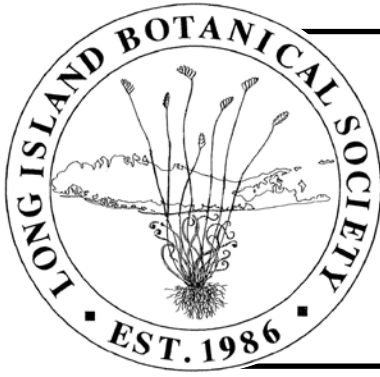




Long Island Botanical Society Newsletter

Announcing the publication of: *Atlas of the Flora of Long Island, New York*

Eric E. Lamont

President, Long Island Botanical Society

It has taken 40 years to complete the task of preparing and publishing *Atlas of the Flora of Long Island, New York* (Fig. 1) and at long last, it was issued in August 2026 as volume 30 of *Memoirs of the Torrey Botanical Society*, published in association with the Long Island Botanical Society. This achievement fulfills a goal set by LIBS members at the founding of the society in 1986. At the time, the LIBS Flora Committee (Table 1) had just been formed and set the goal of publishing an *Atlas* of Long Island's flora as its number one priority. Monthly meetings were held and work began. Voucher specimens were collected, herbaria were visited, field observations were recorded, and in 2005 the committee produced a first draft of the *Atlas* (*Draft Atlas of the Vascular Plants of Long Island, New York*) and provided copies to local botanists and naturalists for review. The first draft forms the foundation of the current *Atlas*. During the early years, a group of 12 individuals propelled the committee, including Joseph M. Beitel, Orland J. "Skip" Blanchard, Steven E. Clements, Barbara H. Conolly, Carol K. Johnston, Rich Kelly, Eric E. Lamont, Allan J. Lindberg, Lois Lindberg, Grace E. "Betty" Lotowycz, Christopher R. Mangels, and Robert E. Zaremba.

In 2008, the untimely passing of Steve Clements was a major blow to the Flora Committee. Steve had chaired the committee for several years and was the major force behind producing the *Draft Atlas*. But after many difficulties and delays, the *Atlas* has been published! This article provides information on

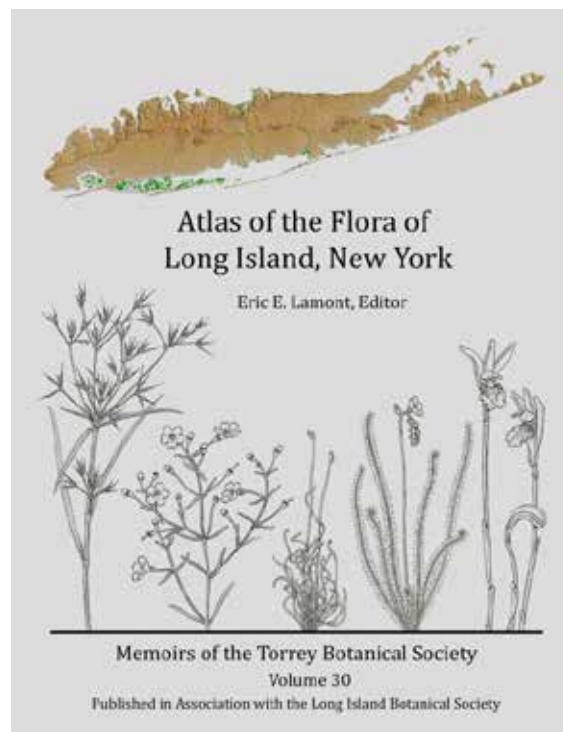


Figure 1. Front cover of *Atlas of the Flora of Long Island, New York*. Illustrations of rare Long Island plants by Bobbi Angell. Digital elevation map of Long Island prepared by Gilbert Hanson, Glenn Richard, and John Potente (prepared in 2010 for the Long Island Botanical Society).

how to order a copy (see page 2) and discusses some of the highlights of the *Atlas*. The *Atlas* provides distributional information for the 2,637 vascular plants spontaneously growing on Long Island (and its coastal islands), a region highly impacted by intensive and extensive urbanization. For each taxon below the rank of genus (*i.e.*, species, subspecies, varieties, and hybrids), a distribution map is provided showing historical and recent records based on herbarium collections and observations. The *Atlas* is useful to amateur and professional botanists, students, conservationists, land use planners, gardeners, historians, naturalists, and nature lovers in general. The *Atlas* tells a story of the history of plants on Long Island, no natural history library should be without a copy.

