



Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581
tel: (508) 389-6360, fax: (508) 389-7891
www.nhesp.org

Redroot

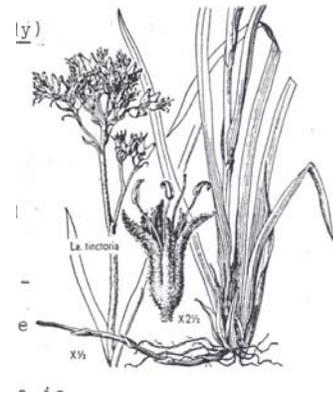
Lachnanthes caroliana (Lam.)
Dandy

State Status: **Special Concern**
Federal Status: **None**

Description: Redroot is a rather slender and erect perennial herb of the Bloodwort family. Leaves are much like Iris leaves (flattened in one dimension), but paler green and more slender, growing several to a clump. From the center of the clump grows a stem 11.5-30"/3-8 dm. tall, which is smooth below, becoming woolly near the inflorescence. The three-petal flowers are yellowish and occur in dense clusters which may be flat-topped or rounded. The entire inflorescence is densely woolly and yellowish white, about 1.2 – 3"/3-8 cm. wide. Flowering occurs from early July to late August.

Habitat in Massachusetts: *L. caroliana* inhabits the exposed sandy to peaty shores of Coastal Plain ponds. It is usually found in linear bands along the middle to upper margins of the shore or in coves. The survival of Coastal Plain pondshore species is dependent on the pronounced seasonal fluctuation of the water levels of these kettlehole ponds which have no inlet or outlet. Water levels are determined by the amount of rainfall and movement of groundwater, generally rising in the winter and spring and falling in the summer and fall.

Other pondshore associates include Plymouth Gentian (*Sabatia kennedyana*), Threadleaf Sundew (*Drosera filiformis*), and Golden Hedge-hyssop (*Gratiola aurea*).

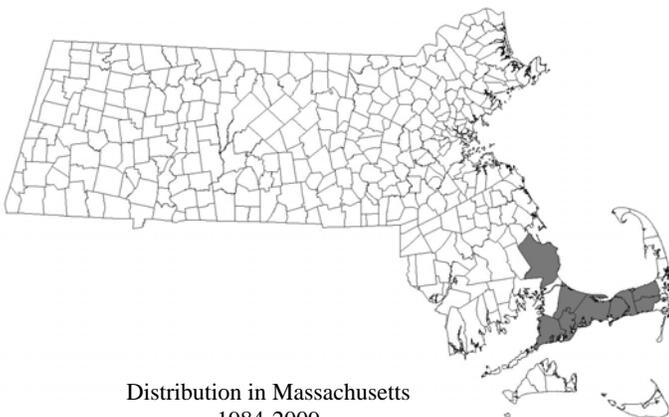


Holmgren, Noel H. 1998. *The Illustrated Companion to Gleason and Cronquist's Manual*. The New York Botanical Garden.

Range: Redroot occurs in widely separated (disjunct) areas along the coastal plain in Nova Scotia, southeastern Massachusetts, Long Island, southern New Jersey, and from Maryland to Florida, Louisiana and Cuba.

Population Status in Massachusetts: This species is considered a Species of Special Concern in Massachusetts. Since 1984, 26 occurrences have been verified; 10 other historical occurrences have been recorded.

As with all the pondshore species, there has been a loss of habitat through development of pondshores for housing and recreational use. Lowering of water quality in the ponds by run-off and leaking septic systems and alteration of the water table have also reduced available habitat. Like other pond species, Redroot varies in abundance from year to year depending on water level. It may survive in a dormant state for one or more years when conditions are unfavorable.



Distribution in Massachusetts
1984-2009

Based on records in Natural Heritage Database

Updated 20 February 2009