

Saussurea nuda (Dwarf Saw-wort)

Conservation Status Rank Summary

Date Published: August 14, 2026

For details on assessment and ranking methodology, see: [Conservation Status Assessment Definitions, Process, Rank Factors, and Calculation of State Ranks for Montana Species](#)

Rarity and Trends

Rank Factor	Date Assessed	Value Factor Rating	Score	Data Source	Comments
Rarity					
Range Extent	2025-12-02	$\frac{3870.7 \text{ km}^2}{D = 1,000-5,000 \text{ km}^2}$	2.360	MTNHP Range Maps	None
Area of Occupancy	2025-12-02	$\frac{11 \mid 4\text{km}^2 \text{ cells}}{D = 6-25 \text{ 4-km}^2 \text{ grid cells}}$	2.060	MTNHP databases	Of the approximate 96,004 2km x 2km grid cells that cover Montana, 11 cells contain observations of the species.
Number of Occurrences	2025-12-02	$\frac{11}{B = 6 - 20}$	1.380	MTNHP Databases/ Expert Opinion	Current observations group into approximately 11 occurrences
Population Size	2025-12-02	$\frac{*}{DE = 1000 - 10,000 \text{ individuals}}$	[2.360, 3.140]	MTNHP databases/ Expert Opinion	Good population data are lacking for most occurrences. One occurrence was documented with 100-500 plants, a few others were described as "locally common" or "large colonies". Most others appear to be small with less than 100 plants. The total population size in MT is likely in the low thousands.
# of Occurrences in Good Condition	2025-12-02	$\frac{*}{C = \text{Few (4-12) occurrences with excellent or good viability or ecological integrity}}$	2.200	MTNHP databases/ Expert Opinion	At least a few occurrences appear to have good viability.
% of Area Occupied in Good Condition			-		Factor not used in ranking.
Environmental Specificity	2025-03-01	$\frac{\text{Narrow}}{B = \text{Narrow; specialist or community with key requirements common}}$	-	Expert Opinion	Factor not used in ranking. Assessed by Scott Mincemoyer
Rarity is calculated by averaging weighted factor scores: $((2.36 \times 1) + (2.06 \times 2) + (1.38 \times 1) + ([2.36, 3.14] \times 2) + (2.20 \times 2)) / 8 = [2.12, 2.32]$					
Trends					
Short-term Trend	2025-12-02	$\frac{*}{FG = \text{Decline of 30\% to relatively stable}}$	[-0.070, 0.000]	Expert Opinion	Trend data are lacking though the species' habitat is intact and stable so populations have likely remained relatively stable.

Long-term Trend	2025-12-02	* FG = Decline of 30% to relatively stable	[-0.070, 0.000]	Expert Opinion	Trend data are lacking though the species' habitat is intact and stable so populations have likely remained relatively stable.
Trends score is calculated by summing weighted short and long-term trend scores: $([-0.07, 0.00] \times 2) + ([-0.07, 0.00] \times 1) = [-0.21, 0.00]$					

*Values may be absent if not precisely estimated; factors may still be assessed for rank if a Factor Rating can be assigned.

Threats

Rank Factor	Date Assessed	Value Factor Rating	Score	Data Source	Comments
Threats					
Overall Threat Impact			-		Factor not used in ranking.
Intrinsic Vulnerability	2025-03-01	Moderately vulnerable B = Moderately vulnerable	2.750	Expert Opinion	Assessed by Scott Mincemoyer
Threat score is calculated from Overall Threat Impact when available or Intrinsic Vulnerability if not: (2.75) = 2.75					

Individual Threats Data

Threat Category	Date Assessed	Impact Score	Scope	Severity	Immediacy	Comments
No individual threats data used in this rank						

Conservation Status Rank Calculation

Raw score

Rarity: $([2.12, 2.32] \times 70\%) + \text{Threats: } (2.75 \times 30\%) + \text{Trends: } ([-0.21, 0.00]) = [2.10, 2.45]$

Calculated Rank: S2

Accepted Rank	S2S3
Author(s)	Scott Mincemoyer
Rank Approved By	Andrea Pipp
State Rank Reason	<i>Saussurea nuda</i> is restricted to alpine habitat within the Bob Marshall Wilderness and mountains along the Rocky Mountain Front in Montana. Occurrences are scattered and mostly small in size. The small populations make <i>Saussurea nuda</i> vulnerable to extirpation in the state. Surveys that bring forth current data on distributions, population counts and viability, habitat conditions, and threats are greatly needed. Monitoring is also necessary to assess population trends.

