

# Anticosti Aster

*Symphotrichum anticostense*

<b>STATUS</b>	Endangered 	Not Listed 
Special Concern 	Not Listed 	Not Listed 



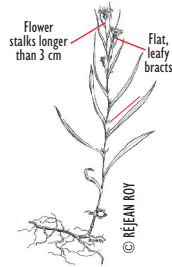
Flower

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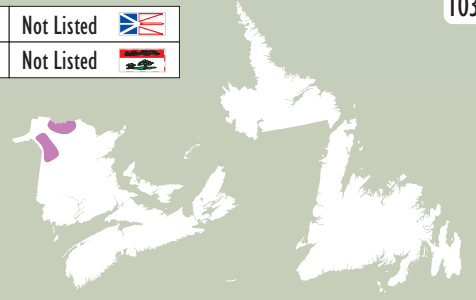
## Species Description

Anticosti Aster is a slender, perennial herb that typically reaches a height of 20-60 cm. Its long, narrow leaves (9-16 mm long, 5-18 mm wide) have few or no teeth and are relatively stiff, leathery, and arching. They have a hairy, angled midrib and flattened edges. Flowers are few and usually pale lavender. Flower stalks are typically longer than 3 cm. Tiny leafy bracts at the base of each flower head are usually flat, pointed upwards, with a papery base.



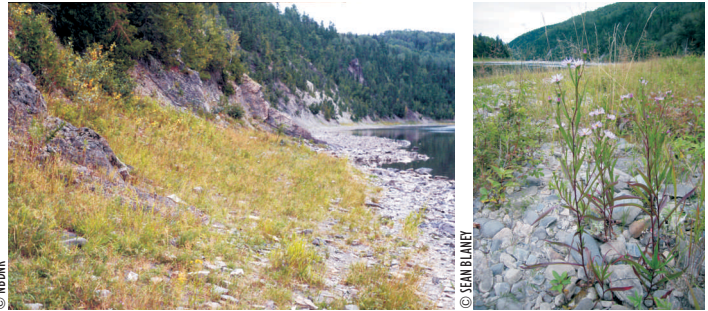
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Endemic to lands in eastern Gulf of St. Lawrence area; found in central and northwestern New Brunswick.



## Habitat

Anticosti Aster lives on calcareous bedrock or gravel along shores of larger rivers. These are usually gently sloping and just below the high water mark where periodic flooding and ice scour occurs and helps to keep other competing vegetation at bay. It can also occur on sandy and muddy shores, but this is less frequent.



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Look for calcareous river shore habitat and asters flowering from mid-July to September; however, positively identifying this species can be very difficult and may require genetic analysis.

## Interesting Points

- Asters belong to the largest family of plants on earth.
- Aster is Greek for “star” and refers to the flower's resemblance to a bright shining star.
- Anticosti Aster is thought to have originated at least three separate times when New York Aster and Boreal Aster hybridized a long time ago.



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Entire plant in typical shoreline habitat

## Similar Species

### New York Aster:

Typically more flowering heads and flower stalks shorter than 3 cm; leaves flat, pliable and leafy texture; leafy bracts at base of flower head usually spreading and green throughout.



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New York Aster

### Boreal Aster:

Leaves typically 2-5 mm wide often with edges rolled downward; flowers generally with white rays; habitat typically includes high-pH fens and marshes.



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Boreal Aster flower

### Panicled Aster:

Flowers commonly white, with very high numbers per plant; leaves pliable with a leafy texture and edges rolled downward; habitat typically includes stream margins, meadows, and fields; plants can reach 1+ m in height.



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Tall Panicled Aster flowers

## Threats to Survival

- Invasive exotic species which are likely promoted on the Saint John River by agricultural and commercial nutrient enrichment and siltation.
- Elimination and alteration of habitat due to dam construction and water level management.
- Erosion and siltation due to industrial or road construction and land clearing practices.
- Residential development that alters or degrades shoreline habitat.
- Hybridization with New York Aster, which is very widespread today due to the prevalence of human-disturbed habitat.

## How You Can Help

If you own or use property along river shore, reduce shoreline disturbances by leaving a natural vegetation buffer. Ensure you obtain a permit from municipal and provincial departments before altering a shoreline.



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Dense, invasive Reed Canary Grass



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Outdoor classroom in Anticosti Aster habitat

## Contacts, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

**Contact:** AC CDC (506) 364-2658, or NB DNR (506) 453-3826

**Info:** [www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca](http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca), [www.cosewic.gc.ca](http://www.cosewic.gc.ca)

**Sighting Reports:** 1-866-727-3447 or [www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings](http://www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings)