



**Natural Heritage
& Endangered Species
Program**

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Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Hairy Wood-mint
Blephilia hirsuta
(Pursh) Benth.**

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

DESCRIPTION: A member of the mint (Lamiaceae or Labiatae) family, Hairy Wood-mint is an herbaceous perennial, reaching a height of 12-36 inches (4-8 dm). Its light-purple flowers and long-stalked, sharply toothed leaves grow from an often unbranched, hairy stem. Hairy Wood-mint is typically found in rich, moist forests.

IDENTIFICATION: Hairy Wood-mint has square, erect, and mostly unbranched stems, covered in short hairs, 0.05-0.1 inches (1-2 mm) long. The ovate (egg-shaped) leaves are opposite and simple, with serrated (toothed) edges, 1.5-3 inches (4-8 cm) long, and have the aroma of peppermint. The leaf bases are rounded and attach to the stem on long petioles. The flowers are nearly white to pale purple, with darker purple spots, and have two lips (formed from five fused petals), 0.3-0.5 inches (0.75-1.25 cm) long. Dense clusters or whorls of flowers at the end of the stem are separated from each other by a row of fringed, colored, floral bracts along the stem. Plants bloom from May until August, and produce small nutlets.

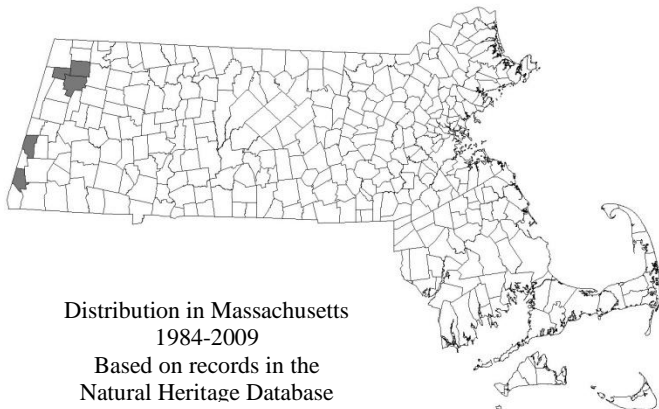


Photo by Pam Weatherbee

SIMILAR SPECIES: Downy Wood-mint (*Blephilia ciliata*) has blue-purple flowers, and also grows to a height of 12-36 inches (4-8 dm). Its leaves are short-stalked or stalkless, minimally toothed, and are whitish underneath; stems are downy. Downy Wood-mint is also currently listed as Endangered in Massachusetts.

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

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

1 Rabbit Hill Rd., Westborough, MA; tel: 508-389-6300; fax: 508-389-7890; www.mass.gov/dfw

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RANGE: The documented range of Hairy Wood-mint extends across North America from Minnesota to Quebec and Vermont. It continues southward through Kansas, Nebraska, and Tennessee.

HABITAT: In Massachusetts, Hairy Wood-mint is commonly found in rich mesic forest. It occurs in the vicinity of small, intermittent streams or river floodplains, and prefers dark, moist soils typical of mature hardwood forests. It is often found with trees such as American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Yellow Birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) and White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*). Associated trees, shrubs, and herbs may include Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*), Basswood (*Tilia americana*), Blue Cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), White Snakeroot (*Eupatorium rugosum*), Pale Touch-me-not or Jewelweed (*Impatiens pallida*), and Woodland Millet (*Milium effusum*).

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS: As for many rare species, exact needs for management of Hairy Wood-mint are not known. The following comments are based primarily on observations of populations in Massachusetts. Hairy Wood-mint grows best in rich, mature woodlands, and in areas with moist soils, often in the vicinity of stream and seeps. Any disturbance of the particular moisture regime, or the forest habitat, would negatively impact the populations. Mature forest environments should be protected, as should the water quality and levels of small streams and creeks. Trail access to populations should be avoided, and where it occurs, efforts should be made to minimize trampling impacts

FLOWERS PRESENT:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

Updated 2015

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