

NOTE

MICRANTHES STELLARIS (SAXIFRAGACEAE),
NEW TO QUÉBEC

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Micranthes stellaris (L.) Gornall (= *Saxifraga stellaris* L.) is a perennial arctic-alpine amphiatlantic species (Hultén and Fries 1986). Closely related to the circumpolar *M. foliolosa* (R. Br.) Gornall (= *S. foliolosa* R. Br.; *S. stellaris* var. *comosa* Poir.), it is easily distinguished by the hairy adaxial surface of the leaves and by the absence of bulblets in the inflorescence. Viviparous plants are known to occur sporadically in Europe (Webb 1993) but have not yet been observed in North America (Böcher et al. 1968; Porsild 1920; M. Blondeau, QFA, pers. comm.).

The geographical range of *Micranthes stellaris* extends from mountainous areas of eastern Europe westward to Iceland, Greenland, Labrador, and Baffin Island (Scoggan 1978; Webb 1993). Porsild (1964) and McJannet et al. (1993) based the Baffin Island report of the species on a single collection made on Kekerten Island (Cumberland Sound) by James Taylor, who served on whaling vessels in the Davis Strait between 1856 and 1861 (Taylor 1862). Arguing that the east coast of Baffin Island has been relatively well collected and that this single collection was not enough to support its occurrence in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, Aiken et al. (1998) proposed to treat the species as an “excluded taxon at this time.” The original voucher could not be located in the Kew Herbarium, having been lost or mislaid (S. Landrein, K, pers. comm.). Fortunately, a photograph of the voucher, taken and annotated by Porsild in 1962, is held at the National Herbarium of Canada (CAN 272374, negative J8166-30). The plant shown is definitely *M. stellaris*, exhibiting the typical habit of the plant, the lax panicle with divergent branches, and the complete absence of bulblets in the inflorescence. Therefore, the species should be maintained in Baffin Island’s flora.

In Greenland, *Micranthes stellaris* is rather common along the southeastern and southwestern coasts where it reaches 68°40'N (Porsild

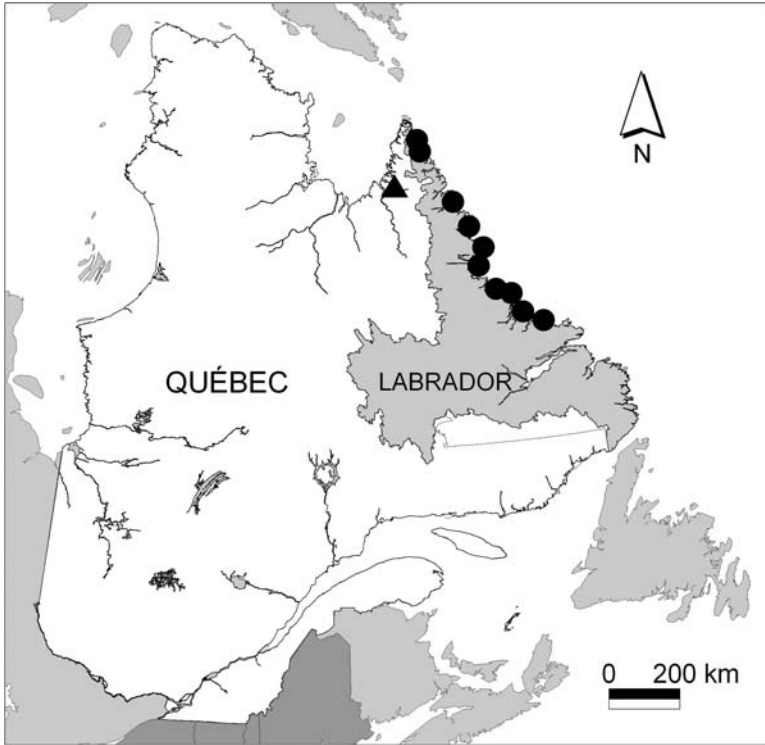


Figure 1. Distribution of *Micranthes stellaris* in Labrador and Northern Québec (triangle indicates the new locality).

