PRUNUS PUMILA var. PUMILA L.
Great Lakes Sand Cherry

FAMILY: Rosaceae

HABIT: Low, diffusely branched, erect to decumbent or prostrate shrub to 3 m.; flowering May-early June; fruiting July-September.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Only one other low, sand inhabiting Prunus--P. susquehanae-- is found in Ohio. P. pumila is distinguished from it as follows:

P. pumila - leaves narrowly oblanceolate with apex acute to acuminate and base narrowly cuneate, lustrous above, pale below.

P. susquehanae - leaves elliptic to ovate, obtuse to subacute at apex, acute to rounded at base, pale green above, glaucous below.

TOTAL RANGE: Endemic to the Great Lakes regions from Lake Ontario w. to n. MN and no. to about 52o latitude.

STATE RANGE: ERIE CO.: Cedar Point, 31 June 1899, W.A. Kellerman & R.F. Griggs (OS); Cedar Point, 21 Sept. 1900, W.A. Kellerman (OS); only one plant, Cedar Point, 10 July 1902, E.L. Moseley n.d., W.A. Kellerman (OS). HAMILTON CO.: Terrace Park, dry gravel soil, 9 Aug. 1917, E.L. Braun (CINC, OS). The Erie County collections all are from the general locality. Jennings (1908) describes this site. The Hamilton County population is described by Braun (1961, p. 222): “adventive... it grew in gravelly soil of an abandoned gravel pit near a railroad.

STATE STATUS:

HABITAT: Sand dunes, sandy or calcareous, rocky shores.

HAZARDS: Mechanical disturbance of the beaches by off-road vehicles, etc., sudden alterations in water level, overshading through succession, soil compaction.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, presumed poor due to limited and limiting habitat.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect mature fruiting branchlets. Record growth habit carefully.

COMMENTS: The habitat for this Great Lakes endemic is virtually non-existent in Ohio today. The site of the only indigenous population has been altered beyond recognition. Possibly it possibly may be confused with Prunus susquehanae (see Similar Species) and thus overlooked, but this seems unlikely. This species probably is truly extirpated from the Ohio flora.
SELECTED REFERENCES:


