LATHYRUS VENOSUS Muhl.
Wild Pea

FAMILY: Fabaceae

HABIT: Perennial herb to 2 m.; flowering May, June; fruiting June, July.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Lathyrus venosus is similar to the other native species of Lathyrus and to some species of the genus Vicia. It is distinguished by technical flower and fruit characters.

TOTAL RANGE: Occurs mostly in the mountains of e. PA and adj. NJ to e. WV and GA.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Adams, Belmont, Lawrence, and Union counties. Pre-1980 specimens exist from Erie, Lake, Lucas, and Williams counties.

HABITAT: In dry sandy soil in open upland woods and prairies.

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

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown if natural recovery is allowed, but presumed excellent if planted in its native habitat. Deam (1940) states that under cultivation, this plant spreads rapidly by underground stems.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering or fruiting material is needed for positive identification. Collect only the aboveground portion of this plant; the rhizome should be left in the ground.

COMMENTS: It is likely that the current knowledge of the range of this species in Ohio is accurate. It would be difficult to overlook or misidentify this tall plant with its dense racemes of handsome purple flowers.

Some authors divide this species into three varieties. Under this concept, Ohio plants would likely be var. intonsus Butt. & St. John. The other varieties occur largely to the east and south of Ohio.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

