

VIOLA LANCEOLATA L.
Lance-leaved Violet

FAMILY: Violaceae

SYNONYM: *Viola lanceolata* L. ssp. *lanceolata*

HABIT: Stemless perennial herb to 1.5 dm.; flowering early May-early June; fruiting May-July.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Viola lanceolata* is very similar and closely related to *V. primulifolia*. *V. lanceolata* can generally be distinguished by its lanceolate to linear leaf blades, whereas the leaf blades of *V. primulifolia* are usually ovate. However, leaf shape in both species exhibits considerable variation, so that this single character should not be relied upon exclusively for identification. Fernald (1949) states that after the spring flowering season, *V. lanceolata* is easily distinguished by its habit of sending out well-developed leafy prostrate stolons bearing many cleistogamous flowers. The stolons of *V. primulifolia* are essentially leafless and sterile, the cleistogamous flowers being on erect peduncles borne chiefly from the rhizomes or the first nodes of the stolons.

TOTAL RANGE: FL to e. TX, n. to N.B., s. Que., s. Ont., OH, MI, WI, MN, and NE.

STATE RANGE: There are post-1980 records from Athens, Erie, Henry, Jackson, Lake, Lucas, Meigs, Pike, and Scioto counties. There are pre-1980 records from 6 counties: Clermont, Cuyahoga, Fairfield, Lawrence, Lorain and Ross.

HABITAT: Open, moist sandy areas in pastures, meadows, and prairie remnants; margins of bog ponds; usually in acidic substrates.

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

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Presumed good due to its variety of habitat and apparent tolerance of disturbance.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering or fruiting material is needed for positive identification; avoid over-collecting.

COMMENTS: *V. lanceolata* may be more frequent in Ohio than current records indicate. It could easily be overlooked due to its small size and brief blooming period. It should be sought in suitable habitats throughout the state.

Viola lanceolata occasionally is split into two subspecies (Russell, 1965), of which the Ohio plants would be the typical subspecies. Though in general more southern in range, the ssp. *vittata* (Freene) Russell has been reported from the lake counties of Indiana and Illinois. It is conceivable that some of our plants from the Lake Erie counties may be identified as this other subspecies.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

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Miller, L.D. 1976. The Violaceae of Ohio. Unpublished M.S. thesis. Kent State University, Kent, OH. 203 p.

Russell, N.H. 1965. Violets (*Viola*) of central and eastern United States: An introductory survey. *Sida* 2: 1-113.



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