

Rare Plant Diversity

Abstract

Some plants are rare because they naturally occur in very specialized habitats or in very low numbers; others may be rare because they have suffered setbacks because of natural processes or pressures from human activities. The highest number of rare plant species is in southern Ontario, where human activity is intensive and extensive. Farming, deforestation, draining of wetlands, and the use of insecticides and herbicides has reduced the populations and areas of distribution of numerous species.

Plants may be rare for several reasons. Some plants naturally occupy very specialized habitats or may occur in very low numbers; others may have suffered setbacks because of natural processes or pressures from human activities. Many temperate plants that are common south of the border are rare in the northern part of their range in extreme southern Canada. Knowing the location and special requirements for survival of these plants is important for developing appropriate conservation measures.

Map Sources

Number of Rare Plant Species

Haber, E. 1994. Rare Vascular Plants of Canada Database: Documentation and Summary of Contents. Database and report prepared for the National Atlas Information Service in co-operation with the Canadian Museum of Nature. Unpublished, Mar. 1994.

Related Web sites (1999 – 2009)

Federal Government

Canadian Museum of Nature - Collections by Discipline
http://nature.ca/collections/collections_e.cfm

Canadian Museum of Nature - Our Research
http://nature.ca/research/research_e.cfm

Environment Canada. State of the Environment Infobase
<http://www.ec.gc.ca/soer-ree/>

The State of the Environment (SOE) Infobase was originally developed in 1996 as an interactive and convenient mechanism for presenting a number of environmental

reporting products and tools, including The State of Canada's Environment 1996 and Canada's National Environmental Indicators Series 2003.

Other

California Native Plant Society. Rare Plant Program.

<http://www.cnps.org/rareplants/rppindex.htm>

Rare Plant Program.

United States Government. United States Geological Survey. Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center.

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/plants/wyplant/wyplant.htm>

Wyoming Rare Plant Field Guide.

University of Alaska Anchorage. Environment and Natural Resources Institute. Alaska Rare Plant Field Guide

<http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/enri/>