What information does the *Atlas* provide? The remainder of this article is devoted to a discussion of the different types of information

provided in the *Atlas*. Each distribution map is divided into 24 zones largely based on political boundaries (Fig. 2). The legend includes three symbols (representing pre-1980 vouchers, post-1980 vouchers, and post-1980 observations).

Strictly by the numbers. The vascular flora of Long Island comprises 166 families, 863 genera, and 2,405 species, plus 127 additional infraspecific taxa and 105 hybrids for a total of 2,637 taxa below genus. The largest family is Asteraceae with 256 species, followed by Cyperaceae with 234 species,

(continued on page 3)

Long Island Botanical Society

Founded: 1986 • Incorporated: 1989

The Long Island Botanical Society is dedicated to the promotion of field botany and a greater understanding of the plants that grow wild on Long Island, New York.

Visit the Society's Web site
www.libotanical.org

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Society News

How to order a copy of *Atlas of the Flora of Long Island, New York*

1. Copies can be ordered online via the website of the Torrey Botanical Society (www.torreybotanical.org). From the home page, navigate to "publications" and then "Memoirs of the Torrey Botanical Society." If for any reason you have difficulties, please email Terry Leatherman (Terry.L Leatherman@kwgglobal.com), Senior Association Manager.

\$40 (Hardback, 258 pages)

2. Pick-up a copy at the LIBS 40-year anniversary celebration in Montauk on September 19, 2026 (see p. 7 of this issue).

\$40 cash or check

3. Pick-up a copy at Eric Lamont's home in Riverhead, Suffolk County (717 Sound Shore Road); email Eric to make arrangements (elamont@optonline.net).

\$40 cash or check



LIBS Life Members. One way members support the society is by becoming a Life Member. Such support keeps the society vibrant and able to achieve its goals. Please show your support of LIBS by becoming a Life Member. Current Life Members of LIBS (as of July 2026):

Jim Ash

Susan Avery

Lillian Ball

Kim Berlin

Karen Blumer & Mike Madigan

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Victoria Bustamante

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Michael Feder	Grace E. “Betty” Lotowycz	Stephen M. Young
Steven D. Glenn	Christopher R. Mangels	Robert E. Zaremba

Table 1. Members of the Long Island Botanical Society Flora Committee, 1986-2026.

(*Atlas of the Flora of Long Island continued from page 1*)

and Poaceae with 232 species; the largest genus is *Carex* with 132 species, followed by *Cyperus* with 28 species, and *Juncus* and *Viola*, each with 27 species. One thousand, four hundred and twenty-eight species are native and 955 species are non-native (including waifs); the nativity status of 22 species is unknown. When waifs are subtracted from the tally, 767 species are non-native. The percent of non-native taxa in the flora varies depending on which category of non-native taxa is used. If all non-natives (including waifs) are compared with all natives and taxa of unknown nativity status, the percent of non-native taxa below genus is 38%. If only naturalized taxa are used (waifs excluded), the percent of non-native taxa below genus is 33%.

Scientific names. Taxonomy, nomenclature, and native status essentially follow Werier (2017). In a few cases (*e.g.*, *Carya ovalis*

(Wangenh.) Sarg.), the *Atlas* includes species not recognized by Werier (2017), in such cases the taxonomy and nomenclature of Weakley *et al.* (2024) is followed. In a few other cases (*e.g.*, *Xyris bracteicaulis* L.M. Campb.), the *Atlas* does not include species recognized by Werier (2017), in such cases Werier (2026) is followed. Rarely, a species is listed as native in New York by Werier (2017) but is non-native on Long Island (*e.g.*, *Asimina triloba* (L.) Dunal); in such cases the species is listed as non-native. Circumscription of the five supraordinal groups (lycophytes, pteridophytes, gymnosperms, angiosperm dicots, and angiosperm monocots) follows Weakley *et al.* (2012); within each group, families, genera, and species are arranged alphabetically.

