

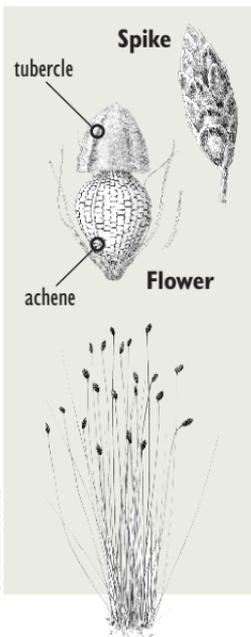


# Tubercled Spike-rush

*Eleocharis tuberculosa*



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## Species Description

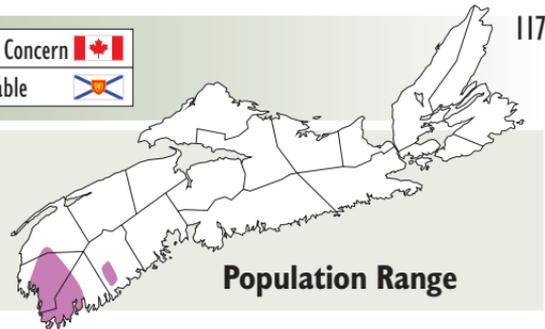
Tubercled Spike-rush has stiffly erect flattened stems that grow in dense clumps and reach heights of 10-40 cm. A distinct oval spike is present at the top of each stem and is composed of numerous tiny flowers covered by brownish scales. Each flower develops into a small one-seeded fruit (achene) with an unusually large knob-like tubercle on its top.

**STATUS**

Special Concern 

Vulnerable 

Occurs on the shorelines of seven lakes in southwestern Nova Scotia.



**Population Range**

117

## Habitat

Found on sandy or stony lakeshores and gravel bars, on the fringes of peat layers, and on the edges of peaty wetlands bordering lakes. It also occurs on floating peat mats.



© PAT HUDSON



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Tubercled Spike-rush is typically found on lakeshores and peat rich areas that receive full sunlight. Look for its flowers from June to September.

## Interesting Points

- ACPF are able to survive in harsh environmental conditions (flooding, ice scouring), that other plant species find difficult to tolerate.
- *Eleocharis* means "graceful marsh dweller".



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## Similar Species

There are at least 12 other spikerush species in NS. They are typically distinguished by comparison of the fully mature achene, which requires a hand lens for viewing. The most similar to Tubercled Spike-rush include *Eleocharis tenuis*, *E. elliptica* and *E. obtusa*.

Tubercled Spike-rush has stiffly erect stems that arise from the same base. The main distinguishing feature is its very large tubercle when compared to other species.



© SEAN BLANEY

*Eleocharis obtusa*



Lawns and rock walls eliminate natural lakeshore vegetation and encourage nutrient run-off.

## How You Can Help 5 of 13

Carefully consider the placement and type of dock because all have some impact on lakeshore habitat. Docks that minimize impacts to the shoreline and lake bottom such as floating or pipe docks are recommended. Contact NS Environment to see if a permit is required. Consider using public access boat launches rather than creating one on your property since they require extensive shoreline modification and promote run-off.

## Threats to Survival

- Shoreline and shrub-zone alterations can destroy or degrade suitable habitat (see examples on page 114).
- Nutrient run-off (from agriculture operations, septic tanks, land clearing, lawns, roads) can increase lake nutrient levels which encourages the growth of common, weedy plants and algal blooms.



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Plant ID on Great Pubnico Lk

## Contacts, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

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

**Info:** [www.speciesatrisk.ca/coastalplainflora](http://www.speciesatrisk.ca/coastalplainflora), [www.speciesatrisk.ca/stewardshipguide](http://www.speciesatrisk.ca/stewardshipguide)

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

**Stewardship:** Nova Scotia Nature Trust: [nature@nsnt.ca](mailto:nature@nsnt.ca), MTRI: [info@merseytobeatic.ca](mailto:info@merseytobeatic.ca)