

# Saving White Wood Aster:

## What you can do to help

White Wood Aster (*Eurybia divaricata*) is a woodland plant. This plant blooms in the fall and produces numerous flat-topped white flowers that gradually turn bronze-purple as the flower ages. The white flowers differentiate White Wood Aster from other woodland asters with heart-shaped lower leaves, such as Heart-leaved Aster, Fringed Blue Aster and Large-leaved Aster — all of which usually have bluish flowers.

### Do you live near White Wood Aster?

In Canada, White Wood Aster occurs in southern Ontario and southwestern Quebec. It grows in open, dry deciduous forests and thickets. It is also common along the edges of trails. In Ontario, White Wood Aster is found in forests dominated by Sugar Maple or American Beech, often with Red Oak, White Oak, Black Oak, Shagbark Hickory and Basswood. It requires well-drained soils although it is known to thrive during wet years.

### What you can do to help

- ✓ **Learn to identify this plant.** If you are lucky enough to discover a new population of White Wood Aster, be sure to report it to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources or the Natural Heritage Information Centre.
- ✓ **Do not collect this plant** or its parts for medicinal, ornamental or any other uses.
- ✓ **Learn to identify invasive species,** especially Garlic Mustard. Your local Conservation Authority or Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Office can provide you with information on invasive species that occur in your area and what you can do to help prevent their spread.
- ✓ **Maintain a naturally-vegetated buffer** between White Wood Aster and areas you use herbicides. Chemicals contained in the herbicides may be harmful to this plant.



Photo: Patrick O'Hara

### Field check

- ✓ Height: up to 30 cm
- ✓ Leaves: alternate; coarse textured; upper leaves deeply serrated, narrow and pointed; lower leaves heart-shaped
- ✓ Stem: dark
- ✓ Flowers: narrow, long petals known as “rays” and yellow centres

### Did you know?



Garlic Mustard is a very invasive plant that is gradually crowding out White Wood Aster at some of its remaining sites. Stop its spread!



## More Best Stewardship Practices

- ✓ **Stay on designated trails** when walking, cycling or driving an off-road vehicle in a natural area to avoid trampling vegetation and damaging sensitive habitat.
- ✓ **Keep your pets on a leash** when you walk them in natural areas, as pets can transport invasive plant seeds if they get stuck in the pet's hair.
- ✓ **Avoid dumping waste of any kind in natural areas.** Garbage damages plants, pollutes the environment and may introduce invasive species.
- ✓ **Landscape with native plant species** from local seed-stock supplied by a reputable garden centre.
- ✓ **Learn about stewardship activities** in your area and actively participate in protecting Species at Risk. To find more information about stewardship activities in your area, contact your local Stewardship Council or Conservation Authority.
- ✓ **Take advantage of the Environmental Farm Plan program.** To learn more contact the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources or the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.
- ✓ **If you have Species at Risk** on your property, you may be eligible for stewardship programs or financial incentives that support the protection and recovery of Species at Risk and their habitats. Contact the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources for more information.
- ✓ **Report any illegal activity** related to plants and wildlife to 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667)

## Status

White Wood Aster is listed as Threatened nationally and provincially. It is illegal to kill, harm or collect the species, or to destroy its habitat in Ontario. This plant is also protected under The Natural Heritage component of the Provincial Policy Statement under Ontario's Planning Act.

Carolinian Canada Coalition is working with local Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Offices, Conservation Authorities and other Non-Governmental Organizations to recover Species at Risk.

You can help the recovery efforts by protecting this species and its habitat.

## Good sources of information

### Carolinian Canada Coalition:

[www.carolinian.org](http://www.carolinian.org)

### Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources:

Includes information about Ontario Species at Risk  
[www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/)

### Natural Heritage Information Centre

<http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/>

### Find your local Conservation Authority Office:

[www.conservationontario.ca](http://www.conservationontario.ca)

### Government of Canada Species at Risk Public Registry:

[www.sararegistry.gc.ca](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca)

### Find your local Stewardship Council:

[www.ontariostewardship.org](http://www.ontariostewardship.org)

### Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

[www.omafra.gov.on.ca/](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/)

### Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Includes information about the Environmental Farm Plan  
[ontariosoilcrop.org](http://ontariosoilcrop.org)