Rare native species. The distribution maps exhibit species rarity in two ways: 1) a species is rare due to having only one or

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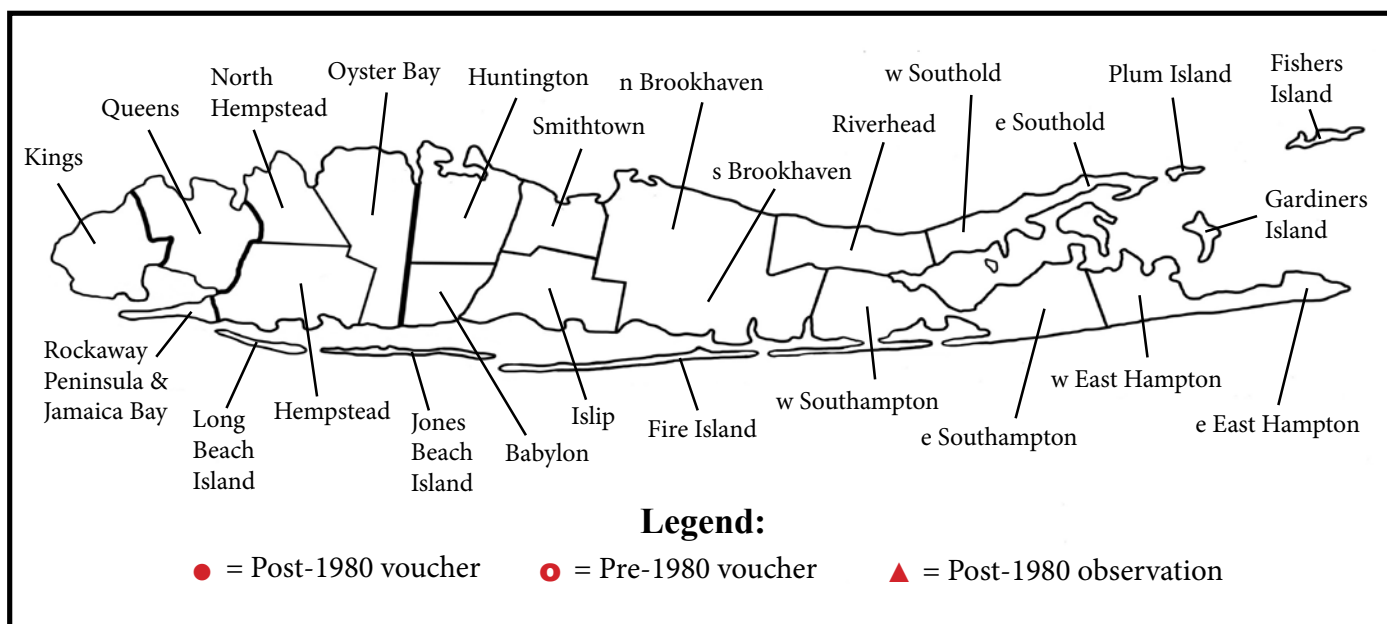


Figure 2. Map of Long Island, New York, delineating the boundaries of the 24 floristic zones.

(Atlas of the Flora of Long Island continued from page 3)

very few records from Long Island; 2) a species is rare due to having very few extant occurrences (post-1980), although it may have been more common historically (pre-1980). *Carex bebbii* (Bebb's sedge) is an example of the first type of rarity and *Triosteum perfoliatum* (perfoliate-leaved horse gentian) is an example of the second (Fig. 3). Several rare and threatened species on Long Island are not listed as rare in New York and receive no legal protection. Long Island needs its own rare plant list and needs to protect its botanical heritage.

Declining native species. Numerous native species once considered common and secure on Long Island are now rare or on the verge of becoming extirpated. Examples include *Ceanothus americanus* (New Jersey tea) and *Orontium aquaticum* (golden club) (Fig. 4).

Extirpation. The number of native plant species considered extirpated on Long Island has not been determined. Listing a species as extirpated contains some uncertainty. Some na-

