



## Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

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

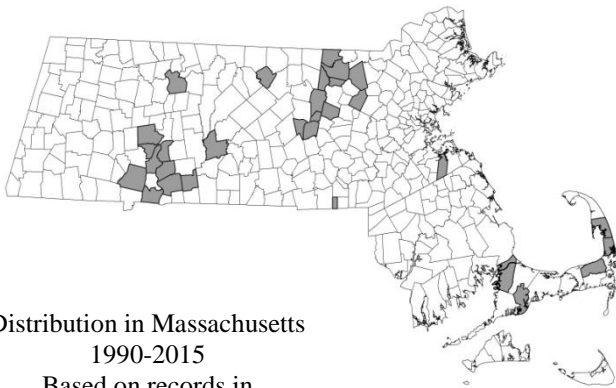
Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

## Wild Lupine *Lupinus perennis* L.

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

**SPECIES DESCRIPTION:** Wild Lupine is a short-lived perennial legume growing up to two feet high. It has palmate leaves with seven to eleven leaflets, unlike the very similar non-native Garden Lupine (*Lupinus polyphyllus*), which has ten to eighteen leaflets per leaf and is planted or often escapes from gardens to roadsides in New England. Wild Lupine has a showy raceme of blue-violet flowers (occasionally white or pink) in late spring and early summer.

**DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE:** In Massachusetts, Wild Lupine was found historically in Berkshire County at one site, but the rest of the current and historic records are from the Connecticut River valley eastward. There are current reports from Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden, Worcester, Middlesex, Plymouth, and Bristol Counties. There are historic records from Essex and Nantucket counties, but no current records, and no records either current or historic from Suffolk or Dukes counties. Of the 148 documented sites, fifty are considered current, meaning they have been observed in the past 25 years.



Distribution in Massachusetts  
1990-2015  
Based on records in  
Natural Heritage Database  
Map updated 2015



Photo by Paul Somers, NHESP

**HABITAT DESCRIPTION:** Wild Lupine grows in dry, sandy, open fields and woodlands, including Pitch Pine/Scrub Oak barrens. This habitat may include roadsides, gravel and sand pits, waste areas, and railroad lines, among other disturbed areas. Associated species include Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Scrub Oak (*Quercus ilicifolia*), Stiff Aster (*Ionactis linariifolia*), bush clovers (*Lespedeza* spp.), and goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.), among other plants common in open areas.

**THREATS:** The primary threats to Wild Lupine are direct destruction of habitat by all forms of development and succession of open habitats to forests, often because of fire exclusion. Once wide-spread in central and eastern Massachusetts, Wild Lupine is now much reduced in locations and population sizes. Often, open areas are kept open by mowing, which may not kill the lupine plants outright, but may prevent flowering or seed ripening.

**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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**REFERENCES:**

- Gleason, H.A., and A. Cronquist. 1991. *Manual of Vascular Plants of Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada*. Second Edition. The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY.
- Bertin, R.I., and T.J. Rawinski. 2012. *Vascular Flora of Worcester County, Massachusetts*. New England Botanical Club, Cambridge, MA.

Prepared 2015

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