

CLITORIA MARIANA L.  
Butterfly-pea

FAMILY: Fabaceae (Leguminosae)

HABIT: Low, ascending or twining perennial herb; flowering June-August; fruiting August, September.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Clitoria mariana* resembles some species of the genus *Desmodium* vegetatively, but can be recognized by its large (about 5 cm. long) pale blue flowers as opposed to the small (less than 1 cm. long) flowers of *Desmodium*.

TOTAL RANGE: L.I. and NJ to s. OH, s. IN, MO, OK, s. FL and TX.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): There are post-1980 records from Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Scioto, Vinton, and Washington counties. There are pre-1980 records from Adams, Fairfield, and Guernsey counties.

HABITAT: In open to semi-open situations in dry to moist soil: upland woods, borders of prairie openings, and barrens.

HAZARDS: Overshading by woody species as a result of succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown if natural recovery is allowed, but probably not good even if planted. Steyermark (1963) states that this plant is not usually successfully transplanted because of its long taproot, nor has he ever been able to establish it from seed.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering or fruiting material is needed for positive identification. Only the aboveground portion of this plant should be collected; the long taproot should be left undisturbed.

COMMENTS: The current knowledge of the range of this species in Ohio probably is accurate. The large showy flowers are difficult to overlook. It should still be sought throughout unglaciated Ohio.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Gleason, H.A., and A. Cronquist. 1991. Manual of vascular plants of northeastern United States and adjacent Canada. New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York. 910 pp.

Steyermark, J.A. 1963. Flora of Missouri. The Iowa State University Press, Ames, IA. 1728 p.



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