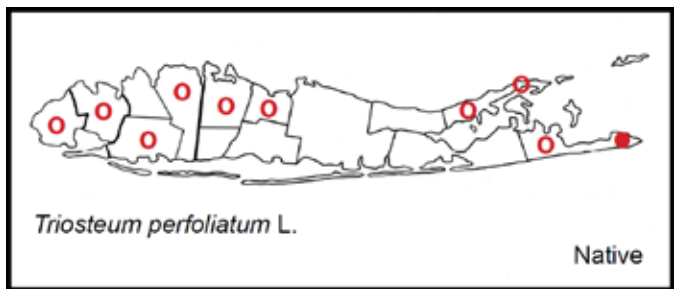
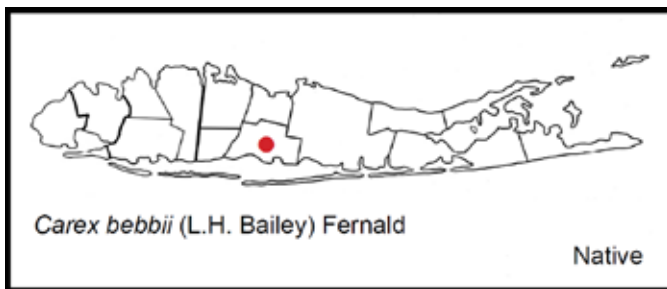


Figure 3. Two examples of how to recognize maps of rare native species. The map of *Carex bebbii* (Bebb's sedge) is an example of a species considered rare due to having only one record from Long Island. The map of *Triosteum perfoliatum* (perfoliate-leaved horse gentian) is an example of a species considered rare due to having very few extant occurrences (post-1980), although it was more common historically (pre-1980).

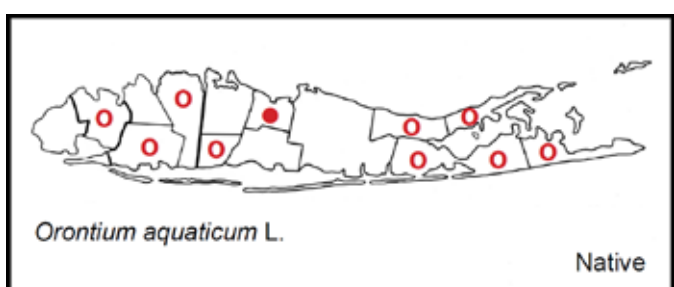
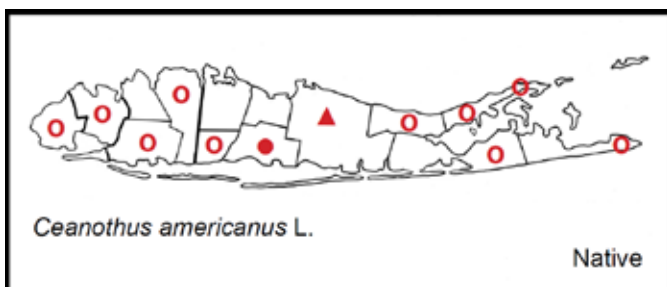


Figure 4. Two examples of declining native species on Long Island: *Ceanothus americanus* (New Jersey tea) and *Orontium aquaticum* (golden club). Once considered relatively common and secure on Long Island, these two species are now rare or on the verge of becoming extirpated.

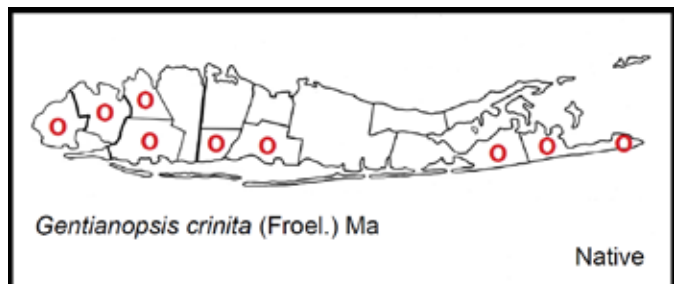
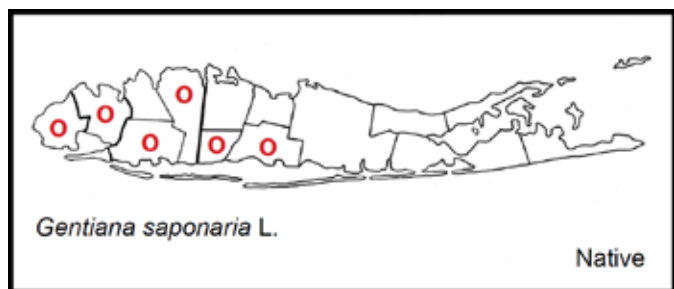
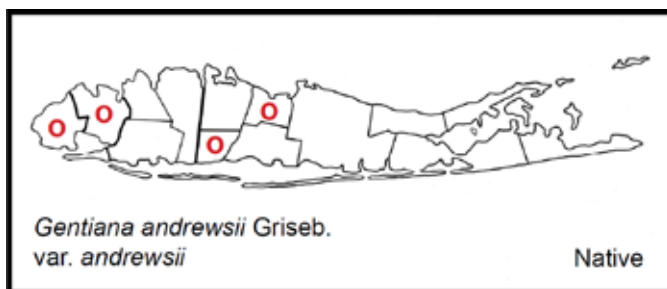


