SPECIAL PLANTS OF NEW JERSEY

factsheet

Estuary Beggar-Ticks

NJ Natural Heritage Program Data: August 2008

Current and Historically Documented Records

Scientific Name: *Bidens bidentoides*

State-listed: None

Federally-listed: None

State Conservation Rank: S2

Global Conservation Rank: G3G4

Description/Identification Tips: Annual herb up to 1 m tall in the aster family (Asteraceae). Leaves opposite, narrowly oval, up to 18 cm long, sharp-pointed and toothed. Yellow flowers on the main and axillary shoots; outer ray flowers absent or very small, central disk 5-12 mm wide with 7-30 flowers.

Range: DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA.

Best Time to See: Blooms August through October.

Habitat: Fresh to brackish portions of tidal rivers in estuaries on firm substrates consisting of sands, gravels, or mud-covered sands and gravels. Often occurs in areas that have been disturbed by humans like road banks and places where concrete slabs were scattered to prevent erosion.

Management: The upland-wetland transition area and the intertidal zone of fresh to brackish rivers should be protected from extreme human disturbances such as dumping dredge spoil, adding landfill, building dikes, and bulkheading. Periodic visits to known populations should be made to record fluctuations in population size and searches for new populations should be conducted.

Needs: Determine if depleted sites can be restored with or without human intervention.

Comments: The height of Estuary Beggar-Ticks is very variable. This variation is likely related to the location of the plant along an intertidal zone, with plants growing lower in the zone becoming dwarfed.

References: Ferren and Schuyler 1980; Schuyler 1990; Clemants and Gracie 2006; NatureServe 2010; USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database 2011.

Ecological Interactions

* Unlike other *Bidens* species, the seeds of Estuary Beggar-Ticks, while still dispersed by hooking into animal fur and feathers, are specialized for short-distance transport within the intertidal zone rather than long-distance transport far from the parent plant. Such short-distance dispersal could prevent this species from recolonizing habitat patches in which it has been lost.