

EASTERN FLOWERING DOGWOOD



Species at Risk

In Canada, the Eastern Flowering dogwood is only found in Southern Ontario and is part of a unique eco-region called Carolinian Canada. The Eastern Flowering dogwood is an endangered species and is at risk of becoming extirpated.

This tree is a small understory tree that is often found at the edges or within woodlots. In the spring, from late April to early May, the Flowering dogwood can be easily identified by the large, white four petal-like bracts that surround smaller greenish-yellow flowers that appear before the leaves come out. The leaves are oval shaped and are opposite of each other, in the fall the leaves turn a bright red colour. The bark of a mature Flowering dogwood looks scaly and block like. The fruit is produced in late summer or early fall and is approximately 1.5 cm in length, red, oval in shape and occurring in clusters of 3 to 5. Birds eat the fruit and distribute the seed.

The major threat to the Flowering dogwood is a fungus called Dogwood Anthracnose. This fungus causes brownish-red spots on the leaves and petals that causes die back, once the entire leaf is infected, the infection may advance to the stems and new shoots which causes cankers. Eventually, infections through cankers will kill branches and entire trees. Other threats include habitat loss and fragmentation.

It is illegal to search for, harass or capture a species at risk or destroy their habitat.

Pictures courtesy of Rob Tervo

References: COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report on the eastern flowering dogwood in Canada, 2007

