



Lowbush Blueberry Fact Sheet

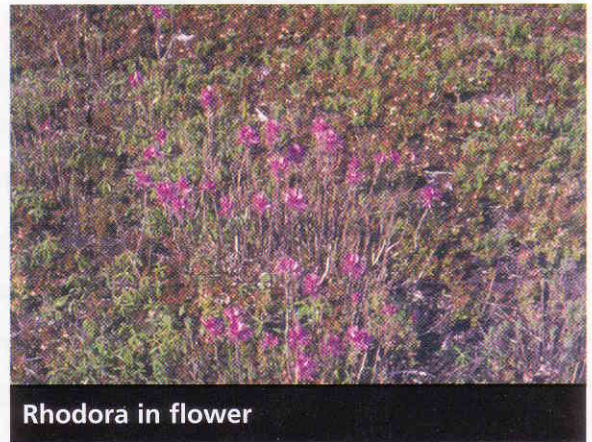
Rhodora

Rhododendron canadense (L.) Torr.

Other name: Canadian rhodora

Description

Rhodora is a branched, woody shrub which grows up to 1 m in height. It is one of the first plants to flower in the spring at which time it has no, or few leaves. Flowers usually occur in groups of 2-3 and are rose-purple in colour. A white flowered form has been collected in Kings County. Individual flowers are less than 2 cm wide and 2-lipped. The upper lip is 3-lobed while the lower is divided into two narrow petals. Leaves are alternate, grey-green, dull, rough, oblong, and thin. The underside of the leaves is covered with short rust coloured hairs. Stems are erect, smooth and grey in colour. Rhodora has a fibrous root system which produces new shoots.



Rhodora in flower

Economic Importance

Rhodora is very common throughout its range which extends from Newfoundland to Quebec, south to New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and is one of our dominant spring-flowering shrubs. Rhodora prefers swamps, bogs, rocky barrens, and poorly drained soils. It is no longer a serious weed problem in blueberry fields. When not in flower, it is sometimes confused with sheep laurel, but its leaves are usually a lighter green.



Rhodora

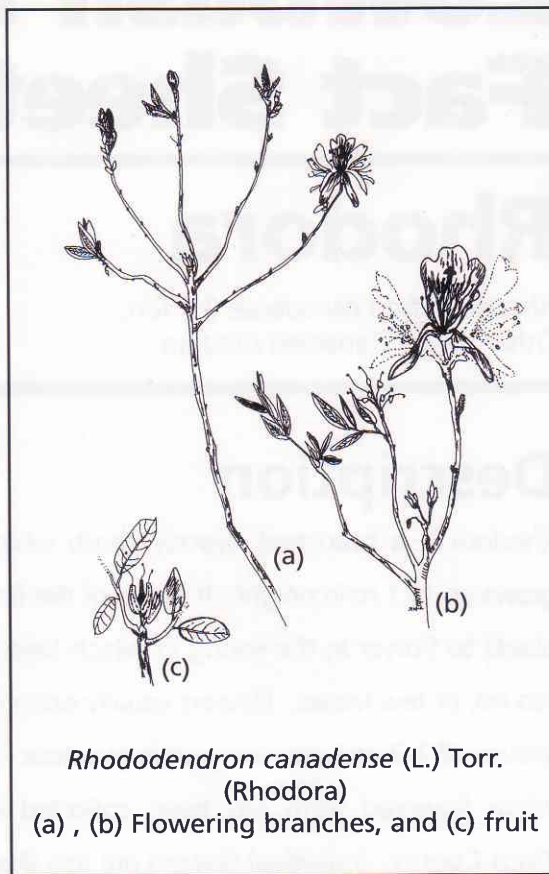


Life Cycle

Rhodora is a deciduous perennial woody shrub. It will spread by seed or by shoots originating from its root system. Flowering occurs from about May 20 - June 20. Seeds develop in capsules about 3-4 mm wide and 10-13 mm long. Capsules may remain on the stems throughout the winter. Many light orange, oblong seeds are produced in the capsules and are shed close to the shrub.

Control Strategy

Rhododendrons generally have fragile root masses, so individual stems can be pulled easily. Mowing may encourage sprouting from the roots, forming dense mats. Pulling in these situations may cause damage to the crop. Rhodora is susceptible to applications of hexazinone (Velpar™/Pronone™), therefore, it is generally not a problem in blueberry fields receiving treatment. For further information, consult the Weed Control Guide for Lowbush Blueberries.



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