



Rare Plants of New Hampshire

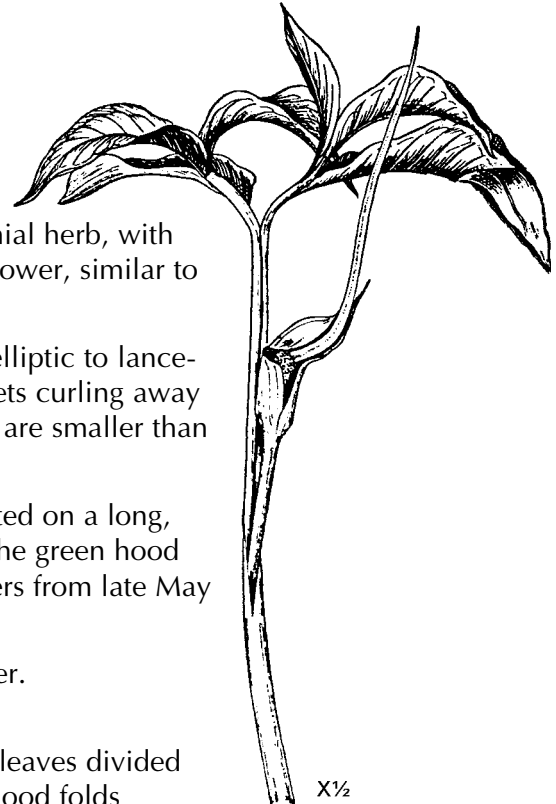
Green Dragon, Dragon Root

Arisaema dracontium (L.) Schott
Arum family (Araceae)

What Does It Look Like?

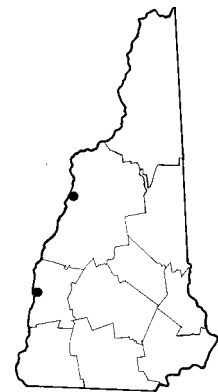
This woodland plant is a 40-100 cm (16-40 inches) tall perennial herb, with one (sometimes two) compound leaves and a single unusual flower, similar to jack-in-the-pulpit.

- Leaves:** Usually a single compound leaf, with 7-13 elliptic to lance-shaped (but broader above the middle) leaflets curling away from the central leaf stalk. The outer leaflets are smaller than the central ones.
- Flower:** The individual flowers are tiny and are situated on a long, slender, fleshy spike that protrudes beyond the green hood approximately 5-10 cm (2-4 inches). It flowers from late May to June.
- Fruit:** A cluster of orange-red berries in late summer.
- Similar species:** Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) has leaves divided into only three leaflets and the large, loose hood folds completely over a small spike that is club shaped, not pointed. These closely related plants are sometimes seen growing together.



Where Is It Found?

- Habitat:** Across its range, green dragon grows in low woods and along streams. In New Hampshire, it has been found exclusively in silver maple floodplain forests.
- Associated species:** Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), fringed loosestrife (*Lysimachia ciliata*), sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), stinging nettles (*Urtica dioica*), Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*), white grass (*Leersia virginica*).
- Distribution:** Quebec to Minnesota south to Texas and Florida.



Green Dragon in New Hampshire

- Historic Locations
● Verified since 1980



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What Is Its Status?

Conservation

status: Populations of green dragon are more secure farther south, but it is critically imperiled here in New Hampshire where it is at the northern edge of its range. It is state listed as endangered due to extreme rarity (only 2 occurrences for the state have been confirmed since 1980).

Management: Green dragon is presently known in New Hampshire only from the Connecticut River valley. As a plant that is adapted to forested floodplain habitats, it may not respond well to significant canopy removals and soil disturbance. Green dragon requires the natural flood regimes associated with silver maple floodplain forests.

What Should You Do If You Find This Plant?

Please report sightings of this or other rare species to the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory. Documentation should include: (1) location of the sighting on USGS topographic map or road map, with written directions for relocating the plant; (2) a photo of the plant; and (3) descriptive information including how many plants there are, whether any plants are flowering or fruiting, and comments about the surrounding vegetation. Information may be sent to NHNHI/DRED, PO Box 1856, Concord, NH 03302-1856. If you have any questions, please call the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory Program at (603) 271-3623.

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