Figure 5. Examples of species currently (2026) considered extirpated on Long Island: *Gentiana andrewsii* var. *andrewsii*, (Andrew's bottle gentian), *G. clausa* (meadow bottle gentian), *G. saponaria* (soapwort gentian), and *Gentianopsis crinita* (common fringed gentian).

tive species previously considered extirpated (not observed in more than 60 years) have subsequently been found to be extant (e.g., *Corallorhiza odontorhiza*, autumn coralroot). Species not recorded on Long Island in more than 100 years are likely extirpated, especially those that were known from very few localities. Among the many plant species considered extirpated on Long Island are four gentians (Fig. 5).

Changes in plant distribution patterns. Several plant species with southern geographic affinities have recently (post-1980) colonized Long Island (Fig. 6). Species with northern affinities (Fig. 6) have declined to a greater extent than those with southern affinities, suggesting a potential role of climate change.

Recent arrivals. The number of plant species new to Long Island has significantly increased the last few decades. Many of the new introductions are non-native species, some are escapes from cultivation and some are waifs. One species in particular is note-

worthy (Fig. 7). *Epipactis helleborine* (helleborine, weed orchid) is Long Island's only non-native orchid and is by far the most common orchid on the island. In 1962, Roy Latham collected the first voucher of *E. helleborine* from Long Island at Moores Woods, Greenport, Suffolk County. During the last 60 years, *E. helleborine* has been rapidly colonizing Long Island in both disturbed and native sites, where it can appear to be a native species.

Pre-1980 vs. post-1980 records of invasive species. There are no pre-1980 records of *Persicaria perfoliata* (mile-a-minute) from Long Island, the first collection dates to 1998. The distribution map of *P. perfoliata* reveals how quickly this invasive species colonized the island (Fig. 8). The maps of other invasive species are similar. Some maps reveal an invasive species in the midst of colonization whereby it first colonizes western Long Island and then spreads eastward.

Waifs. Waifs are non-native plants that either are strays from cultivation or were somehow introduced into the flora but do not persist. The *Atlas* includes waifs as defined and described

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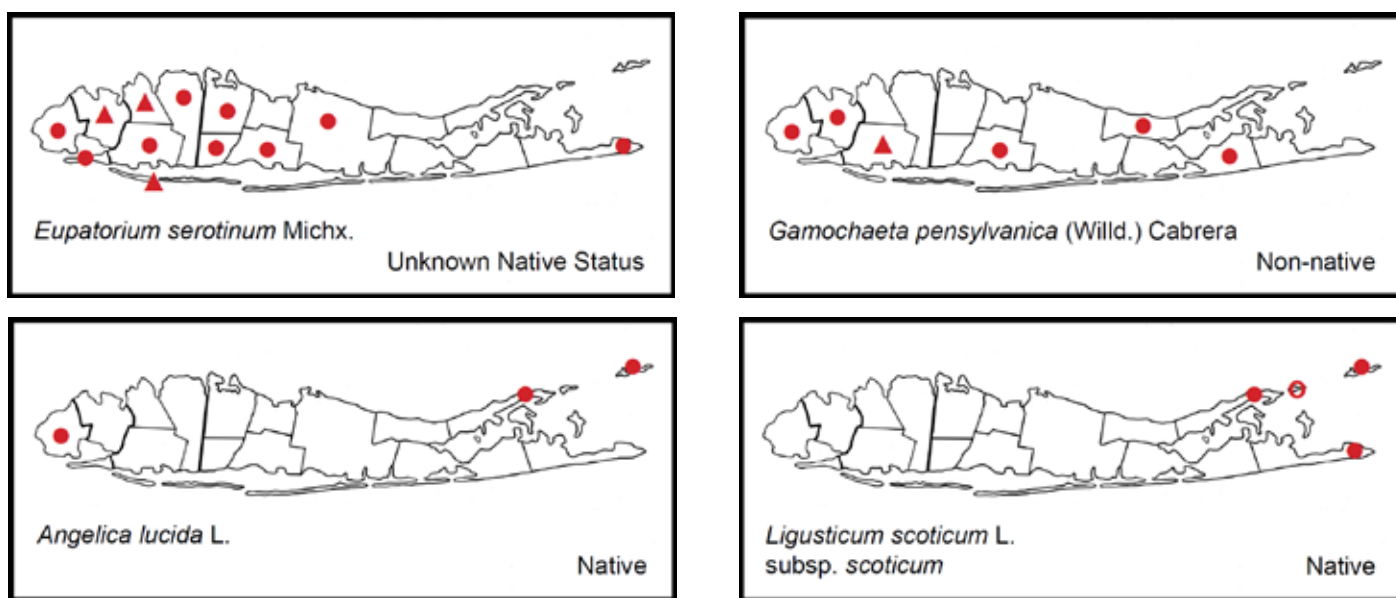


