

Long's Bulrush

Scirpus longii

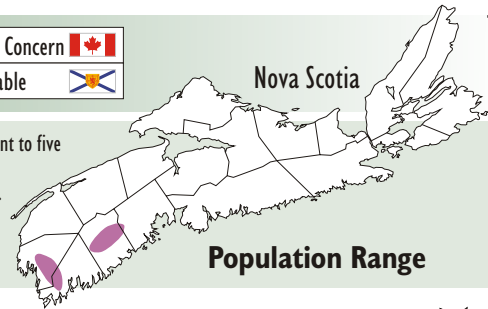
STATUS

Special Concern 

Vulnerable 

79

Nova Scotia



Population Range

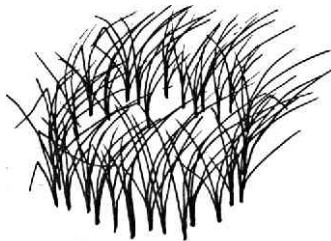
Occurs in wetlands adjacent to five lakes and in two bogs in southwestern Nova Scotia. It has an estimated population of at least 80 colonial clusters.



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Species Description

Long's Bulrush is a slow growing grass-like plant that forms circular colonial clusters. It has tough, serrated leaves that are 60-80 cm long and 5-10 mm wide. In the fall its leaves turn yellow and die back to the base. By April new yellowish/green leaves begin to grow.



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Habitat

Found in stillwater meadows, inland fens, bay bogs, barrier bogs and peat lakeshores. It generally occurs in the most waterlogged regions of these habitats, where competition from shrubs is low. It is typically submerged in water from November until April.



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Long's Bulrush is found in wetlands. Flowering is rare and identification is mainly through features of the leaves and circular growth. In the unlikely event that flowering occurs, look for flowers between June and early July.

Interesting Points

- This species is globally imperilled.
- In Nova Scotia, the largest circular clusters of Long's Bulrush are 5-10 meters in diameter and 150-400 years old - older than many trees!
- Its age can be accurately estimated by counting the annual bulge (summer) and thinning (winter) of the rhizome (underground stem).



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Similar Species

Fourteen bulrush species occur in Nova Scotia. Other bulrush species, such as *Scirpus cyperinus*, form circular clusters. However, Long's Bulrush is much larger in diameter, with larger rhizomes (carrot sized width); the middle of the circular cluster is empty and the leaves are only produced at the end of the stems.

Threats to Survival

- Activities that alter wetland water levels, flow, and drainage (including road construction, land development and agricultural practices).
- OHV damage can create an opening that allows other vegetation to invade the circular cluster.
- Fire suppression may reduce the genetic diversity of this species, because flowering typically only occurs after disturbances such as fire.



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OHV damage along trail edges

How You Can Help

Do not build roads, infill or drive OHVs in wetlands or along wetland margins, as these activities alter key wetland processes. If wetland alteration is necessary you must obtain provincial permits. For more details contact your NS DNR regional biologist



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Contacts, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

Contact: NS DNR (902) 679-6091

Info: www.speciesatrisk.ca/coastalplainflora

Sighting Reports: 1-866-727-3447 or sightings@speciesatrisk.ca

Stewardship: Nova Scotia Nature Trust, www.nsnst.ca