

Manitoba's Species At Risk

Threatened



Any native Manitoba species likely to become endangered or at risk due to low or declining numbers in Manitoba if the factors affecting it don't improve. Threatened species are declared as such by regulation under the *Endangered Species Act*

Riddell's goldenrod

Solidago riddellii

Riddell's goldenrod is a provincially threatened plant found in Manitoba, Ontario and in 14 American states. It is a herbaceous perennial that grows to a height of one metre (3.3 feet). The narrow leaves tend to curve downward and are folded inward along the middle vein. They usually have several prominent veins near the leaf base and have rough edges. The lower leaves gradually taper towards the stem on long stalks and can reach 24 centimetres (9.5 inches) in length. The upper leaves are smaller and not stalked. The flat-topped to rounded flower cluster bears many small yellow flowering heads (50 to several hundred). Each flowering head is less than one centimetre (0.4 inches) in diameter. Of the 15 goldenrod species confirmed to grow in Manitoba, Riddell's goldenrod is perhaps most easily confused with Ohio goldenrod (*Solidago ohioensis*). However, the leaves of Ohio goldenrod are flat rather than folded and lack prominent veins.

Habitat

In Manitoba, Riddell's goldenrod grows in open tallgrass prairie and shrubby fen-like habitats. It prefers moist to wet, calcium-rich soils which often have mineral-rich water movement at, or near, the soil surface. Most of Manitoba's remaining populations occur along roads.

Life History

Riddell's goldenrod survives as an underground woody stem during winter. It typically blooms from August to September and appears to be pollinated by bees, wasps, flies and other insects such as moths and butterflies. Individual seeds are dispersed by wind. Plants may reproduce by sending up shoots from the underground stem. Riddell's goldenrod may hybridize with stiff goldenrod (*Solidago rigida*) and white upland aster (*Solidago ptarmicoides*).

Distribution

The native range of Riddell's goldenrod extends from southeastern Manitoba and southwestern Ontario, southeast to Georgia in the United States. Riddell's goldenrod is at the northern edge of its range in Manitoba, where small populations occur within an approximately 30 kilometre-wide band that stretches from southeast of Winnipeg to the Tall Grass Prairie Preserve near the U.S. border.

Status

Riddell's goldenrod is considered provincially rare (S2) by the Manitoba Conservation Data Centre. Although it is considered vulnerable (S3) in Ontario and rare in several American states, NatureServe considers the species to be secure (G5) overall. Road allowance maintenance such as mowing and herbicide spraying threaten the survival of Riddell's goldenrod in Manitoba. Riddell's goldenrod is also particularly susceptible to changes in moisture caused by drainage projects.

Riddell's goldenrod was listed as threatened by regulation under Manitoba's *Endangered Species Act* in 2001. It was assigned a status of special concern by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) in 2000.

Stewardship and recovery

A key component of stewardship and recovery is the protection of habitat for the species. The Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve protects over 2,100 hectares (5,200 acres) of prairie, wetland and forest habitat for native plant and animal species, including Riddell's goldenrod. Since the majority of populations in Manitoba occur along roads, adjacent landowners and those responsible for road maintenance can help ensure this



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Cool Facts

Other scientific names used to describe *Solidago riddellii* include: *Oligoneuron riddellii*, *Aster riddellii* and *Solidago amplexicaulis*.

A false myth blames goldenrods for hay fever in late summer and fall. However, goldenrod pollen is large, heavy and sticky and is carried by insects not wind. Hay fever is an allergic reaction to the fine, light, dry pollen produced by other plants such as the ragweeds (*Ambrosia* spp.).

Riddell's goldenrod belongs to the Aster family, also known as the Composite family, which includes sunflowers and daisies. The part which most people think of as a single flower is actually a flower head made up of many tiny flowers.

In Manitoba, Riddell's goldenrod is at the leading edge of its northern migration following the retreat of glaciers. Hybridization with other Manitoba goldenrods may provide an opportunity to study evolutionary responses to climate change.



plants' survival by becoming aware of land management activities that threaten or protect Riddell's goldenrod. For example, mowing in late summer may threaten Riddell's goldenrod populations by removing flowers before seeds are produced and dispersed. Maintaining natural drainage patterns and native vegetation will help promote the survival of Riddell's goldenrod populations in Manitoba.

Get involved in recovery

The Manitoba Conservation Data Centre monitors Riddell's goldenrod populations regularly. New populations are being discovered within its known range. Please contact the Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch, or your nearest Manitoba Conservation office, if you think you may have found Riddell's goldenrod or would like more information on what you can do to further enhance your land for this and other native Manitoba plant and animal species.

**Manitoba Conservation
Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch**
Box 24, 200 Saulteaux Crescent
Winnipeg MB R3J 3W3
204-945-7775
www.manitoba.ca/conservation/wildlife/index.html

Manitoba Conservation Regional Office

Red River Region
Winnipeg, Manitoba
204-948-3262

Eastern Region
Lac du Bonnet, Manitoba
204-345-1431

Partners in production of this fact sheet:
Manitoba Conservation,
Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch
Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service
Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation

Extirpated Species

Any species once native to Manitoba that has disappeared through all of its Manitoba range. Extirpated species are declared as such by regulation under the *Endangered Species Act*.

Endangered Species

Any native Manitoba species threatened to disappear through all or most of its Manitoba range. Endangered species are declared as such by regulation under the *Endangered Species Act*.

Threatened Species

Any native Manitoba species likely to become endangered or at risk due to low or declining numbers in Manitoba if the factors affecting it don't improve. Threatened species are declared as such by regulation under the *Endangered Species Act*.

Vulnerable Species

Species not regulated under the *Endangered Species Act* but which could eventually be considered Endangered or Threatened if the factors affecting them do not improve.