

VIOLA PEDATIFIDA G. Don
Prairie Violet

FAMILY: Violaceae

SYNONYMS: *Viola palmata* var. *pedatifida* (G. Don.) Cronq.

HABIT: Stemless, herbaceous perennial to 15 cm.; flowers April-May; fruits June-July.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Very similar to the common *Viola palmata* which blooms at the same time as *V. pedatifida* and often occurs in similar habitats. The leaves of *V. pedatifida* are more strongly dissected and are three-parted with each lobe cleft into linear lobes that are again split into 2-4 segments. Miller (1976) provides excellent illustrations of these two species.

TOTAL RANGE: W. OH to Alb., s. and w. to MO, TX, and AR; also in the cedar glades of TN and KY.

STATE RANGE: MONTGOMERY CO.: Dayton, 24 May 1881, O.E. Feicht (OS).
OTTAWA CO.: Marblehead, 20 May 1895, M. Beattie (BGSU); Marblehead, 20 May 1895, E.L. Moseley (OS). A specimen at OS from Belmont County is labeled "yard" and evidently comes from cultivation. This species was formerly reported from Adams and Highland counties (Braun, 1928, 1969; Cusick & Silberhorn, 1977) but all such reports are based upon misidentifications of *Viola palmata*. The species was rediscovered in 1998 in Clark County. It was subsequently located in 1999 in Madison County and in 2000 in Logan County.

HABITAT: In full sun in well-drained, calcareous situations such as dry prairies, clifftops, and cedar glades.

HAZARDS: Overgrowth by woody species through succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but perhaps good; related species grow well in cultivation.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect mature flowering specimens only.

COMMENTS: The habitat for prairie violet is limited in the state and largely altered by man in the past decades. The Marblehead station may have been quarried away and the Dayton area has been changed by urban development. Still, prairie violet should be sought in appropriate habitats in western Ohio. It is easily confused with the common *Viola palmata* and may be overlooked by persons unfamiliar with the distinctions between these species. Gleason and Cronquist (1991) consider this taxon to be a variety of *V. palmata*. Russell (1965) states that *V. palmata* and *V. pedatifida* are essentially indistinguishable where their ranges overlap (as they do in Ohio).

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