

Eared False-Foxglove (*Agalinis auriculata*)

Pennsylvania Endangered Plant Species

State Rank: S1 (critically imperiled), Global Rank: G3 (vulnerable)

Identification

Eared false foxglove is an herb with a simple hairy stem 12 to 16 inches high. The purple, one-inch flowers bloom in the upper leaf axils, forming a leafy spike. Blossoms are funnel-shaped with five lobes and four stamens. One pair of stamens is longer than the other. The fruit is a capsule about 1/2-inch long. Eared false-foxglove is so-named because the uppermost leaves have lobes that stick out at the base, reminding botanists of earlobes.

Biology-Natural History

Eared false-foxglove, an annual, is a member of the Figwort Family (*Scrophulariaceae*). The flowers resemble the garden foxgloves of the genus *Digitalis* to which they are related. Eared false-foxglove blooms in August and September.

Habitat

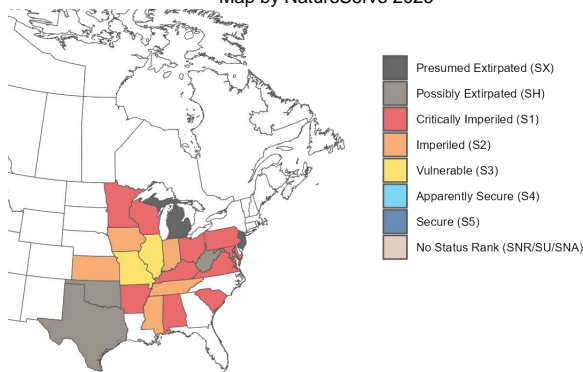
This plant grows in prairies, open dry woods and fields. In Pennsylvania, it is currently surviving at only two locations, on limestone gravel on the edge of an abandoned zinc mine. This species is extremely uncommon, with an historical range extending from northern New Jersey, across Pennsylvania and Ohio, to southern Minnesota, south to Virginia, Alabama, Tennessee and Missouri. A second species of *Agalinis* grows from Kansas south to Texas.



Photo Credit: Kathy Regan, The Nature Conservancy

North American State/Province Conservation Status

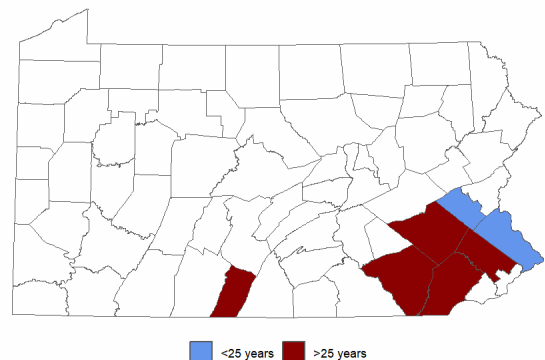
Map by NatureServe 2025



Reasons for Being Endangered

Of 16 known Pennsylvania locations, populations of eared false-foxglove can be found today at only two. Several populations were destroyed during road construction. Many of the historical sites in eastern Pennsylvania may have suffered the same fate. This species is endangered or threatened in nine other states. Eared false-foxglove has been extirpated from Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey and possibly Wisconsin. Habitat destruction for development is the leading cause of this species decline.

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Management Programs

Eared false foxglove is a candidate for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act. It is one of five species in Pennsylvania to receive funding for status survey and monitoring work through a cooperative agreement with the USF&WS. A 5 year plan has been developed to search for historical populations and to protect known sites. Environmental assessments using PNDI will help to avoid impacts to any new and existing plant locations.

References:

- NatureServe. 2025. NatureServe Explorer [web application] NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available at <https://explorer.natureserve.org> (Accessed: May 8, 2025)



Fact Sheet adapted from: Felbaum, Mitchell, et al. Endangered and Threatened Species of Pennsylvania. Harrisburg, PA: Wild Resource Conservation Fund, 1995.