Supplementary Information

Montana Natural Heritage Program. 2021. Conservation Status Assessment Definitions, Process, Rank Factors, and Calculation of State Ranks for Montana Species. 18 p.

https://mtnhp.mt.gov/docs/Montana_State_Rank_Criteria_20211201.pdf

Montana Field Guide Species Account:

<https://fieldguide.mt.gov/speciesDetail.aspx?elcode=PDAST8B0F0>

Predicted Suitable Habitat Model:

<https://mtnhp.mt.gov/resources/models/?elcode=PDAST8B0F0>

Information Needs

Information needs are assessed by considering the availability of factors used to assess species status as well as the quality of these assessments. Current information availability and quality to inform Conservation Status Rank for this species are highlighted.

Rank Factor	Assessment Category	Value	Criteria
General Status	Status Quality	Adequate	Calculated rank has low uncertainty and is represented by a single rank (e.g. S3); accepted rank may be adjusted to a range rank (e.g. S2S3)
		Poor	Rank assessed as SU or calculated rank has notable uncertainty and corresponds to a range rank with 2 or more values (e.g. S2?, S1S3, or S4S5)
Rarity	Range Quality	Adequate	Range polygon adequately represents area of probable occupancy and does not include substantial unoccupied areas; range may be adequately defined and still include areas of unsuitable habitat (e.g. mountain ranges for plains species)
		Marginal	Range polygon defined, but may include or exclude notable areas where the species may or may not occur on the landscape
		Poor	Range polygon not defined
	Habitat Quality	Adequate	Species-habitat relationship is well-defined (e.g. relevant literature or robust habitat model available)
		Marginal	Understanding of species-habitat relationship is adequate among some but not all habitats (e.g. literature covers similar habitats outside of Montana or habitat model performance is only somewhat adequate)
		Poor	Species-habitat relationship is not well understood
Threats	Threat Quality	Adequate	Threat Impact is a single value (including "Unthreatened")
		Marginal	Threat Impact assessed at more than one value (e.g. "High - Medium")
		Poor	Threat Impact is Unknown but Intrinsic Vulnerability is assessed
		Unknown	Threat Impact is Unknown and Intrinsic Vulnerability is not assessed
Trends	Recency	Current	Short-term Trend assessment date less than 10 years old
		Out of Date but Adequate	Short-term Trend assessment date is more than 10 years old or Unknown, but species is Unthreatened
		Out of Date	Short-term Trend assessment date more than 10 years old
		Not Available	Short-term Trend data are not available
	Trend Quality	Sufficient	Short-term Trend assessed at a single value or multiple values with a minimum trend greater than -10% (stable or increasing)
		Unknown but Sufficient	Short-term Trend is Unknown, but species is Unthreatened
		Poor	Short-term Trend is less than -10% (in decline) with two or more values selected
		Unknown	Short-term Trend is Unknown

Summary of Information Availability

Summary of Information Needs

Surveys that bring forth current data on distributions, population counts and viability, habitat conditions, and threats are needed. Monitoring is necessary to assess population trends.

Additional Threat Details

The table below contains the complete threats assessment for this species. While the Conservation Status Rank Calculation is based on cumulative, broadly categorized (Level 1) threats data, threats are assessed and tracked for more specifically categorized (Level 2) threats when available.

Threat Category	Date Assessed	Assessed By	Data Source	Scope	Severity	Immediacy	Comments
Climate Change & Severe Weather - 11	2025-12-02	S. Mincemoyer	Expert Opinion	Large	Moderate-Slight	Unknown	Climate change including increased temperatures, decreased snowpacks, and increases in the frequency and severity of drought may impact populations.