



News Release

Public Affairs Office
PO Box 1306
Albuquerque, NM 87103
505/248-6911
505/248-6915 (Fax)

Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas) <http://fws.gov/southwest>

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Contacts: Dawn Gardiner, 361-994-9005, Dawn_Gardiner@fws.gov
Lesli Gray, 972-439-4542, Lesli_Gray@fws.gov

JOHNSTON'S FRANKENIA REMOVED FROM ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Number of plants exceeds 4 million in Texas and Northeast Mexico

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today that the Johnston's frankenia will be removed from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Plants. Once thought to number less than 1,000 plants, the best available information now indicates that there are over 4 million plants in at least 68 locations throughout southwest Texas and northeast Mexico. Johnston's frankenia was listed on August 7, 1984, as endangered.

The Service is also announcing the availability of the Post-Delisting Monitoring Plan for Johnston's frankenia. The post-delisting monitoring plan was developed in cooperation with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission, The Nature Conservancy, and Texas Department of Transportation.

"Thanks to the collaborative efforts of our partners including Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, The Nature Conservancy, Texas Department of Transportation, the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission, USDA's Natural Resources Service and private landowners in Texas, the Service received additional information on the locations and population of Johnston's frankenia," said Benjamin Tuggle, the Service's Southwest Regional Director. "This updated information in combination with the conservation efforts of private landowners has enabled us to remove the plant from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Plants. We will continue to work with our partners through the post-delisting monitoring plan to ensure that Johnston's frankenia populations remain healthy."

The Service originally proposed delisting Johnston's frankenia on May 22, 2003, because the population and range of the species was greater than previously known and threats not as severe as originally thought. Unfortunately, the Service was unable to finalize the delisting proposal due to higher priority listing actions. The comment period on the proposed delisting and post-delisting monitoring plan was reopened in October 2011.

The Johnston's frankenia is a plant endemic to south Texas in Webb, Zapata, and Starr Counties and an adjacent area in northeastern Mexico. It is a low-growing, perennial shrub that occurs in a clumped distribution on specialized habitats of hypersaline (very salty) soils. The range of the Johnston's frankenia in Texas is currently estimated to encompass 2,031 square miles (5,260 square kilometers). Currently, there are 68 reported populations in the United States and 4 in Mexico, with an estimated total number of individual plants exceeding 4 million.

The goal of the Service is to make implementation of the Endangered Species Act less complex, less contentious and more effective. The Service seeks to accelerate recovery of threatened and endangered species across the nation, while making it easier for people to coexist with these species.

For more information on the final delisting rule and the post-delisting monitoring plan, see the *Federal Register* notice on our web site at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest>. For further information contact Dawn Gardiner, Assistant Field Supervisor, Texas Coastal Ecological Services Field Office, Corpus Christi, TX, 361-994-9005 ext. 259, Dawn_Gardiner@fws.gov, 6300 Ocean Dr., USFWS Unit 5837, Corpus Christi, TX 78412-5837. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 800-877-8337.

America's fish, wildlife, and plant resources belong to all of us, and ensuring the health of imperiled species is a shared responsibility. We're working to actively engage conservation partners and the public in the search for improved and innovative ways to conserve and recover imperiled species.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/>. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#) and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).

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