



**Natural Heritage  
& Endangered Species  
Program**

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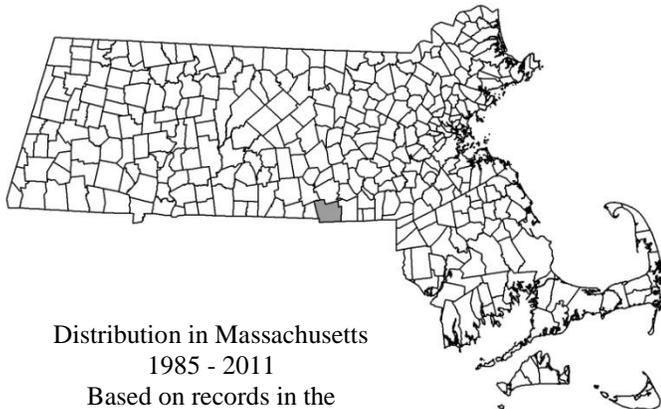
*Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife*

**One-flower Sclerolepis  
*Sclerolepis uniflora*  
(Walt.) BSP**

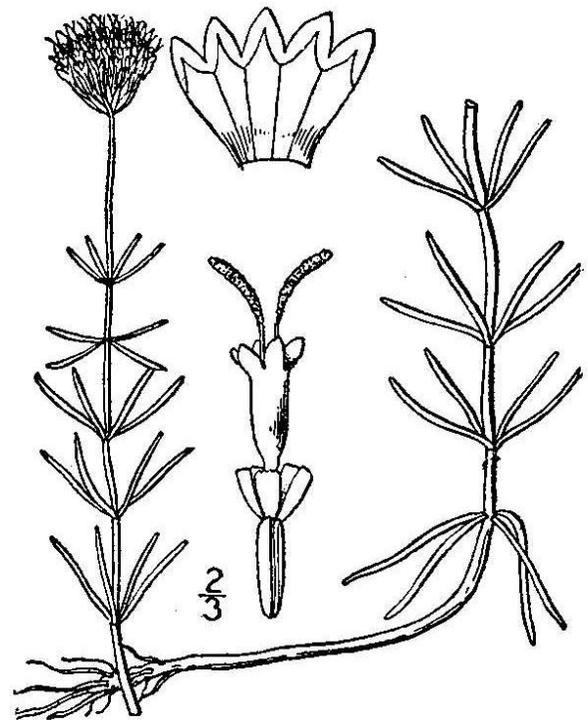
State Status: **Endangered**  
Federal Status: **None**

**Description:** *Sclerolepis* is a delicate, creeping plant in the Aster family (Compositae or Asteraceae), which can form extensive mats on pond shores. The linear, stalkless, hairless leaves are 1-2 cm (2/5 - 4/5 in.) long and are arranged in whorls of four to six. The stems reach from 1 to 4 dm (3 to 18 in.) in length and are usually unbranched. In autumn, *Sclerolepis* produces pinkish or flesh-colored flowers borne in a terminal head (a dense cluster of small, stalkless flowers). This inflorescence is 4-15 mm (4/25 - 15/25 in.) wide. The fruit is a 1-1.3 mm (1/25 in.) long, dark brown to black achene (a dry, one-seeded fruit) with whitish ribs. *Sclerolepis* is a perennial that can spread vegetatively and overwinters as slender, whitish rhizomes (horizontal underground stems which may bear rootlets).

**Range:** The documented range of *Sclerolepis* includes areas near the coast from Alabama and Florida to New Jersey. Disjunct populations occur in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.



Distribution in Massachusetts  
1985 - 2011  
Based on records in the  
Natural Heritage Database



USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions*. 3 vols. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Vol. 3: 355.

**Similar Species:** Golden Hedge Hyssop (*Gratiola aurea*) is found in the same habitat as *Sclerolepis*. While Golden Hedge Hyssop looks similar when immature, it has only two opposite leaves per node and has wider, or lanceolate, leaves. In addition, mature plants of Golden Hedge Hyssop have showy, yellow, tube-shaped flowers.

**Habitat:** *Sclerolepis* is found on sunny pond shores, amongst cobbles or where leaf litter collects, where there is a considerable drop in water level late in the summer. It appears to require protection from wave action;

**A Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Massachusetts State Wildlife Action Plan**

**Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife**

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Please allow the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program to continue to conserve the biodiversity of Massachusetts with a contribution for 'endangered wildlife conservation' on your state income tax form, as these donations comprise a significant portion of our operating budget.

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however, it can grow both on beaches and in shallow water. The one current station in Massachusetts is a pond shore habitat, including sandy, gravelly areas among boulders and wet, peaty areas. Associated species include the water milfoils *Proserpinaca intermedia* and *Proserpinaca pectinata*, Pipewort (*Eriocaulon septangulare*), Golden Hedge Hyssop (*Gratiola aurea*) and various species of rush (*Juncus* spp.) and mermaid-weed (*Myriophyllum* spp.).

**Population Status in Massachusetts:** *Sclerolepis* is currently listed as Endangered in Massachusetts. There is only one population in the Commonwealth, which was first discovered in 1911. Reasons for the plant's rarity include the plant's limited dispersal capability and the fact that Massachusetts is disjunct from the major portion of the plant's range. Threats include shore development and foot traffic. *Sclerolepis* is also considered rare in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, and Louisiana.

*Updated 2015*

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