1964). In Labrador, it is known from ten localities scattered along the coast from Big Bight Brook, 54°58'N, 59°03'W, to Eclipse Harbour, 59°50'N, 64°11'W (Figure 1; Flore du Québec-Labrador nordique project database, Université Laval; Kew Herbarium). Two other collections from Labrador are not located [not dated, *Bansa 65* (κ); before 1829, *Dr. Morrison s.n.* (κ)]. The collection from Cutthroat Harbour [*Porsild 193* (CAN)] reported by Meades et al. (2000) as *M. stellaris* has been revised to *M. foliolosa* (M. Blondeau, QFA, pers. comm.). Another collection from Chidley Peninsula [*Sir W. MacGregor 1905* (κ)], annotated as *S. stellaris* by A. E. Porsild in 1935, was recently revised to *M. foliolosa* by J. Cayouette (DAO, pers. comm.).

Micranthes stellaris was collected in 2003 in Québec along the Narsaaluk River (58°42'33"N, 65°25'11"W), approximately 30 km

east of the Inuit settlement of Kangiqsualujuaq (formerly George River). The river flows into the Koroc River, whose source is in the Tornгат Mountains. The plants were growing in rock crevices beside a stream at the foot of a north-facing gneissic cliff. Associated species were *Salix arctica* Pall., *Viola labradorica* Schrank, *Veronica wormskjoldii* Roem. & Schult., *Solidago macrophylla* Pursh, *Harrimannella hypnoides* (L.) Coville, *Sibbaldia procumbens* L., *Rhododendron lapponicum* (L.) Wahlenb., *Vaccinium uliginosum* L., *Phyllodoce caerulea* (L.) Bab., *Micranthes nivalis* (L.) J.K. Small, *Carex capillaris* L., *Juncus biglumis* L., *Pedicularis flammea* L., *Ranunculus pygmaeus* Wahlenb., and *Rubus arcticus* L. subsp. *acaulis* (Michx.) Focke. The population was limited to a few individuals. The species appears to be extremely rare in the explored area.

Micranthes stellaris has a global conservation status rank of G3G4. Its Canadian status is N1, while it is ranked S1S2 in Labrador (NatureServe 2005). It will be added as S1 on Québec's endangered and vulnerable plant list (Labrecque and Lavoie 2002; J. Cayouette, DAO, pers. comm.).

SPECIMEN CITATIONS: CANADA. Labrador: Big Bight Brook, 15 km SE of Makkovik (54°58'N, 59°03'W), moist seepage below tundra-barren crest of high rock ridge, 5 Aug 1979, R.S.W. Bobbette 6501 (NFLD); Arlorkak Island, 60 km NNW of Postville (55°15'N, 59°55'W), 16 Aug 1979, R.S.W. Bobbette 6635 (NFLD); Windy Tickle (55°45'N, 60°20'W), 21 Aug 1937, V. Wynne-Edwards 7602 (CAN), 21 Aug 1937, D. Potter 7675 (GH); Davis Inlet (55°54'N, 61°00'W), 6 Aug 1939, A. Dutilly, H.T. O'Neill & M.G. Duman 7579 (QFA); Nain Bay (56°32'N, 61°41'W), 1936, P. Hettasch 7674 (GH); Port Manvers (56°59'N, 61°23'W), 9 Aug 1939, G. Gardner 39312 (QFA); Okak (57°33'N, 61°58'W), ca 1840–1855, *Anonymous s.n.* (K), before 1903, S. Weiz s.n. (K); Hebron (58°12'N, 62°38'W), ca 1850–1860, [F.] Erdman 63 (K); Ryan's Bay (59°32'N, 64°04'W), gravelly bottom of shallow brook at edge of tundra, 10 Aug 1931, C.E. Abbe & M.E. Odell 415 (CAN); Eclipse Harbour (59°50'N, 64°11'W), wet rocky hillside, 6 Aug 1934, D. Potter & W.B. Brierty 2961 (GH). Québec: Montagne au sud du ruisseau Narsaaluk, 4 km en amont de la rivière Koroc (58°42'33"N, 65°25'11"W), 26 Jul 2003, N. Dignard & M. Despôts 03-389 (QUE, DAO).

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