

Sweet Pepperbush

Clethra alnifolia

STATUS

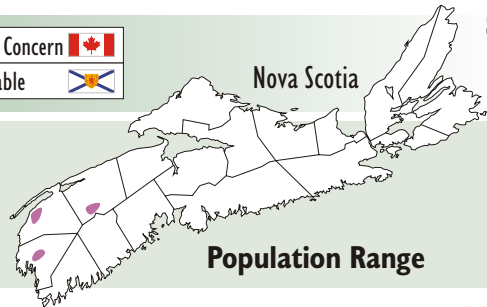
Special Concern 

Vulnerable



83

Nova Scotia



Population Range

Located along the shores of six lakes in southwestern Nova Scotia.

Habitat

Occurs in open areas higher up on the shoreline in the shrub zone. Granite boulders are often present. It has also been observed along streams and up to ten meters inland in shaded forests.



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Species Description

Sweet Pepperbush is a woody shrub that can grow to a height of 2 m, and is typically found in dense thickets. It has small, white flowers with five petals that are clustered together along a central axis. Each petal is about 8 mm in length. It has shiny, alternate, serrated leaves 7-15 cm long.



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Sweet Pepperbush is typically found in the shrub zone along lake shorelines. Look for its flowers between mid-August and mid-October.

Interesting Points

- Occurrence in Nova Scotia may be linked with fire disturbance.
- Its name is derived from its sweet fragrant flowers and peppercorn-like fruit.
- Since 1731 this species has been cultivated in Europe as an ornamental shrub.



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Similar Species

Meadow Sweet:

Long narrow leaves; white flowers with wide petals.



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Canada Holly or Winterberry:

Leaves similar; single white flowers; red fruit.



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Peppercorn-like fruit

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Sweet Pepperbush Leaf

Threats to Survival

- Physical alteration of the shoreline and shrub zone (land clearing for development, infilling, substrate removal, OHV use, and some forestry activities).



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How You Can Help

Cottage owners, developers and forest harvesters should leave natural vegetation as a shoreline buffer. Follow any municipal standards for building away from the shoreline. For more details view "How you can help" at www.speciesatrisk.ca/coastalplainflora

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