

LATHYRUS VENOSUS Muhl.
Wild Pea

FAMILY: Fabaceae

HABIT: Perennial herb to 2 m.; flowering May, June; fruiting June, July.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Lathyrus venosus* is similar to the other native species of *Lathyrus* and to some species of the genus *Vicia*. It is distinguished by technical flower and fruit characters.

TOTAL RANGE: Occurs mostly in the mountains of e. PA and adj. NJ to e. WV and GA.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Adams, Belmont, Lawrence, and Union counties. Pre-1980 specimens exist from Erie, Lake, Lucas, and Williams counties.

HABITAT: In dry sandy soil in open upland woods and prairies.

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

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown if natural recovery is allowed, but presumed excellent if planted in its native habitat. Deam (1940) states that under cultivation, this plant spreads rapidly by underground stems.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering or fruiting material is needed for positive identification. Collect only the aboveground portion of this plant; the rhizome should be left in the ground.

COMMENTS: It is likely that the current knowledge of the range of this species in Ohio is accurate. It would be difficult to overlook or misidentify this tall plant with its dense racemes of handsome purple flowers.

Some authors divide this species into three varieties. Under this concept, Ohio plants would likely be var. *intonsus* Butt. & St. John. The other varieties occur largely to the east and south of Ohio.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Butters, F.K. and H. St. John. 1917. Studies in certain North American species of *Lathyrus*. *Rhodora* 19: 156-163.

Deam, C.C. 1940. Authorized reprint 1970. *Flora of Indiana*. Verlag Von J. Cramer, S-H Service Agency, New York, NY. 1236 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.

King, C.C. 1981. Prairies of the Darby Plains in west-central Ohio. p. 108-127. In Stuckey, R.L. and K.J. Reese, eds. The Prairie Peninsula - in the "shadow" of Transeau: Proceedings of the sixth North American Prairie Conference. Ohio Biol. Surv. Biol. Notes No. 15. 278 p.



Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Created: 1/1984 James F. Burns