Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

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Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
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MASSACHUSETTS ENDANGERED PLANTS

Large-leaved Goldenrod
(*Solidago macrophylla* Pursh)

Gleason, H.A. The New Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern U.S. and Adjacent Canada New York Botanical Garden, 1952

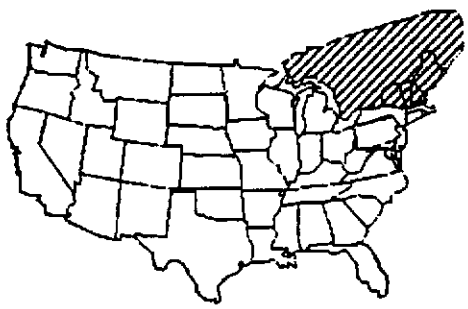
Description

Large-leaved Goldenrod is a perennial herb, measuring 1-2.5 feet (30-80 cm) tall, a member of the Composite or Daisy family. The lower leaf blades are large ,1.2-6 inches (3-15 cm) long, sharply toothed, oval-shaped, and taper abruptly to the leafstalk. Basal leaves are likewise toothed but are also tufted, situated on long stalks, and usually persistent long after their appearance in late spring. Flowers are golden-yellow and form a narrow, club-shaped elongate inflorescence Each flower head is large compared to other goldenrods, comprised of many small florets, and rests on a very short stalk. Fruits (achenes) are smooth and measure .15-.2 inches (.4-.5 cm) long. Flowering season is late July-September.

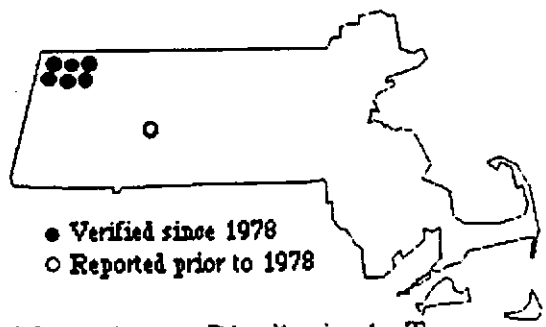
Similar Species

Cut-leaved Goldenrod (*Solidago arguta*) resembles Large-leaved Goldenrod but the former has a more arching or elm-like inflorescence. It inhabits rocky woodlands generally at lower elevations than Large-leaved Goldenrod.

(continued overleaf)



Range of Large-leaved Goldenrod



Massachusetts Distribution by Town

1990

Habitat in Massachusetts
This species is found at higher elevations in filtered light and full sun along roadsides and trails, in thickets, clearings and open summits, and in damp woods with an open understory. Shade is often provided for the plant by a canopy of Yellow Birch, Black Cherry, beech, American Mountain-ash, Red Spruce, Balsam, Fir, and Red Maple.

Range
Large-leaved Goldenrod is found from Newfoundland to Ontario, south to the Green Mountains, Adirondacks, northern Berkshire Plateau, Mt. Greylock, and the one hisorical record from Massachusetts was near the Notch in the Holyoke Range.

Population Status
Large-leaved Goldenrod is listed as "Threatened" in Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, Large-leaved Goldenrod is at the southern limit of its range which, in part, accounts for its rarity. The lack of high elevations, coupled with our relatively high summer temperatures, may also be contributing factors to its rarity. There have been 5 recent (after 1978) verified occurrences and 1 historical (before 1978) verified occurrence. One current population occurs at the jucture of town lines. All of these towns are marked in the distribution map although there was only one occurrence in this case.