributed in the more northern and cooler portions of North America. In Pennsylvania, there are historical records from much of the state although the majority of these records occur in the southeastern counties.

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (2007)





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