

# SPECIES AT RISK in New Brunswick



## Bathurst Aster

Scientific name: *Symphotrichum  
subulatum var obtusifolius*

N.B. Status: Endangered

### Bathurst Aster

#### Description & Biology

The Bathurst Aster is a coastal or salt marsh plant of the north-eastern region of New Brunswick. It is small, generally no more than 20 cm in height, with branching from the base of the plant. It has fleshy leaves, which is typical of many of the plants that grow in this type of salt influenced habitat.

The Bathurst Aster is unusual among the asters in that it has only a few, small *petals*. In fact, what we think of as aster *petals* are actually tiny individual flowers called *ray flowers*. A cluster of a second kind of tiny flower, called *tube flowers*, forms the centre of the aster blossoms, in what often resembles a small button. The ray flowers of the Bathurst Aster are few and small, which gives the impression that the plant has lost several petals.

The flowers are produced at the end of the summer and are white with a tint of blue. This is an annual aster, growing from seed each summer.

#### Habitat & Survival

The Bathurst Aster is found on gravel strands or adjacent salt marshes, where they are covered daily by tidal waters.

Salt marshes and coastal features have received greater conservation attention over the past decade. Coastal stewardship, such as protecting salt marshes, is an effective measure in conserving this species.

#### Distribution

The Bathurst Aster is a true New Brunswick endemic, being found nowhere else in the world. An endemic is a species that is native to or limited to a given geographic area. It is known from a few sites along the north-eastern coast, near Bathurst. The Bathurst Aster is a variety of the Salt Marsh Aster, which is more widely distributed in Canada and the United States.



NB Distribution of  
Bathurst Aster