



# Rare Plants in the Narrow River Watershed

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# Four rare plants in the Narrow River Watershed

☛ *Sea Lavender*

☛ *Eelgrass*

☛ *Sedge Grass*

☛ *Sabatia Stellaris*



# Sea Lavender

## *Limonium carolinianum*



- ☞ This plant grows in coastal salt marshes.
- ☞ When it is in bloom, in August, its tiny blossoms can color the marsh a pale misty lavender.
- ☞ Due to over harvesting for dried arrangements, it is now protected.
- ☞ It is most commonly found in the lower area of the watershed from the Sprague Bridge to the Narragansett Bay.



# Eelgrass

## *Zostera Marina*

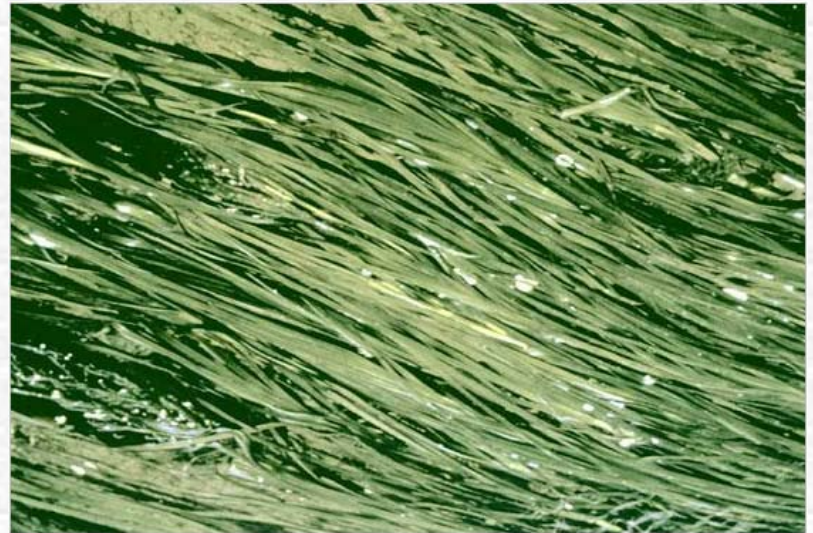
- Eel grass is a plant (often called sea grass) that lives underwater, and is found in quiet, shallow bays and estuaries.
- It has infrequent occurrences south and north of Middlebridge as well as patches in Pettaquamscutt Cove.
- Like all plants, eel grass produces its own food, using the energy of the sun. Sea grasses provide an important habitat for many small sea creatures, fish, and even other plants.





- Common depth distribution is 3-25 feet
- Poor water clarity severely impacts remaining eelgrass beds
- Most eelgrass death is due to nutrient discharge from coastal septic systems, fertilizer runoff from lawns and discharges from wastewater treatment facilities.

- The largest remaining meadow in Narragansett Bay is on the eastern shore of Jamestown.
- It covers over 25 acres.
- Eelgrass guard against shoreline erosion and filters pollutants.





# Sedge Grass

## Carex ~ Cyperaceae



- There are over 2000 species of grass-like perennial herbs.
- Sedges can be distinguished from grasses by their solid, 3-angled flower stems (grasses have round, hollow flower stems).
- Sedge grasses form dense, compact clumps.
- DEM has noted that 2 types of sedge grass are regionally rare (< 20 occurrences in NE) in the NRW – Walter's Sedge and Collin's Sedge.



- Collin's Sedge was completely extirpated from Connecticut's wetlands in 2004 leaving NRW one of the last remaining areas for this species in NE.
- Collin's Sedge is listed as a state historical plant.
- Other species of sedge grass in NRW

- Prickly Bog Sedge – *Endangered*
- Thicket Sedge
- Foxtail Sedge
- Olney Sedge



**Sea Pink**  
*Sabatia Stellaris*





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- An upright annual with fibrous roots growing as one main stem with branches borne on the upper half of the stem.
- *Sabatia Stellaris*, aka Rose of Plymouth, has a moderate salt water tolerance and lives in moist to wet soils.
- Less than 10 occurrences in the NE area. 4 of the 10 are in RI. NRW boasts 2 different occurrences.
- The flower color is pink or whitish-pink with a yellow eye bordered by a red jagged line.

# Invasive Species

Beware when you see advertisements that say:

**PEST FREE!**      *RAPID GROWING!*  
***WILL GROW ANYWHERE!***

For Example:

*Purple Loosestrife*

*Beach Rose*

*Honeysuckle*

*Bittersweet*

*Burning Bush*

*Japanese Barberry*

*Porcelain Berry*

*White Poplar*

See the extensive list on page 21 in the Narrow  
River Handbook!

# There are many organizations helping to save and protect plants in their natural habitat

- ☛ **NEPCOP** – *New England Plant Conservation Program*
  - ☛ **NHP** – *RI Natural Heritage Program*
  - ☛ **The Nature Conservatory**
  - ☛ **Wild Plant Society of RI**
  - ☛ **DEM** – *Department of Environmental Management*
- ☛ They develop lists of species they think are endangered or threatened.
  - ☛ Conduct surveys to monitor and locate rare plants.
  - ☛ Help to reintroduce endangered plants.