Figure 6. Examples of changes in plant distribution patterns. *Eupatorium serotinum* (late thoroughwort) and *Gamochaeta pensylvanica* (Pennsylvania cudweed) are species with southern geographic affinities and have recently (post-1980) colonized Long Island. *Angelica lucida* (sea-coast angelica) and *Ligusticum scoticum* subsp. *scoticum* (Scotch lovage) are species with northern affinities and both have significantly declined on Long Island and may be extirpated.

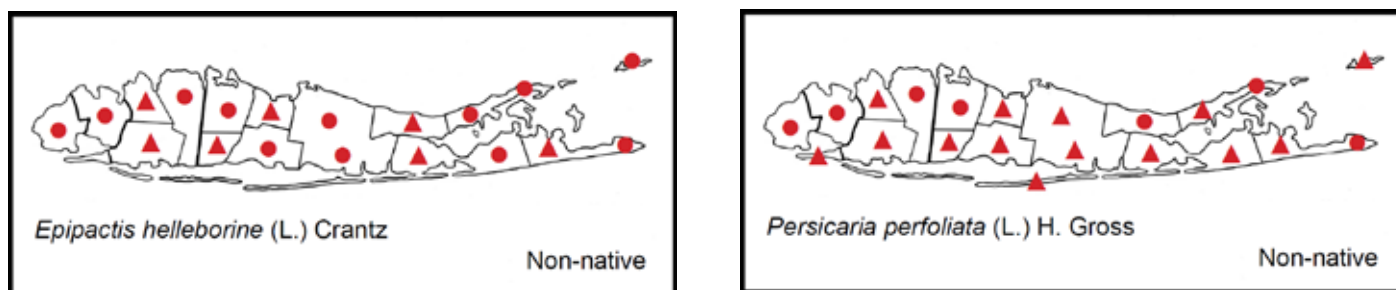


Figure 7. Map showing the post-1980 distribution of *Epipactis helleborine* (helleborine, weed orchid) on Long Island. This non-native orchid was first collected on Long Island by Roy Latham in 1962.

Figure 8. Map showing the post-1980 distribution of *Persicaria perfoliata* (mile-a-minute) on Long Island. This non-native species was first recorded on Long Island in 1998.

(*Atlas of the Flora of Long Island continued from page 5*)

by Werier (2017). All waifs are mapped and a list of 188 waifs recorded from Long Island is presented in Appendix 1.

Maps reveal Long Island's most common species. A list of Long Island's most common trees can easily be compiled from the distribution maps. Lists of other plant groups also can be compiled (*eg.*, most common native wildflowers, most common non-native species, most common native grasses, and more).

