

ARETHUSA BULBOSA L.  
Dragon's-mouth

FAMILY: Orchidaceae

HABIT: Herbaceous perennial, 0.5-4.0 dm.; arising from a small corm loosely attached to the substrate; blooming, in Ohio, late May-mid June.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Pogonia ophioglossoides* (Rose Pogonia) grows in the same habitat and also has solitary flowers; no other Ohio orchid even remotely resembles *Arethusa*, one of our most striking and distinctive wildflowers.

TOTAL RANGE: Nfld. to MN, s. to NJ, and n. IN; local in s. Appalachians to SC. Apparently absent from large portions of this total range.

STATE RANGE: There are pre-1960 records from Licking and Lorain counties. There are post-1980 records from a single small population in Portage County.

HABITAT: In full sun in sphagnum bogs, often in the wettest part of the bog. At the Ohio station, it occupies sphagnum hummocks that have developed over a marly substrate, but the corms are shallowly rooted only in the sphagnum moss itself.

HAZARDS: Drying of the bog; overshading by woody species; trampling of loose moss; over-collecting; the flowers also are sensitive to late frosts.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Probably very poor. Case (1964) suggests that the plants are short-lived and depend upon seed production for continued existence. No or few seeds probably are produced in years with late frosts.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collecting should be discouraged. Information on this species should not be released to curiosity-seekers.

COMMENTS: The Ohio range appears to be accurately known. The number of flowers in this population varies greatly from year to year, as does the blooming time.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Case, F.W., Jr. 1964. Orchids of the western Great Lakes region. Cranbrook Institute of Science Bull. No. 48, Bloomfield Hills, MI. 147 p.

Luer, C.A. 1975. The native orchids of the United States and Canada excluding Florida. New York Botanical Garden, New York, NY. 361 p.



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