

CLEMATIS OCCIDENTALIS (Hornem.) DC.
Purple Virgin's Bower

FAMILY: Ranunculaceae.

SYNONYMS: *Clematis verticillaris* D.C.

HABIT: Woody-stemmed climber; flowering May-June.

SIMILAR SPECIES: The foliage of all three of the Ohio species of *Clematis* is very similar. Distinction is easily made using the sepals of the flowers. *C. virginiana* has white, small sepals. *C. viorna* has purple sepals that are thick and leathery. *C. occidentalis* also has purple sepals but the flowers are larger and more delicate and campanuloid.

TOTAL RANGE: Que. to Man., s. to NJ, n. IA; in mountains to VA.

STATE RANGE: DELAWARE CO.: near Scioto River, exposed limestone cliff, 16 May 1910, J.H. Schaffner (OS). This specimen has virtually destroyed by insects, making identification impossible at the present time. However, an unsigned annotation on the sheet indicates that the damage occurred prior to 1935 and that the identification of the species is correct. This site probably was inundated by the creation of O'Shaunessy Reservoir on the Scioto River.

HABITAT: Rocky, open slopes and woods, often on calcareous substrate.

HAZARDS: Overshading in late successional stages, over collecting.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, presumed poor.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect complete mature specimens. All reports should be checked carefully.

COMMENTS: This species is quite showy when in bloom and is not likely to be overlooked. It well may be extirpated from the state.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

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

Pringle, J.S. 1971. Taxonomy and distribution of *Clematis*, Sect. *Atragene* (Ranunculaceae), in North America. *Brittonia* 23: 361- 393.



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