Maps can confirm habitat preference. Sometimes, distribution maps confirm the specific habitats required by rare species. For example, *Amaranthus pumilus* (seabeach amaranth;

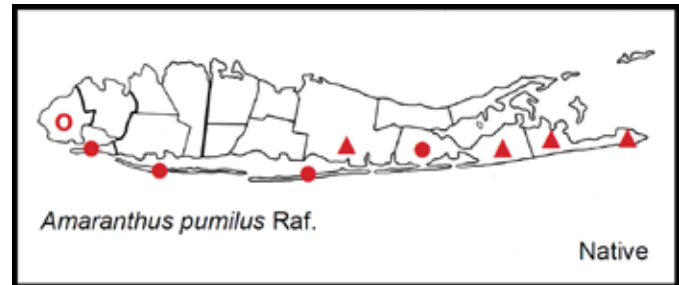
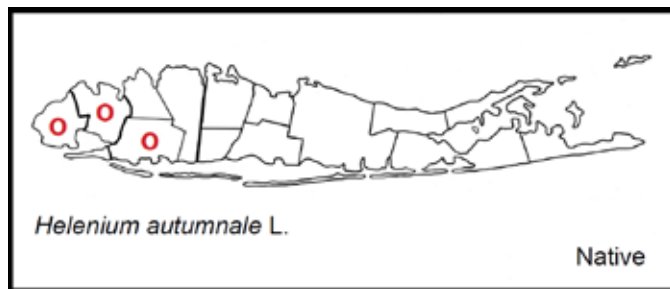


Figure 9. Map showing the distribution of *Amaranthus pumilus* (seabeach amaranth) on Long Island. This rare plant is federally listed as threatened and occurs on Long Island's barrier islands and on sandy beaches of the south shore.

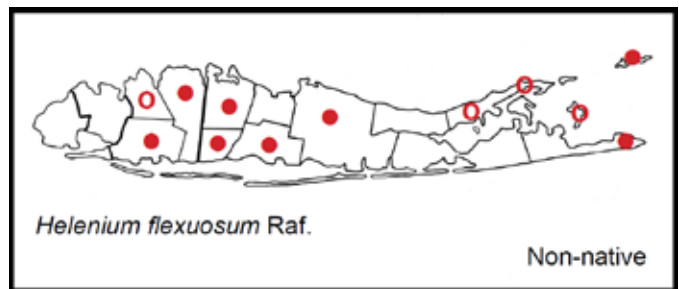


Figure 10. Distribution maps of native *Helenium autumnale* (common sneezeweed) and non-native *H. flexuosum* (purple-headed sneezeweed), two species that superficially resemble each other. Today, if a sneezeweed is encountered on Long Island it is likely the non-native species, *H. flexuosum*.

federally listed as threatened) occurs on Long Island's barrier islands and on sandy beaches of the south shore (Fig. 9).

Maps can be useful in distinguishing similar species. Sometimes, distribution maps can be helpful in determining the identity of a species. Some similar looking species on Long Island can be separated by their nativity status. For example, two species of sneezeweed are often confused with each other because they superficially resemble each other. However, distribution maps reveal that native *Helenium autumnale* (common sneezeweed) was once rare on western Long Island but has not been recently observed (post-1980) and is probably extirpated; whereas, non-native *H. flexuosum* (purple-headed sneezeweed) is extant on the island and is relatively common (Fig. 10).

Conclusion. The *Atlas* not only provides information on the past status of Long Island plants, it provides an opportunity to build on the baseline of data and obtain an even greater understanding of the plants that grow wild on Long Island. The *Atlas* is not complete and LIBS members are needed to go out in the field and add new records. The incompleteness of the *Atlas* was recently revealed on July 18, 2026 on a field trip to Riverhead, Suffolk County, led by David Werier. The locality was south of the Peconic River, in western Town of Southampton. In just four hours, six new records were found for western Town of Southampton (not in the *Atlas*): *Dichanthelium bicknellii* (Bicknell's rosette grass), *Dichanthelium commonsianum* (Commons' rosette grass), *Dichanthelium mattamuskeetense* (Mattamuskeet

rosette grass), *Paspalum setaceum* var. *setaceum* (thin bead grass), *Rubus bifrons* (Himalayan blackberry), and *Utricularia geminis-capae* (hidden-fruited bladderwort). Additionally, in June 2026 I collected an individual of *Knautia arvensis* (bluebuttons) spontaneously growing in Northville, Suffolk County; a new record for Long Island (not in the *Atlas*) and reported by David Werier (personal communication) to be spreading throughout New York State. Vicki Bustamante and colleagues recently added two new records to the flora of Long Island (*Populus ×rouleauiana*, Rouleau's aspen and *Reynoutria ×bohemica*, Bohemian knotweed) and one from Fishers Island (*Cyrtomium fortune*, Asian netvein hollyfern).

