Yellow passionflower (*Passiflora lutea)*

Pennsylvania Endangered
State Rank: S1 (critically imperiled), Global Rank: G5 (secure)

What it looks like:

Yellow passionflower is a perennial herbaceous vine, climbing or trailing to lengths of around three meters (ten feet).

Leaves have three palmate lobes tapering to rounded points; they are hairless, with no teeth at the margins.

Flowers have five stamens surrounding a central pistil in the middle of a two-centimeter fringe of long, slender yellow-white petals (see magnified image on next page).

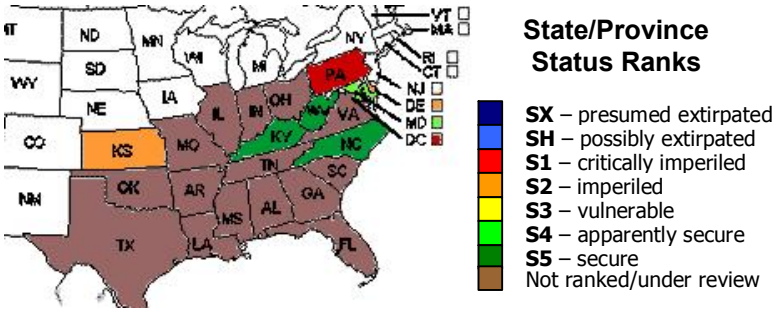
Illust. Alan S. Heilman, TENN Vascular Plant Herbarium

Where it is found:

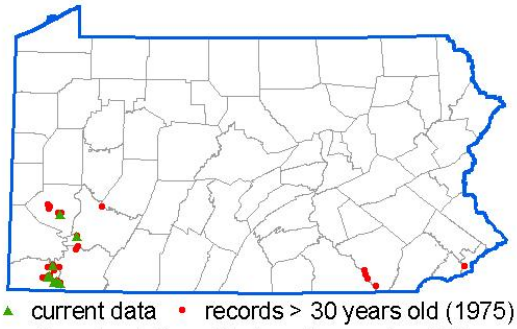
Yellow passionflower grows in wet conditions; it is considered a national wetland indicator species. Pennsylvania is at the northeastern corner of its range, which runs south to Florida and west to Kansas and Texas.

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (August 2007)



Pennsylvania Distribution by County



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program data 2005

Why it is rare:

The two states in which yellow passionflower is classified as critically imperiled, Kansas and Pennsylvania, are both at the edges of its range. It is possible, then, that populations in these states are small and scattered in part because they are at the edge of the species' ecological tolerances. However, yellow passionflower's wetland habitat is frequently the target of human disturbance, including drainage and indirect modification by flood-control regimes. Probably yellow passionflower would be more abundant given more wetland habitat, even at the edges of its natural range.

Conservation considerations:

Yellow passionflower's status has yet to be determined through the majority of its natural range; further study of this species' abundance, especially in states at the edges of its range, would be invaluable in planning its conservation. Generally speaking, yellow passionflower will benefit from preservation of its wetland habitat and management of invasive competitors such as Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*).

Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

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References

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