

# Rockrose

*Helianthemum canadense*

**STATUS**

Not Listed

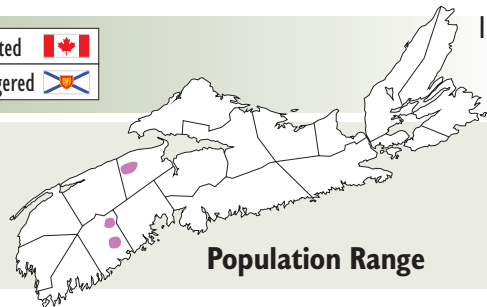


Endangered



101

Found in Kings and Queens Counties, with approximately 5000 plants left in the wild.



**Population Range**

## Habitat

The majority of the Rockrose population in Nova Scotia occurs in sand barren habitat, but it also can be found on the borders of mixed woods, and on sandy, cobble lakeshores. It is usually found in sunny areas with limited competition from woody species and requires light disturbance to keep its habitat open (such as fire and ice scour).



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Flower bud

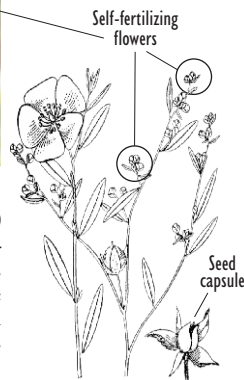
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## Species Description

Rockrose (or Canada Frostweed) is a small (10-40 cm tall), finely-haired perennial herb with lance-shaped leaves and a reddish brown stem. It has bright yellow flowers (2 - 4 cm wide) with five petals. In late summer, side branches often produce multiple, small self-fertilizing flowers. Its stem is rough to the touch.



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Look in June and July for showy, yellow flowers and August for smaller self-fertilizing flowers.

## Interesting Points

- The name is from the Greek *helios* (sun) and *anthemon* (flower).
- Rockrose yellow flowers are very short lived. They open only on sunny mornings and the petals drop by noon.
- The smaller self-fertilizing flowers (present on side branches) open only when the seeds are released.
- Over 97% of its sand barren habitat in Nova Scotia has been lost.



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Seeds of small self-fertilizing flowers



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Flower starting to drop its petals

## Similar Species

There are no other rockrose species in Nova Scotia.

**Pinweed** (*Lecaea intermedia*): Often found growing among Rockrose plants in sand barren habitat. Its small reddish-brown flowers and seed capsules can resemble small self-fertilizing Rockrose flowers. However, Pinweed often has numerous flowers and is generally more branched. It also has a smooth stem and in late summer and fall small vegetative basal shoots form at its base.



Pinweed seed capsules



Flower close-up



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Vegetative basal shoots

## Threats to Survival

- Habitat loss and destruction from human activities (agriculture, urban development, road construction, sand quarries, etc.).
- Fire suppression and extirpation of caribou (helped to create and maintain habitat).
- Shading or competition with shrubs and trees.
- Lack of pollinators.



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Heavy disturbance from road building and OHV use.



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Rockrose growing on the edge of the woods

## How You Can Help

Drive off-highway vehicles on designated trails only and not in sand barren or lakeshore habitat. Grow garden plants that encourage pollinators. Maintain the natural vegetation around lakeshores and avoid shoreline alterations.



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Rockrose survey

## Contacts, Information & Sighting Reports

**Contact:** NS DNR (902) 679-6091

**Info:** [www.gov.ns.ca/natr/wildlife](http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/wildlife)

**Sighting Reports:** 1-866-727-3447, [www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings](http://www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings)