

PHLOX LATIFOLIA L.
Mountain Phlox

FAMILY: Polemoniaceae

SYNONYM: *Phlox ovata* Michx. (see Comments).

HABIT: Perennial herb to 6 dm.; flowering mid May-early June; fruiting June, July.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Phlox latifolia* is very similar to several other species of the genus *Phlox*. It generally can be distinguished by its few stem leaves (seldom more than three pairs below the inflorescence at anthesis), and by the presence of short, decumbent, sterile shoots with persistent elliptic leaves. It is ultimately distinguished by technical characters.

TOTAL RANGE: Chiefly in the Appalachian Mountains; PA to GA; also w. of the mountains in OH and IN.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): There are post-1980 records from Fulton and Lucas counties. Pre-1980 records are from Henry and Williams counties.

HABITAT: Open to semi-open situations in subacid soils: open woods, thickets, occasionally alluvial meadows.

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

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown if natural recovery is allowed. However, Wherry (1931) states that this species grows well if planted in its native habitat.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering material is needed for positive identification. The corolla should be split open to its base, and the length of the style noted.

COMMENTS: *Phlox latifolia* is essentially a southern Appalachian plant with a few scattered stations in Ohio and Indiana. It may be somewhat more widespread in the state than current records indicate, however. It could easily be misidentified or overlooked due to its similarity to other species of the genus *Phlox*. It should be sought in areas of the appropriate habitat throughout the state.

Reveal et al. (1982) argue that the lectotype designated for *Phlox ovata* L. is actually based on a specimen of *Ruellia caroliniensis*. This invalidates the name *P. ovata* and means that the taxon is now called by the next available name, which is *Phlox latifolia* Michx.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

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.

Reveal, J.L., C.R. Broome, M.L. Brown, and G.F. Frick. 1982. Comments on the typification of two Linnaean species of *Phlox* (Polemoniaceae). *Taxon* 31: 733-736.

Wherry, E.T. 1931. The eastern long-styled Phloxes, Part I. *Bartonia* 13: 18-37.

Wherry, E.T. 1931. 1936. Polemoniaceae of the middle Appalachian region, Part II. *Castanea* 1: 32-35.



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