

# Lobed Spleenwort

## *Asplenium pinnatifidum*

### Description

Lobed spleenwort is a small fern that grows from a short rhizome. The leaves, narrowly triangular in shape and tapering to an elongated tip, may be up to 7 inches (17 cm) long but are often much shorter. The leaf margins have a lobed outline, with the lobes tending to get deeper near the base of the leaf. The leaf stem is mostly green, but maroon at the base. As in most ferns, the spores are produced on the underside of the leaves.

### Distribution & Habitat

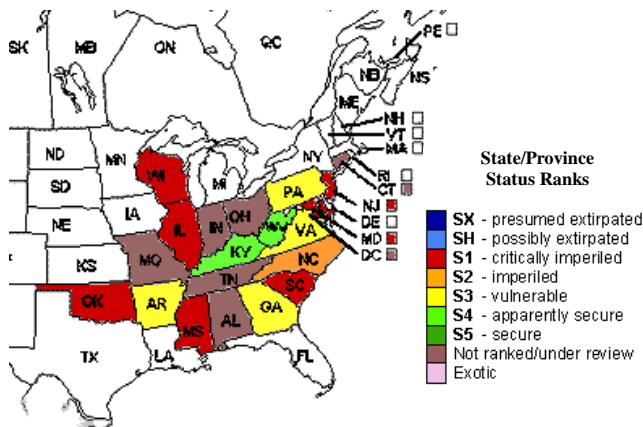
Lobed spleenwort has a range from New Jersey west into Wisconsin, and south into Georgia and Oklahoma. In Pennsylvania, it has been documented historically at scattered locations in the southern counties. It grows on dry shaded cliffs and rock outcrops, particularly on sandstone and schist.



Photo source: PNHP

### North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe 2014

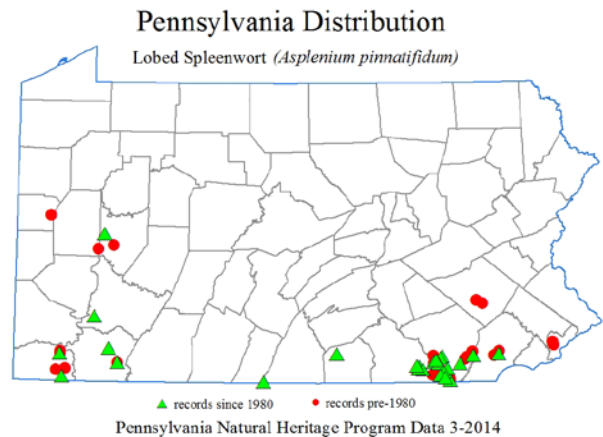


### Current State Status

The PA Biological Survey (PABS) considers lobed spleenwort to be a species of special concern, based on the few occurrences that have been recently confirmed and its specialized habitat. It does not have a PA legal rarity status, but has been assigned a suggested rarity status of Rare by PABS. About two dozen populations, mostly with few individuals, are currently known.

### Conservation Considerations

This species and its habitat have threats such as indiscriminate spraying of herbicide, quarrying, invasive species, and forest fragmentation. The viability of existing populations and the rock outcrop habitat may be enhanced by establishing a surrounding buffer of forest.



### NatureServe conservation status ranks

**G4** – Apparently secure globally; **S3** – Vulnerable in Pennsylvania.

### References

- NatureServe. 2014. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 6.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>
- Rhoads, A.F. and T.A. Block. 2007. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.

