

RANUNCULUS PUSILLUS Poiret
Low Spearwort

FAMILY: Ranunculaceae

HABIT: Erect to ascending herbaceous annual, 1-6 dm.; flowering April, May; fruiting May, June.

SIMILAR SPECIES: This species closely resembles *Ranunculus laxicaulis* and may be distinguished from it by the following characters: *R. pusillus* has entire to denticulate leaves, 1-3 petals that are 1-1.5 mm. long, and achenes 1 mm. long. *R. laxicaulis* has mostly entire leaves, 5-10 petals that are 3-4 mm. long, and achenes under 1 mm. long.

TOTAL RANGE: s. NY to FL and TX, in the interior to MO, IN, and OH.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): There are post-1980 collections from Adams, Jackson, and Scioto counties. There are pre-1960 records from Ashtabula, Clermont, Gallia, and Ross counties.

HABITAT: Low wet ground, swamps, and shallow pools.

HAZARDS: Permanent drying of habitat; overshadowing by woody species through succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown; presumed good due to abundance of seemingly suitable habitat.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect complete, mature specimens.

COMMENTS: This species may be more abundant than current records indicate. It may be undercollected because of its similarities to *Ranunculus laxicaulis*. It should be sought throughout southern and eastern Ohio.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

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Henry, L.K. and W.B. Buker. 1958. The Ranunculaceae of western Pennsylvania. *Castanea* 23: 33-46.

Keener, C.S. 1976. Studies in the Ranunculaceae of the southeastern United States. Part V. *Ranunculus*. *Sida* 6: 266-283.

Mitchell, R.S. and J.K. Dean. 1982. Ranunculaceae (Crowfoot family) of New York State.
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