



RARE PLANTS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Hairy Hudsonia

Hudsonia tomentosa Nutt. **Synonyms:** sand golden-heather

Rock-rose family (Cistaceae)

What Does It Look Like?

A low, branched perennial shrub, usually under 20 cm (8 in.) tall, forming mats or low mounds. The stems are grayish green, with whitish hairs and scale-like leaves. Older stems may be gray to reddish brown.

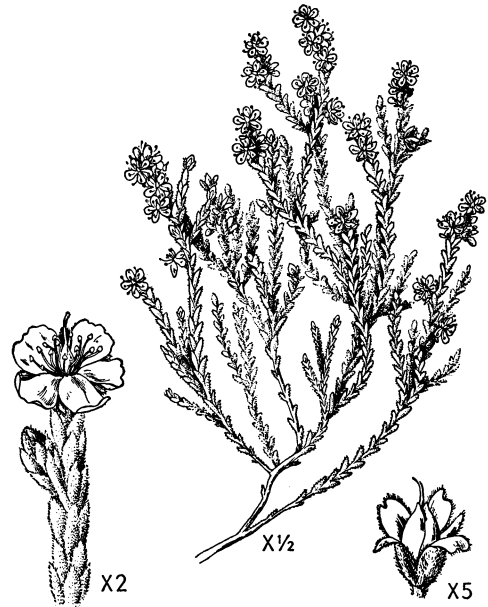
Leaves: The leaves are tiny and nearly scale-like, alternate, overlapping, blunt tipped, densely hairy, and about 1-3 mm (less than 0.12 in.) long.

Flowers: Five-petaled, bright yellow flowers, each about 6 mm (0.25 in.) wide, cover the tops of the plants. The hairy calyx has two outer sepals that are much shorter than the inner three. Flowering occurs in late June through July.

Fruit: The few-seeded capsules are round, smooth, and surrounded by the calyx, which remains after flowering.

Key features: Its height (very low shrubs), densely hairy leaves and stems, yellow flowers, and sandy habitat.

Similar species: Golden heather (*Hudsonia ericoides*) has slightly hairy, longer, and needlelike leaves that spread outward. The leaves are 3-6 mm (about 0.12-0.25 in.) long. Golden heather is also more greenish.



Where Is It Found?

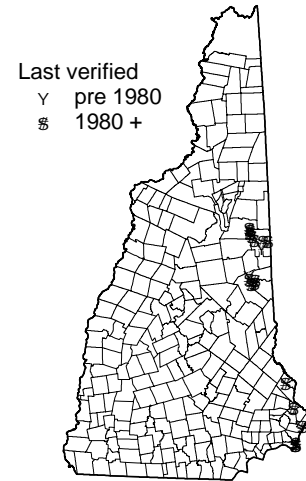
In New Hampshire, hairy hudsonia is only found in sand dunes near the coast, or on sandy lake beach strands or river barrens in the Ossipee region. Other rare species may also be associated such as golden heather (*Hudsonia ericoides*), blunt-leaved milkweed (*Asclepias amplexicaulis*), and fine grass-leaved goldenrod (*Euthamia tenuifolia*).



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Conservation status: Hairy hudsonia is threatened in New Hampshire. Of 19 populations, 17 have been verified since 1980. Populations range from a single plant to more than 500 in patches as large as 10 square m (100 sq. ft.).

Range: From Canada south along the coastal states to North Carolina, inland from West Virginia to Illinois, and north around the Great Lakes.



Why Is It Rare?

Most coastal sand dune habitat in New Hampshire has been lost to development. Other habitats where this species is found in the state, such as sandy lake or river shores, are infrequent.

Conservation Considerations:

While this species relies on some natural disturbance to maintain an early-successional habitat, the plants themselves are very sensitive to direct disturbance. Hairy hudsonia is easily disrupted by trampling and is especially vulnerable to vehicular traffic, which has become increasingly likely in the sandy areas where these plants are found. Restricting off-road vehicle access, and routing foot traffic away from population areas, would help to protect this species.

The information in this fact sheet is current as of December 2002. It is based on a database maintained by the NH Natural Heritage Program, a bureau in the Division of Forests & Lands in the Department of Resources and Economic Development. NH Natural Heritage is a member of NatureServe, which represents an international network of Heritage programs. Illustration by Anne Rogelberg. Reprinted with permission from The New York Botanical Garden Press. Originally published in H. A. Gleason, The New Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada, Vol. II, p. 548, copyright 1952, The New York Botanical Garden.

To report a location for this species, or for more information, please visit our web page at www.nhdf.org/formgt/nhiweb or call (603) 271-3623.



NH Natural Heritage Program
PO Box 1856
Concord, NH 03302-1856

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