

ASTRAGALUS NEGLECTUS (T. & G.) Sheld.  
Cooper's Milk-vetch

FAMILY: Leguminosae (Fabaceae)

SYNONYM: *Astragalus cooperi* Gray

HABIT: Perennial herb to 1.3 m.; flowering June, July; fruiting July-September.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Astragalus neglectus* is very similar to other species of its genus and to some species of the genus *Vicia*. It is ultimately distinguished by technical fruit characters.

TOTAL RANGE: Local, but widely dispersed around the Great Lakes: e. Ont. to MN, s. to w. NY, OH, s. MI, ND, SD, s. WI, and n. IN.

STATE RANGE: Post-1980 collections from Geauga and Lake counties. Pre-1980 specimens exist from Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, and Lorain counties.

HABITAT: A variety of semi-shaded to open situations: lakeshores, stream banks, cool ravines; more rarely on limestone cliff ledges, limestone barrens, in savannas overlying limestone bedrock, or on steep, eroding shale slopes.

HAZARDS: Unknown, but probably extreme overshadowing by woody species as a result of succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Presumed not good due to somewhat restricted and unstable habitat.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature fruits are necessary for positive identification. Some pods should be dried without pressing to preserve their characteristic shape.

COMMENTS: It is possible that this species is more frequent in Ohio than current records indicate. It is easily misidentified and it may be overlooked due to its somewhat weedy appearance. It should be sought throughout northern Ohio, especially in those counties bordering Lake Erie. Some authors refer to this plant as *Astragalus cooperi* (see Synonym). However, most recent authors, including Isely (1983), do not follow this treatment.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Barneby, R.C. 1964. Atlas of North American *Astragalus*. Mem. N.Y. Bot. Gard. 13: 1-1188.

Isely, D. 1983. *Astragalus* (Leguminosae: Papilionoideae) I.: Keys to United States species. Iowa St. J. Res. 58: 1-172.

McCormac, J.S. 1995. 1994 Status Survey for Cooper's Milk-vetch (*Astragalus neglectus*) in Ohio. Unpublished report from ODNR Div. Natural Resources for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Schultz, J. 2003. Conservation assessment for Cooper's milk-vetch (*Astragalus neglectus*) (T & G) E. Sheld. Unpublished report from the USDA Forest Service, Eastern Region.



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