



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Threatened and Endangered Species



Although not very tolerant to prolonged flooding, this plant relies on periodic flooding to scour away other plants that compete for the same habitat.

Decurrent False Aster *(Boltonia decurrens)*

The Decurrent False Aster is a federally *threatened species*. Threatened species are animals and plants that are likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future. *Endangered species* are animals and plants that are in danger of becoming extinct. Identifying, protecting, and restoring endangered and threatened species is the primary objective of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's endangered species program.

Habitat

This plant is found on moist, sandy floodplains and prairie wetlands along the Illinois River. It relies on periodic flooding to scour away other plants that compete for the same habitat.

Why It's Threatened

Excessive silting seems to be a major cause of the decurrent false aster's decline. Highly intensive agricultural practices have increased topsoil runoff, which smothers seeds and seedlings.

Habitat destruction is another threat. Agriculture has eliminated wet prairies and marshes within the species' range, natural lakes have been drained and converted to row crops. Building levees along rivers and draining wetlands for cultivation has also changed patterns of flooding and eliminated habitat. Herbicides also kill these plants and may be a factor in the decline of the species.

Several communities of decurrent false asters have been found in areas of low-intensity agriculture. Biologists believe that the plant may actually benefit from occasional farming, which eliminates competitive plant species.

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