



# VIRGINIA MALLOW

## Species at Risk

In Canada, Virginia mallow or Sida (*Sida hermaphrodita*) is a species at risk currently designated as Endangered in Canada. This species is only found in two sites in Ontario.

Sida is a large perennial herb that grows 3 to 10 feet (13 meters) tall. Its stems are hairy when young but become smooth with age. The leaves grow alternately on the stem and resemble long pointed maple leaves. They usually have 3 to 7 irregularly toothed lobes, with the middle lobe being the longest. The white flowers, which bloom from July to October, are arranged in stalked clusters that grow from the upper stem leaf axils. Each flower has 5 petals that are each about  $\frac{1}{3}$  inch (8 mm) long.

The species grows in moist open areas on streambanks, bottomlands, as well as disturbed places like roadsides that are in close proximity to stream corridors.

Major threats to this species include competition from exotic invasive species such as *Phragmites australis* and loss of habitat. Other threats include human activities such as trampling by ATV use, shoreline stabilization and lawn maintenance.

It is illegal to search for, harm a species at risk or destroy their habitat. Picture courtesy of Rob Tervo.

References: Natural Heritage Information Centre. 2012. Element Summary Report for *Sida hermaphrodita* Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Peterborough, Ontario. COSEWIC 2009. COSEWIC assessment and update status report on Virginia Mallow in Canada. COSSARO. 2009. 2009 Annual Report from the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO) to the Minister of Natural Resources. 15 December 2009

