

Golden Corydalis

Corydalis aurea

Description

Golden corydalis is an annual or biennial herb with upright or trailing, fleshy stems that are ½ to 2 feet (1.5-6 dm) long. This spring wildflower belongs to the same family as bleeding-heart. The leaves grow both from the base of the plant and alternately along the stems. The leaves are pale green, smooth and finely divided. The flowers are yellow and ½ to ¾ inch (12-20 mm) long. They are irregular, made of 4 unequal petals that are partly fused near the base. The uppermost petal has a sac-like projection near the base and is not crested at the tip. Flowers are grouped in terminal clusters and bloom from May to July.

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe 2025

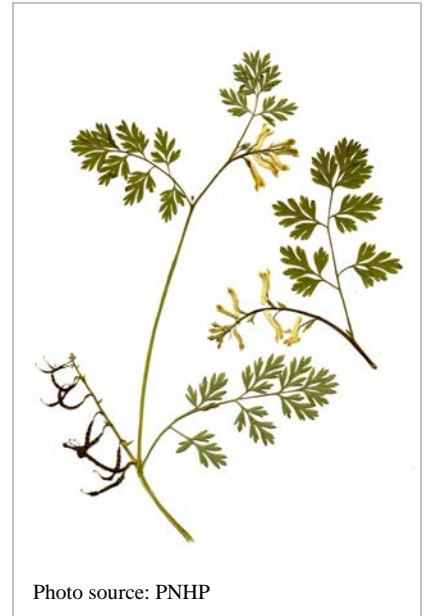
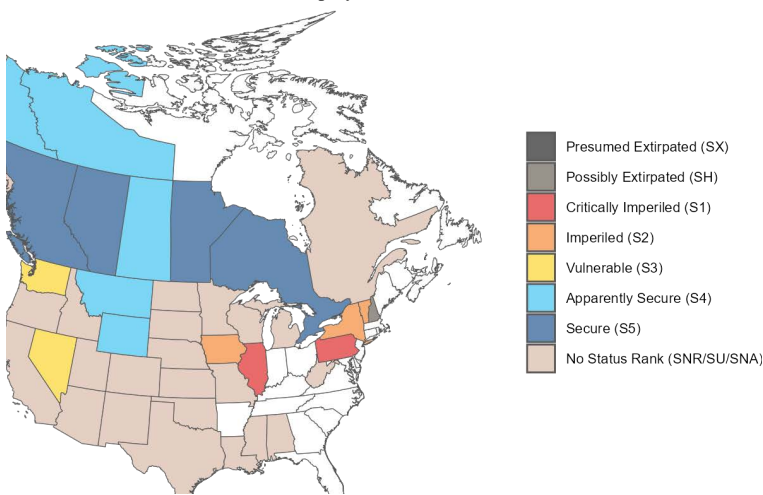


Photo source: PNHP

Distribution & Habitat

Golden corydalis occurs throughout the western United States. In the eastern U. S. its range extends from Vermont and New Hampshire south to West Virginia. It grows in rocky or sandy soil in open woods or along roadsides.

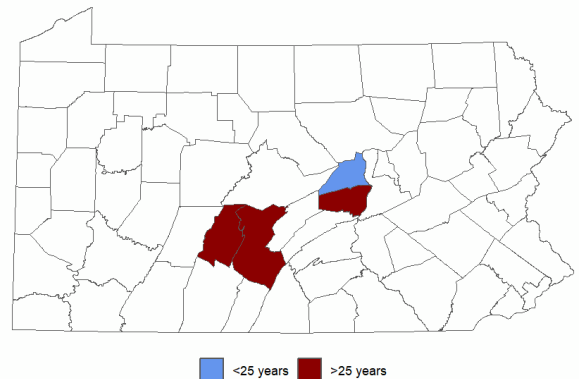
Current State Status

The PA Biological Survey (PABS) considers golden corydalis to be a species of special concern, based on the very few occurrences that have been recently confirmed. It does not have a PA legal rarity status, and has been assigned a suggested rarity status of Endangered by PABS.

Conservation Considerations

Maintenance of known populations and preservation of the rare communities where golden corydalis grows will be crucial to its survival. Removal of overgrowth and invasive species will help to preserve the integrity of the sites. Management of known sites requires long term monitoring of populations. Potential sites for restoration should be evaluated.

Golden Corydalis (*Corydalis aurea*)



NatureServe conservation status ranks

G5 – Globally secure; S1– Critically imperiled in Pennsylvania

References

- NatureServe. 2025. NatureServe Explorer [web application] NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available at <https://explorer.natureserve.org> (Accessed: May 8, 2025)
- Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program. 2025.
- Rhoads, A.F. and W.M. Klein, Jr. 1993. The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania: Annotated Checklist and Atlas. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
- Rhoads, A.F. and T.A. Block. 2000. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.

