

POLYGALA CURTISSII Gray  
Curtiss' Milkwort

FAMILY: Polygalaceae

HABIT: Slender erect annual herb to 4 dm.; flowering August, September; fruiting September.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Polygala curtissii* closely resembles and may be mistaken for the common *Polygala sanguinea*. In *P. curtissii*, the mature flower racemes are loose, and the corolla is bright pink to rose-purple with the keel and upper petals tipped with yellow. In *P. sanguinea*, the mature racemes are very dense with the flowers tightly overlapping, and the corolla is rose-purple, white, or greenish with no yellow on the keel and upper petals.

TOTAL RANGE: DE to OH, s. to SC and MS.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): There is a post-1980 record from Jackson County.

HABITAT: Open to semi-open situations in dry to moist, rocky to sandy soil: woods borders, old fields, and thickets.

HAZARDS: Overshading by woody species due to succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Presumed poor. However, it may respond favorably to moderate habitat disturbance.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering material is needed for positive identification of this species; avoid over-collecting.

COMMENTS: This species is similar to the common *Polygala sanguinea*, which could cause it to be overlooked by botanists. It should be sought in the southernmost part of the state, especially the unglaciated portion. It may prove more frequent than the few records indicate.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Cooperrider, T.S. 1995. The Dicotyledoneae of Ohio. Part 2. Linaceae through Campanulaceae. Ohio State Univ. Press, Columbus, OH. 656 pp.

Miller, N.G. 1971. The Polygalaceae in the southeastern United States. J. Arn. Arb. 52: 267-284.



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