



## Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

[www.mass.gov/nhesp](http://www.mass.gov/nhesp)

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

## Sea Pink *Sabatia stellaris*

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

**DESCRIPTION:** This herbaceous annual is a member of the Gentian family. Generally between 6 to 18 inches (15-45 cm.) tall in other parts of its range, Sea Pink populations in Massachusetts appear somewhat stunted, with plants reaching only about 8 inches (20 cm.) in height. *Sabatia stellaris* has a shallow taproot and a solitary, four-angled stem with alternate branches. Its light green leaves are opposite, linear-lanceolate, 1.5 inches (3.8 cm.) long, and lack any type of stalk. The five-petaled flowers, 0.75-1.5 inches (2-3.8 cm) wide, have a yellow center fringed with dark red. Sea Pink flowers have bright pink petals, yellow stamens, and long, narrow sepals.

**SIMILAR SPECIES:** Slender Marsh Pink (*Sabatia campanulata*) resembles Sea Pink but is only found on freshwater pond shores. Although Slender Marsh Pink flowers have only five petals, its sepals are usually longer than the petals and the leaves are skinnier and longer than those of Sea Pink.

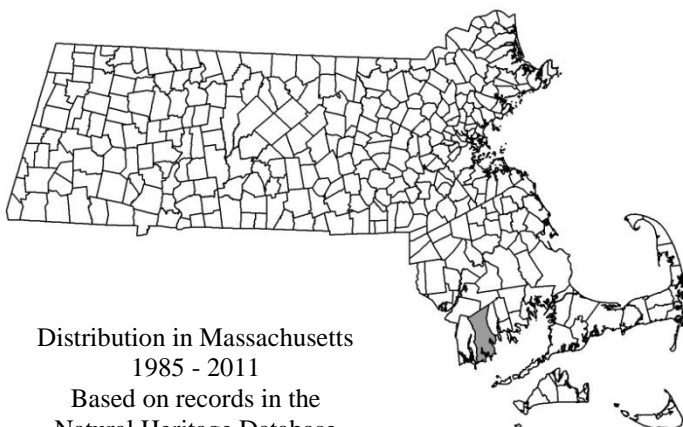
**RANGE:** *Sabatia stellaris* is distributed from southern Massachusetts south along the coast to parts of Florida and Louisiana.



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

**HABITAT:** This species occurs as patches of low plants in brackish or saline meadows and marshes above the level of daily tidal inundation. It is usually found growing in damp sandy or peaty soil. Sea Pink grows in association with marsh grass and low shrubs.

**POPULATION STATUS IN MASSACHUSETTS:** Sea Pink is currently listed as Endangered in Massachusetts under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act. There is only one current site known and one historical occurrence reported. Reasons for rarity and potentially threatening factors include the location of the plant at the northern limit of its range and the possible loss of habitat due to a permanent rise in the water level and/or increasing salinity.



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

Updated 2015

*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](http://www.mass.gov/dfw)

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.

[www.mass.gov/nhesp](http://www.mass.gov/nhesp)