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FIELD TRIPS AND LIBS 40-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

(October 24 continued from back cover)

Dress for the weather and please bring a beverage, snacks or lunch, sunscreen, and insect repellent. Directions from the East: Long Island Expressway to Exit 41 North – NY-106/107 N. Bear left where the two roads split to stay on Route 107N, continue for approx. 7½ miles into Glen Cove. Where Rte. 107 ends at the Glen Cove Fire Dept, turn right onto Brewster St. Continue for ½ mile, turn left onto Dosoris Lane. Go ¾ mile, turn left on New Woods Rd. and take it to the end. Turn right onto Crescent Beach Road, Welwyn Preserve is the first driveway on the right. Continue along the driveway to the main parking lot. From the West: Long Island Expressway to Exit 39 North – Glen Cove Road. After 4 miles, Glen Cove Rd. merges with Route 107N. Continue north on Rte. 107 into Glen Cove and follow the above directions.

September 19, 2026 (Saturday), Noon

LIBS 40-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Location: Third House Nature Center, Montauk, Suffolk County

Please join the celebration of 40 years of LIBS, at the historic Third House Nature Center in Montauk. The event begins at noon with a welcome and social time, immediately followed by a leisurely nature walk led by Vicki Bustamante. Lunch will be catered. The event will end with a members meeting that will discuss, among other items, the future of LIBS.

In order to properly prepare for this event, please email Eric Lamont (elamont@optonline.net) if you are interested in attending.

LIBS 40-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Location: Third House Nature Center, Montauk, Suffolk County

September 19, 2026 (Saturday), Noon



Third House, Montauk, NY. Montauk's first Third House was built in 1747 but burned down, then was rebuilt in 1806. It has had many owners and uses in its 279 years, beginning as a home for the keepers of cattle grazing each summer on Montauk's pastureland. Led by Col. Theodore Roosevelt, veterans of the Spanish-American War rested and recuperated at nearby Camp Wikoff in 1898. Roosevelt wrote about Montauk's extensive grasslands: "Galloping over the open rolling country through the cool fall evenings made us feel we were out on the great western plains." In 1992, Third House Nature Center was established, dedicated to environmental education and advocacy; providing historical, cultural, and educational programs relating the history of Montauk, NY. Photo by Emily Havlik.

FIELD TRIPS AND LIBS 40-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

September 26, 2026 (Saturday), 10am to 3pm

Montauk Outer Beach, Suffolk County

Trip Leader: Vicki Bustamante

Joint trip with NYFA

Explore a botanical odyssey in some of Montauk's lesser known and rare maritime communities—an otherworldly landscape of stunted, wind-shaped, salt-sprayed plants. We'll be trekking off-trail through a richly woven mosaic of maritime heathlands, grasslands, shrublands, forests, and dunes. Some expected plant highlights are *Schizachyrium littorale*, *Aristida tuberculosa*, *Mononeuria caroliniana*, *Artemisia campestris* subsp. *caudata*, *Dichanthelium commonsianum*, *Pityopsis falcata*, *Hudsonia tomentosa*, *Carex tosa*, *Viburnum dentatum* var. *venosum*, *Lechea maritima*, and *Cyperus grayi*, along with large populations of reindeer lichen, *Cladonia rangiferina*.

Bring water, lunch and/or snacks, and sunscreen. Ticks are a special concern, come prepared – boots, tick spray, tick clothing, gators. Register with NYFA (email: montauk@nyflora.org) and additional details regarding the trip will be sent in your confirmation email.

October 24, 2026 (Saturday), 10am

(rain date Sunday, October 25)

An Autumn Walk Through Welwyn, Nassau County

Trip Leaders: Al Lindberg and Lois Lindberg

(email: ajlindberg@optimum.net, phone: 516-317-8837)

Welwyn Preserve (100 Crescent Beach Road, Glen Cove, NY 11542), at over 200 acres, consists of several diverse habitats – mature oak woods, a tuliptree swamp forest, small freshwater streams running into the saltmarsh, and a sandy beach on Long Island Sound, all with associated flora. Despite the incursion of invasives, we will also search for an assortment of Long Island rarities, including striped maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*), Ohio buckeye (*Aesculus glabra*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) and American bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*). The former Pratt Mansion is now home to the Holocaust Memorial & Tolerance Center; an adjoining formal garden has been restored as a Children's Memorial Garden.

(continued inside on page 7)