

Aster-like Boltonia

Boltonia asteroides

Description

Aster-like boltonia is a perennial herb with a hairless, often branched, stem that can grow to about 3 feet (1 m) tall. The leaves are alternately arranged, untoothed, hairless, broadly linear to lance-shaped, up to 6 inches (15 cm) long, and tend to get smaller in size going up the stem. The flowers, appearing from July to October, consist of daisy-like flowering heads about 1/2 inch (ca 12 mm) wide with surrounding white or pinkish ray florets.

Distribution & Habitat

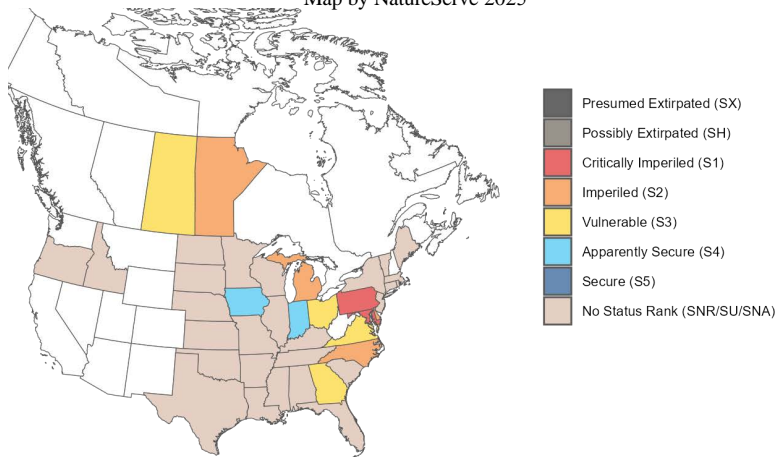
Aster-like boltonia has a wide range in eastern and midwestern North America. In Pennsylvania, it has been documented historically along the lower Susquehanna River and also in Erie County. This species grows in open wet places, in Pennsylvania particularly on open rocky shores and exposed river bed outcrops, especially where annual scouring takes place.



Photo source: Rocky Gleason, PNHP

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe 2025



Current State Status

The PA Biological Survey (PABS) considers the aster-like boltonia to be a species of special concern, based on the very few occurrences that have been recently confirmed and its very specialized habitat. It has a PA legal rarity status and a PABS suggested rarity status of Endangered. Only a few populations along the lower Susquehanna River are currently known.

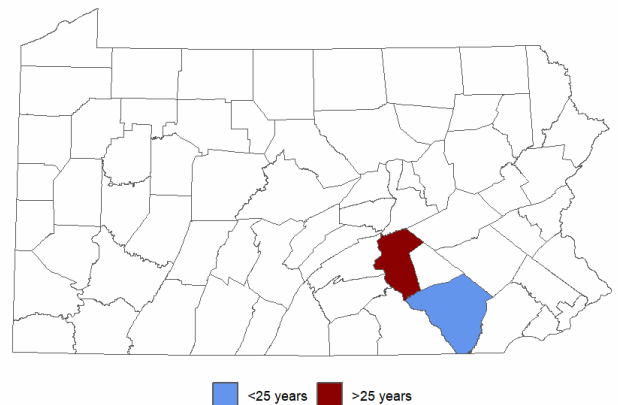
Conservation Considerations

The viability of populations of aster-like boltonia and its habitat depends on maintaining the natural hydrology and natural condition of the shoreline and islands of the lower Susquehanna River. The species appears well-adapted to the seasonal fluctuations in water levels, especially the lower water levels of summer and fall when the plant is flowering and fruiting. Invasive species represent a threat to this species and its habitat.

NatureServe conservation status ranks

G5 – Globally secure; **S1** – Critically imperiled in Pennsylvania

Aster-like Boltonia (*Boltonia asteroides*)



References

- NatureServe. 2025. NatureServe Explorer [web application] NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available at <https://explorer.natureserve.org> (Accessed: May 8, 2025)
- Rhoads, A.F. and T.A. Block. 2007. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. 2nd edition. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.