Lupine
Lupinus perennis

Description

Photo source: PNHP

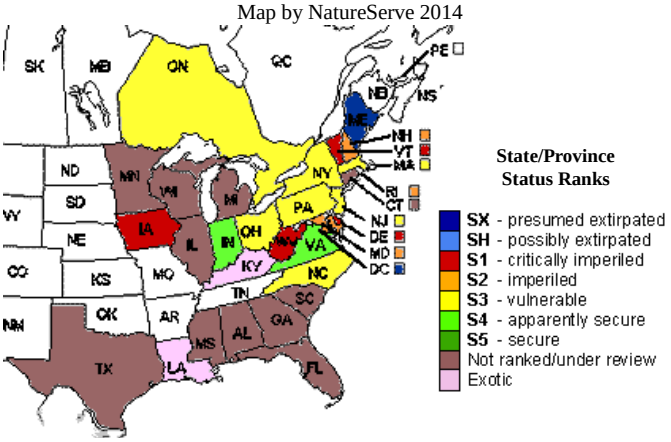
Lupine is a perennial herb with a hairy or hairless erect stem that may grow to 2 feet (0.6 m) in height. The alternately arranged and long stalked leaves have a very distinctive appearance, with the blade portion having 7-11 leaflets that radiate outward from a central point at the tip of the leaf stalk. The individual leaflets vary from hairless to hairy, are untoothed on the margins, and tend to be widest toward the bluntish tip. The attractive flowers, which appear mostly in May and June, are aggregated in an elongate cylindrical cluster on the middle and upper part of the stem. The flowers tend to be some shade of blue, but may be entirely white or pink, and average about ½ inch (12-16 mm) in length and have a pea-like appearance. The fruit consists of a hairy pod-like somewhat flattened capsule up to 2 inches (5 cm) in length, and contains several seeds.

Distribution & Habitat

Lupine ranges from New England to Minnesota and south into Florida and Texas. In Pennsylvania, it has been documented historically in many widespread counties. The species grows in well-drained soil, particularly on woods borders, open woods, and various sorts of clearings.

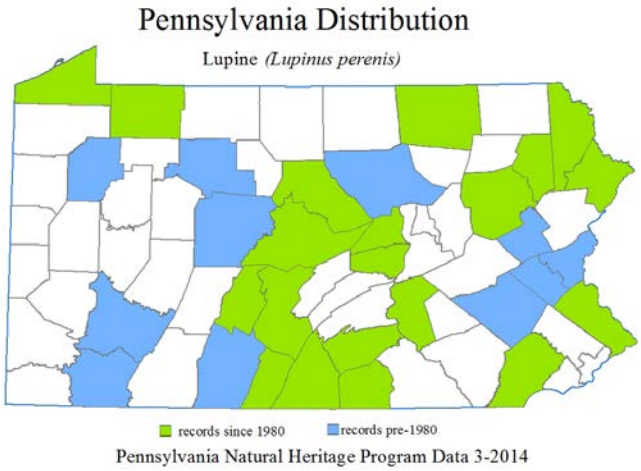
North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe 2014



Current State Status

The PA Biological Survey (PABS) considers Lupine to be a species of special concern, based on the moderate number of locations recently confirmed and the mostly small population sizes. It has a PA legal rarity status and a PABS suggested rarity status of Rare.



Conservation Considerations

The viability of populations of Lupine and its habitat may be enhanced by avoiding the indiscriminate use of herbicides. Active management, such as mowing or invasive species removal, may be required in order to maintain populations.

NatureServe conservation status ranks

G5 – Globally secure; **S3** – Vulnerable 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