

OROBANCHE LUDOVICIANA Nutt.
Louisiana Broom-rape

FAMILY: Orobanchaceae

HABIT: Succulent, parasitic perennial herb, 1-2.5 dm.; flowering August- October; fruiting September-November.

SIMILAR SPECIES: The only Ohio plant even remotely similar to *Orobanche ludoviciana* is the common squawroot (*Conopholis americana*). The latter, however, occurs only in mesic or oak woodlands and is dark brown to yellowish, while *O. ludoviciana* occurs in riverine habitats and is white to light purple in color.

TOTAL RANGE: B.C. to TX, locally e. to MN, OH, TN, and VA; local throughout its total range.

STATE RANGE: There are pre-1980 records from Clermont and Gallia counties.

HABITAT: In sun or semi-shade in moist, often disturbed situations, usually along rivers; also in cultivated fields of tobacco.

HAZARDS: Overgrowth by woody species through succession; herbicidal treatment and plowing of cultivated fields.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, probably poor due to its parasitic habit.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect complete, mature material; avoid over-collecting; note host to which the plant is attached.

COMMENTS: This species is extremely distinctive and not likely to be misidentified. However, its habitat is not well collected in Ohio and intensive searching in the Ohio River Valley may uncover additional stations. On the other hand, this habitat and region also have been extensively disturbed, so it is unlikely that this species is at all frequent in Ohio.

Louisiana broom-rape is a parasite on a wide range of species, including, but not restricted to, giant ragweed (*Ambrosia trifida*), tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*), and tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*). In modern times, its occurrence in cultivated fields has been greatly reduced by the use of herbicides, and thus this species has become even rarer than in the past.

Valley and Cooperrider (1966) cite an 1880 record from Hamilton County.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Musselman, L.J. 1982. The Orobanchaceae of Virginia. *Castanea* 47: 266-275.

Starr, G.H. 1943. A new parasite of tomatoes. *Phytopathological Notes* 33: 257-258.

Thieret, J.W. 1971. The genera of Orobanchaceae in the southeastern United States. J. Arn. Arb. 52: 404-434.

Valley, K.R. and T.S. Cooperrider. 1966. The Orobanchaceae of Ohio. Ohio J. Sci. 66: 264-265.



Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Created: 1/1984 Allison W. Cusick