

# Snow trillium (*Trillium nivale*)

## Pennsylvania Plant Species of Concern

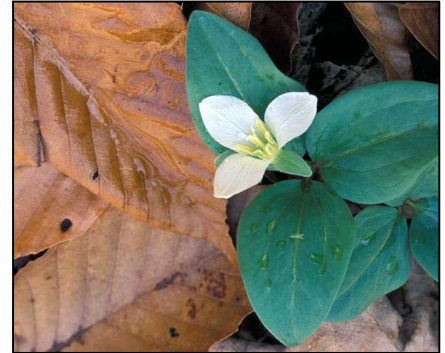
State Rank: S2 (imperiled), Global Rank: G4 (apparently secure)

### What it looks like:

Snow trillium is a small member of the lily family, growing only up to 15 centimeters (about 6 inches) tall. Its structure is very simple: a single stem rises from a short, thick rhizome (underground stem) to a single whorl of leaves, then a single flower. The seeds bear fatty elaiosomes, which attract ants to carry seeds away from the parent plant. Individual plants may live more than eight years.

The **flower** has three white, oval-shaped petals above three slenderer sepals; they are about 4 cm (2 in) across or smaller. Flowering occurs during late February and March.

Three **leaves** are arranged in a single whorl below the flower. They are oval to triangular with a few prominent parallel veins, and from 3 to 5 cm (1.5 to 2 in) long.



Thomas G. Barnes @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database - Barnes, T.G. & S.W. Francis. 2004. *Wildflowers and ferns of Kentucky*. University Press of Kentucky.

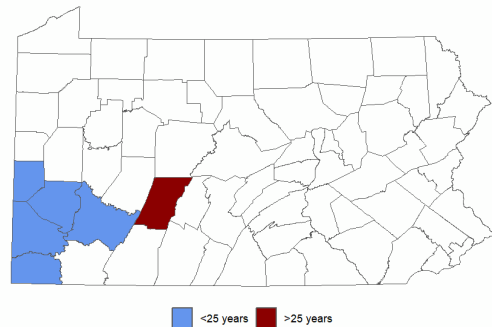
### Where it is found:

Snow trillium grows in wet, fertile woodlands from Pennsylvania west to North Dakota and Nebraska and south to Virginia. It is a calciphile, preferring soil with high limestone content.

### Why it is rare:

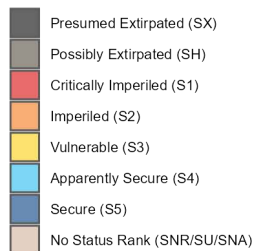
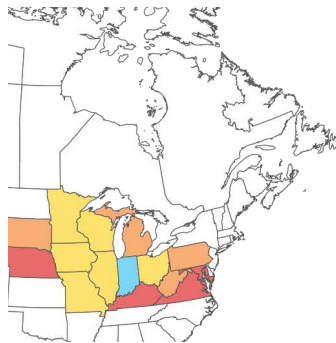
Threats to snow trillium include habitat destruction by logging and quarrying, grazing in the Midwest, and competition from in-

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### North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe 2025



vasive species in some areas. Its populations are often small and widely scattered across its range.

### Conservation considerations:

Snow trillium can most benefit from preservation of undisturbed habitat, with consideration given to save areas large enough for population expansion. Control or removal of invasive exotic competitors will also help.



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program



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### References

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