



TREES AND PLANTS

NORTHEASTERN BULRUSH

ABOUT

The Northeastern Bulrush (*Scirpus ancistrochaetus*) is a leafy, perennial bulrush related to the Sedge family. It is a wetland plant that grows in shallow water beside beaver ponds, sand plain depressions, backwater ponds in river floodplains, boggy marshes and in the south, around the edges of sinkhole ponds. A tall plant, growing to a height of 3.94ft (1.2 meters), its leaves are less than half an inch wide. The Northeastern Bulrush has short, woody underground rootstock (rhizome) from which a flower stem rises in mid-June to mid-July. The flower has a drooping head consisting of dark chocolate-brown florets surrounded by six distinctive rigid, barbed bristles. It is thought that the plants are wind pollinated, and seeds mature in late summer/fall. New plants develop on stems that have fallen on the ground and have also been observed germinating on the parent plant.

DID YOU KNOW?

Dr. Alfred E. Schuyler first identified the Northeastern Bulrush in 1962. It is also known as the Barbed-bristle Bulrush and Northern Bulrush. Its range includes Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. Precise population numbers are unknown, but approximately 50-60 sites are on record. This species is endangered and even slight variations in the natural balance of the water table and its unusual wetland habitat can destroy this plant. Historic sites in eastern Pennsylvania were destroyed, for instance, by agricultural activity, development, and quarrying. In 1991, the Northeastern Bulrush was the second plant in Pennsylvania to be listed as federally endangered.

For more detailed information visit: www.centerforplantconservation.org or www.dcnr.state.pa.us.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

What year was the Northeastern Bulrush listed as federally endangered in Pennsylvania?

- a) 1962
- b) 1950
- c) 1991
- d) 1939

Answer is C.

