

TREES AND PLANTS

PETER'S MOUNTAIN MALLOW

ABOUT

Peter's Mountain Mallow (*Iliamna Corei*) is an upright, perennial herb with lobed leaves and a sticky juice in its leaves, stems and roots. It has attractive pink flowers, maple-like leaves and grows 3-4 feet in height. Its flowering season is in July and August and it can produce up to fifteen or twenty two-inch flowers. It is related to the hollyhock and okra, which are also members of the mallow family.

DID YOU KNOW?

Peter's Mountain Mallow is one of the most rare native plants in the United States. Between 1927 and 1991 it declined from 50 plants to only three. It is uncertain why this plant is so near extinction, but research has determined that the plant's hard seeds need fire to break open the seed coat to allow water in. This popcorn-like effect helps the seeds to germinate. This plant can only be found on Peter's Mountain near The Narrows in Virginia, in a hardwood forest above the New River. Due to this Mallow being critically endangered, the impact of human visitation is kept to a minimum, but a carefully controlled burning program has resulted in bringing this plant back from disappearing.

For more detailed information visit: www.nature.org or www.centerforplantconservation.org.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

What does this plant's hard seeds need to help them germinate?

- a) Floods
- b) Very hot weather
- c) Fire
- d) Thunder storms

Answer is C.

