

IRIS BREVICAULIS Raf.
Leafy Blue Flag

FAMILY: Iridaceae

HABIT: Perennial herb, stem frequently decumbent, to 4 dm.; flowering May, June; fruiting June, July.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Iris brevicaulis* can be distinguished from other members of the genus by its flexuous, often leaning stems that are much shorter than the leaves, its spreading perianth-segments, and its 6-angled, short, plump, ribbed capsule.

TOTAL RANGE: OH and e. KS to LA and KY.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Erie, Madison, Paulding, and Ross Counties. Pre-1980 records are from Auglaize, Darke, Highland, Ottawa, Union and Van Wert counties. Braun (1967) lists it also from Franklin, Hamilton, Henry, Pickaway, and Warren counties.

HABITAT: A variety of wet situations in shade or semi-shade: swamps, swampy stream terraces, floodplains, borders of rich woods, and shores.

HAZARDS: Drainage or other alteration of the wetland habitat; also, digging of plants by wildflower gardeners.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but presumed poor due to the loss of suitable habitat.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering or fruiting material is needed for positive identification. Flower or fruit stalks only should be collected; rhizomes should be left in the ground. Plants should be pressed as soon as possible as the flowers quickly wilt.

COMMENTS: Steyermark (1963) states that *I. brevicaulis* often grows vegetatively and does not produce flowers. It is, therefore, possible that it has been overlooked by collectors when not in flower. This species is widely scattered in western Ohio. It may exist in more of the western counties and should be sought there in appropriate habitats.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Braun, E.L. 1967. The Monocotyledoneae of Ohio : Cat-tails to orchids. The Ohio State University Press, Columbus, OH. 464 p.

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.

Waller, H.E. 1931. The native *Iris* of Ohio and bordering territory. Ohio J. Sci. 31: 29-43.



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