

MOEHRINGIA LATERIFLORA (L.)
Grove Sandwort

FAMILY: Caryophyllaceae

SYNONYMS: *Arenaria lateriflora* L.

HABIT: Slender-stemmed annual herb from creeping filiform rhizome; to 4 dm.; flowering late April to mid-August; fruiting May through August.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Somewhat resembles *Stellaria* or *Cerastium*, but *M. lateriflora* is easily distinguished from these genera by its entire petals.

TOTAL RANGE: Lab. to Alaska, s. to Nfld., N.S., N.E., Md., O., Ind., ne. Ill., Mo., S.D., and N.M.

STATE RANGE: There are post-1980 records from 10 counties: Auglaize, Darke, Defiance, Delaware, Hardin, Mercer, Sandusky, Trumbull, Van Wert, Wood. There are pre-1980 collections from 13 counties: Adams, Allen, Ashtabula, Clinton, Franklin, Lake, Marion, Morrow, Ottawa, Paulding, Perry, Putnam, and Union.

HABITAT: In Ohio, this species shows a preference for damp, open woods. However, label data from a few collections indicate habitat as dry woods, and roadsides.

HAZARDS: Destruction of habitat, overgrowth by woody species through succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but apparently poor; however, one vigorous population in Hardin County, extant as of 1990, occurs in an actively grazed woodland.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect complete, mature specimens; avoid over-collecting.

COMMENTS: The habitat in which *Moehringia lateriflora* occurs is not uncommon in Ohio, blooming period is at a time when activity by botanists is heavy, and this is a rather showy plant that should be prone to collection. Therefore, the lack of recent records is inexplicable. Furthermore, this species has been actively sought after in recent years in northeastern Ohio, to no avail. *Moehringia lateriflora* is on the southern periphery of its range in Ohio, and may be exhibiting a shrinking back from the edges of this part of its range, due to unknown causes.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Maguire, Bassett. 1951. Studies in the Caryophyllaceae – V. Am. Mid. Nat. 46 (2). p. 493-511.

Voss, E.G. 1985. Michigan Flora, Part II. Dicots. Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bulletin 59. p. 170-171.



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