

Annual Fimbry *Fimbristylis annua*

Description

Annual fimbry is an annual graminoid herb that usually is less than 6 inches (15 cm) in height. The plants grow in tufted clumps and have thin, wiry stems that emerge from slender roots. The leaves are relatively few, less than 1/10 inch (3 mm) wide, have flat or inrolled edges, and occur mostly at the base of the plant. The flowers, appearing from July to October, are minute and are grouped in brown, egg-shaped spikelets. Up to 10 spikelets are clustered at the top of each stem, with the spikelets seeming to emerge from one point on the stem. The mature fruits are about 1/16 inch (1-1.5 mm) long.

Distribution & Habitat

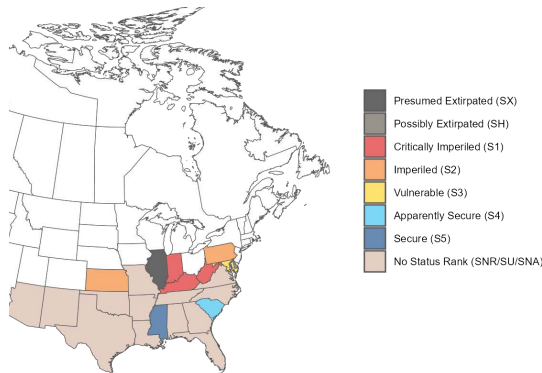
Annual fimbry has a wide range in the southern states, with an extension to the northeast into Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, it is at a northern border of its range, and has been documented historically in a few southeastern counties. It grows in damp depressions or seasonal seepages on serpentine barrens.



Photo source: John Kunsman, PNHP

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe 2025



Conservation Considerations

The viability of populations of annual fimbry and its serpentine habitat will require maintaining early successional conditions and natural hydrology patterns, and controlling invasive species. Active management, through the use of fire, scraping, or mowing, may be needed to create the proper successional stage and ecological conditions for this species to thrive.

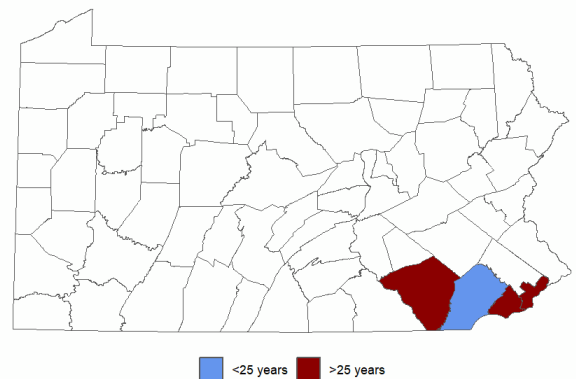
NatureServe conservation status ranks

G5 – Globally secure; S2 – Imperiled in Pennsylvania

Current State Status

The PA Biological Survey (PABS) considers annual fimbry to be a species of special concern, based on the few occurrences that have been recently confirmed and its specialized habitat on serpentine barrens. It has a PA legal rarity status and a PABS suggested rarity status of Threatened. About 12 populations are currently known from the state.

Annual Fimbry (*Fimbristylis annua*)



References

- NatureServe. 2025. NatureServe Explorer [web application] NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available at <https://explorer.natureserve.org> (Accessed: May 8, 2025)
- Rhoads, A.F. and T.A. Block. 2007. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. 2nd edition. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.