

Sida; Virginia-mallow

Ripariosida hermaphrodita

Description

Sida is a large perennial herb that grows 3 to 10 feet (1-3 meters) tall. Its stems are hairy when young but become smooth with age. The leaves grow alternately on the stem and resemble long-pointed maple leaves. They usually have 3 to 7 irregularly toothed lobes, with the middle lobe being the longest. The white flowers, which bloom from July to October, are arranged in stalked clusters that grow from the upper stem leaf axils. Each flower has 5 petals that are each about 1/3 inch (8 mm) long.

Distribution & Habitat

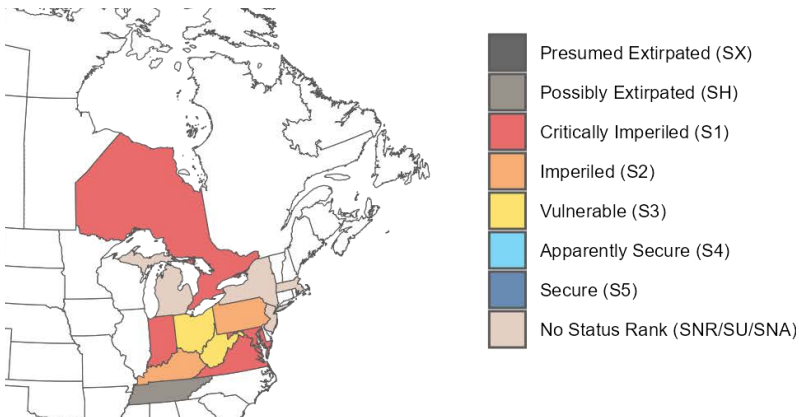
Sida has a rather localized distribution in midwestern and mid-Atlantic portions of eastern North America. In Pennsylvania, the occurrences are restricted to the Juniata River and lower Susquehanna River watersheds. The species grows on streambanks and bottomlands, as well as disturbed places like roadsides and railroad grades that are in proximity to the stream corridors.



Photo source: John Kunsman (PNHP)

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe 2014



Current State Status

The PA Biological Survey considers sida to be a species of special concern, based on the relatively few occurrences that have been confirmed and the localized distribution in the state, as well as rarity throughout its global range. It has been assigned a rarity status of Endangered.

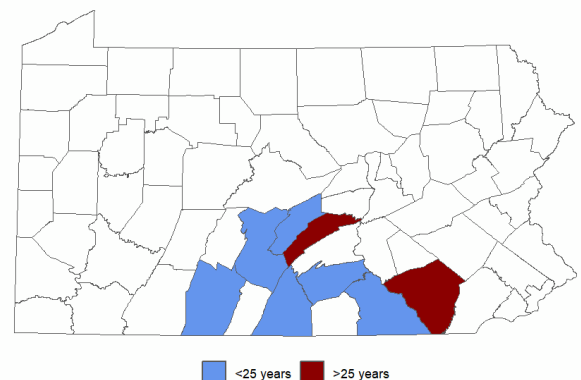
Conservation Considerations

Maintenance of known populations and preservation of the unique habitat where sida thrives will be crucial to its survival. Removal of encroaching invasive species along river corridors and the establishment of buffers surrounding known sites will help to improve habitat quality. Recognition and protection of populations along roadsides and in other unprotected areas will also be important.

NatureServe conservation status ranks

G3 – Globally vulnerable; S2 – Imperiled in Pennsylvania

Sida (*Ripariosida hermaphrodita*)



References

- NatureServe. 2025. NatureServe Explorer [web application] NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available at <https://explorer.natureserve.org> (Accessed: May 8, 2025)
- Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program. 2025.
- Rhoads, A.F. and W.M. Klein, Jr. 1993. The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania: Annotated Checklist and Atlas. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
- Rhoads, A.F. and T.A. Block. 2000. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.