

Bathurst Aster

Symphiotrichum subulatum (Bathurst Population)

STATUS	Endangered 	Not Listed 
Not At Risk 	Not Listed 	Not Listed 



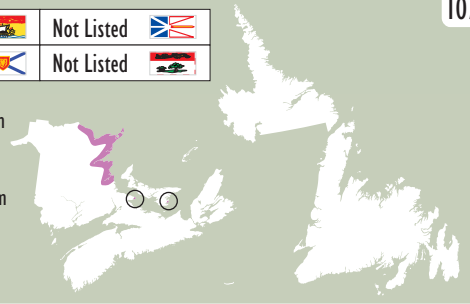
Flower

© DAVID HAZEROLLE
© SEAN BLANEY

Species Description

Bathurst Aster is a small (20 cm tall) annual herb. Its stem is very branched at the base. Its fleshy leaves (10-90 mm long, 6-14 mm wide) are oval- to lance-shaped with a rounded tip and have few or no teeth. Its small flowers have relatively few (16-30) ray florets (petal-like parts) that are very short (1-7 mm) and white with a tint of blue.

The "Bathurst" form is found in 15 sites in eastern New Brunswick between Richibucto and Dalhousie. The typical form is found further east in one NB location, and one PEI location.



Habitat

Bathurst Aster lives in brackish marshes or adjacent gravelly or sandy substrate. Plants are usually submerged daily by the tide but are generally limited to areas with salinity significantly moderated by freshwater inflows.



© SEAN BLANEY



© SEAN BLANEY

Bathurst Aster is found in the intertidal zone. Look for small, bunched plants with asters flowering in late August and early September.

Interesting Points

- Bathurst Aster is no longer recognized as a distinct entity by aster experts, having been combined into the typical form of the species. Research into this species' taxonomy is still ongoing.
- Its specialized, fleshy leaves allow it to avoid absorbing a lethal dose of salt.
- This species is an annual, meaning that it can only persist year after year from seed instead of dormant roots.



© DAVID MAZEROLLE

Very small flowers of Bathurst Aster

Similar Species

New York Aster:

Typically taller (17-100 cm); ray florets longer (10-19 mm) and bluish (rarely white); perennial plant with an extensive and firm root system.



© ALAIN BELLIVIER

New York Aster

Rayless Alkali Aster:

No ray florets (petal-like parts); mature seeds forming bright white fuzzy mass; leaf tip somewhat pointed; leaf edges with sparse, regularly spaced, fine hairs.



© SEAN BLANEY

Rayless Alkali Aster

Gulf of St. Lawrence Aster:

Similar size and habitat, but no ray florets (petal-like parts). See page 105 for more details.



© DAVID MAZEROLLE

Gulf of St. Lawrence Aster



© ALAIN BELLIVIER

Habitat encroachment

Threats to Survival

- Habitat encroachment due to road and bridge construction, and infilling.
- Other threats include large-scale pollution, storm events, and hardening of upper shores required by this species when sea level rises.



© DAVID MAZEROLLE

Researchers' monitoring efforts

How You Can Help

Coastal stewardship and support for habitat protection can help maintain this species population. Avoid trampling, dumping, or the use of all-terrain vehicles in salt marshes.

Contacts, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

Contact: AC CDC (506) 364-2658

Info: www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca, www.cosewic.gc.ca

Sighting Reports: 1-866-727-3447 or www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings