



# Rare Plants of New Hampshire

## Sweet Goldenrod, Licorice Goldenrod

*Solidago odora* Ait.

**Sunflower family** (Asteraceae, sometimes called Compositae)

### What Does It Look Like?

This species is a slender perennial from 0.5-1.5 m (20-60 inches) tall with a spray of yellow-flowering branches at the top and sweet smelling leaves.

**Leaves:** Thin, linear to linear-lance-shaped and numerous along the stem. Their surface is finely translucent-dotted. The leaves are anise-scented when crushed, rarely odorless.

**Flower:** As with many other goldenrods, the flowers are small, yellow, and clustered on branches at the top of the stem. These branches are arranged in a broad panicle. It flowers from August to late September.

**Fruit:** The fruits are very small, short-hairy or nearly hairless. The hairy pappus ("parachute") is equal to or longer than the fruits at their base.

**Similar species:** Only sweet goldenrod has licorice-scented leaves. Other goldenrods may have a broad panicle of flowers, but their leaves are not minutely translucent-dotted, smooth-margined or as thin as in this species.

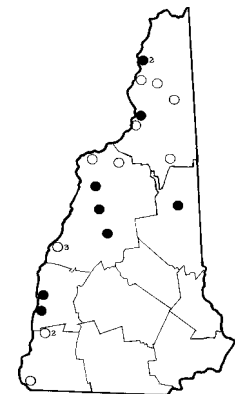


### Where Is It Found?

**Habitat:** Across its range, sweet goldenrod grows in dry open woods, especially in sandy soils. In New Hampshire, it is found in oak, oak-pine, or oak-hickory forest or woodland communities on till soils (often thin or sandy), and on ridges and slopes in the southern portion of the state.

**Associated species:** Black oak (*Quercus velutina*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), hickories (*Carya* spp.), flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), maple-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*), tick-trefoils (*Desmodium* spp.), foxgloves (*Aureolaria* spp.), bastard toadflax (*Comandra umbellata*).

**Distribution:** Central New England, south to Florida and Texas.



### Sweet Goldenrod in New Hampshire

- Historic Locations
- Verified since 1980



## What Is Its Status?

### Conservation

**status:** Populations of sweet goldenrod are more secure farther south, but it is imperiled in New Hampshire where it is at the northern edge of its range. It is state listed as threatened due to its rarity (only 11 of 12 known occurrences for the state have been confirmed since 1980).

**Management:** As a plant that is adapted to forest or partly open (woodland) ecosystems, it is uncertain how it would respond to significant canopy removals. Canopy removals generally increase light, temperature, and nutrient availability and decrease moisture levels, conditions which generally favor more competitive species. If harvesting is necessary, single tree selection is likely to have less impact than clear cutting.

## What Should You Do If You Find This Plant?

Please report sightings of this or other rare species to the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory. Documentation should include: (1) location of the sighting on USGS topographic map or road map, with written directions for relocating the plant; (2) a photo of the plant; and (3) descriptive information including how many plants there are, whether any plants are flowering or fruiting, and comments about the surrounding vegetation. Information may be sent to NHHI/DRED, PO Box 1856, Concord, NH 03302-1856. If you have any questions, please call the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory Program at (603) 271-3623.

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