

# Southern Bog Clubmoss

## *Lycopodiella appressa*

### Description

Southern bog clubmoss is a perennial with leafy, creeping, horizontal stems that occasionally produce erect fertile stems. The fertile stems grow up to 16 inches (40 cm) tall. The leaves are scale-like, with at least a few teeth on the margins, and are pressed flat against the stem in an upward direction and cover the entire length of the stem. The species does not have flowers, fruits or seeds, but produces spores in a club-like structure, called a strobilus, located at the top of each fertile stem. The strobilus in this species makes up less than 1/3 of the total height of the fertile stem.

### Distribution & Habitat

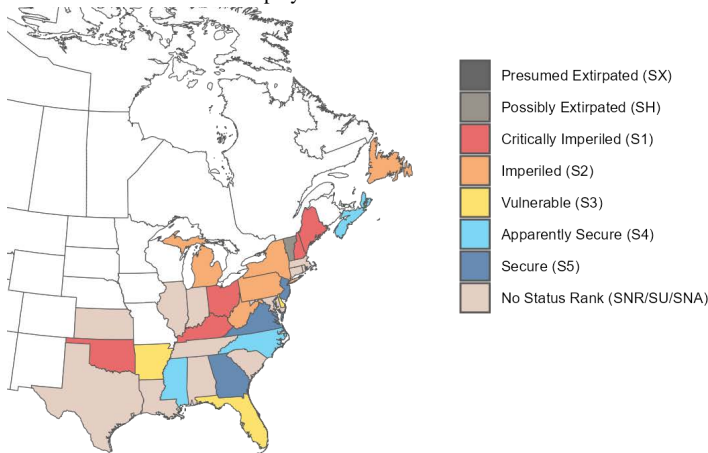
Southern bog clubmoss has a mostly coastal distribution from Nova Scotia west and south into Texas and Florida. In Pennsylvania, it occurs mainly in the southeastern counties, where it grows in sandy to peaty seepages, depressions, and damp successional openings.



Photo source: John Kunsman (PNHP)

### North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe 2025



### Current State Status

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

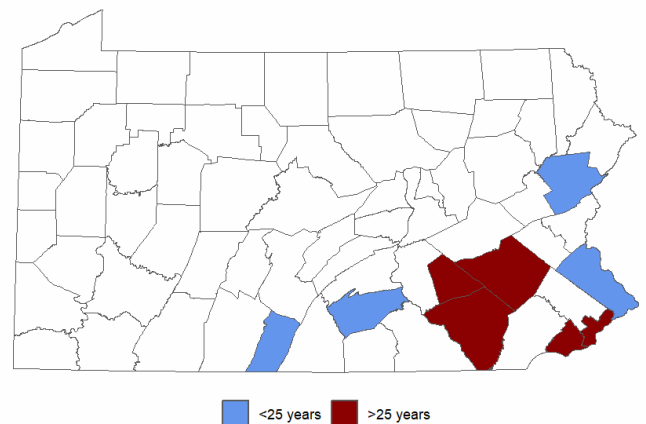
### Conservation Considerations

The viability of known populations of southern bog clubmoss and its habitat type can be enhanced by creating buffers around wetlands, controlling invasive species, and protecting the hydrology of the wetland and its surroundings. This species can colonize certain types of disturbed ground, such as abandoned quarries and utility rights-of-way, if the proper substrate and moisture conditions are present. Natural succession, invasive species, and the indiscriminate application of herbicide can be threats at these sites.

### NatureServe conservation status ranks

G5 – Globally secure; S2 – Imperiled in Pennsylvania

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Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

### 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. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.