

Minutes from the 2008 Rare Plant Forum
WPC Headquarters, Pittsburgh 12 April 2008

47 Attendees (record attendance!).

1. Jeff Wagner, PA Natural Heritage Program – Tracking invasive plants in PA

Data repository.
Open free access.
Submit data online.
View across states.
Coordinate with PA Invasive Species Council.

DEP question – assistance with management? Jeff – effort provides information only.
Jack Holt question – QC? Jeff – need at least photo vouchers.

2. Autumn Sabo, DCNR Announcements

Invitation to attend Eric Burkhart's talk at RCSOB May 15.
Reminder to get Wild Plant Management Permits.
Check WRCP website for 2008 priorities. Applications due June 30.
WRCP Festival at Tom Ridge Center September 13.

3. Steve Grund Announcement

Larry Klotz would like us to be aware of a high-quality photographic site on the internet featuring the flora of Pennsylvania (www.rz.uni-karlsruhe.de/~db111/flora/PA). The author is Michael Hassler of Germany, who spent some time in central Pennsylvania. He would like photographic contributions to his site, but he does not allow use of his photos. Perhaps he could be approached about granting permission to use his photos in exchange for images contributed from this group.

4. Roger Latham – Keystone Grasslands: Origins, floristic and conservation of persistent native grasslands and meadows in PA

History of grasslands in PA.
Grasslands are home to 38% of our extirpated, endangered, and threatened plants but are less than 1% of our current land base.
Most grassland plants are generalists.
Management options.
Differences between temporary and persistent grasslands.
Description of grassland types with some new proposals for Fike.

5. Update Proposals

a. *Baptisia australis* – Steve Grund Current status UEF, Proposed status PR or PT. Sometimes planted and escaping in the east.

Decision: PT

32 occurrences. Locally common in a few counties along narrow stream corridors with prairie plants. Many Allegheny County occurrences are historic. Steve suspects that most historic occurrences are gone or on their way out due to less flooding. Upper Allegheny populations are isolated due to reduction in historic populations.

2 varieties, ours less common (G3-G4 variety but species G5).

Estimated number of extant occurrences 35-60 (18 populations known) and declining (20-50%).

1 additional record on Clarion River. Chuck Williams

Steve has accounted for some of additional populations along Clarion already.

Japanese knotweed in lower Allegheny but not yet in Upper Allegheny where *Baptisia* occurs most commonly. Also discussion of *Phalaris* invasion taking over stream-side grasslands.

Roger thinks it should be PT due to invasives.

Jim mentioned *Lysimachia vulgaris* invading streams.

DEP question about studying scour/dams. Steve says looking for funding to study scouring along Youghiogheny.

John Kunsman – 4 populations in database. Steve has 14 additional populations to add. Steve describes that we have no known A ranked populations.

Roger Latham asks about likely ranks of unknown populations. Steve expects smaller occurrences.

Wes Knapp – were all new occurrences in 1 county? Steve found *Baptisia* in 2 – 3 counties. Is disjuncture real?

Jack Holt – dams probably led to disjuncture due to loss of populations on Allegheny.

Jack – sounds like a very narrow, unique habitat tolerance for *Baptisia*.

4 votes for PR including Joe and Bonnie Isaac since more searching is needed and it is easy to find while along river.

Jim Bissell has done some intensive surveys in NW PA and has found little. If *Baptisia* is not threatened now it will be soon due to invasives.

Population size ranges from a few to a few hundred plants.

Bonnie – how up to date is database? Does WPC have Carnegie's new data included? 4-5 populations missing from data presented although Joe notes that habitat is limited.

Another new EO along Raccoon Creek from 5 years ago– Pat Bonislowsky.

How persistent is species because of scour?

John Kunsman asks how many sites are on protected/public land? Is ER process critical to maintain these populations? Yes, if dam projects but no for small development.

Show of hands: PT vs. PR. Votes for both.

Eastern PA sites are escapees and should not be in ER,

b. *Conoclinium coelestinum* – N-URFN - Loree Speedy proposes delisting,

Decision is to Watchlist

Estimate 200-300 populations. 30 populations known.

Find in degraded habitats, roadsides, ditches and also in higher quality habitat like along Cheat River.

Steve notes that he has also seen it along roadsides but in high quality floodplain habitats being invaded by *Arthraxon hispidus* and *Microstegium vimineum*.

Jack Holt finds it in wet fields, serpentine, moist roadsides. Wide in habitat tolerance. Seems to be fairly tough in Eastern PA. Jack has found it in Chester Co. but it is not in database.

Also in nursery trade.

Joe Isaac has recently found additional populations in three counties that are not along the river – approximately 25 populations.

Joe (and Robert Coxe) question how to determine populations (many small v. one large).

Steve is concerned about invasive species leading to its decline. Wes Knapp agrees that most habitats are prime for *Microstegium*.

c. *Elephantopus carolinianus* – Mark Bowers PE proposed PR

Decision: PR

Discovering new populations in disturbed habitat like cow pastures, pipeline ROWs.

30-50 estimated populations. 15 current extant sites. 8 historic sites.

Known in SE and SW PA.

Joe Isaac found approximately 16 new populations, many of them very large up to few hundred acres, few 1000 plants

Jack Holt has seen it very rarely in SE PA (approximately 5 times in 25 years). Janet Ebert says it often grows abundantly or dies out, little moderate sustaining populations.

John Kunsman – “defender of plant” – okay with PR but not delisting

d. *Helianthus microcephalus* – Loree Speedy – proposed delisted.

Decision to WATCHLIST

Habitat: upland woods, dry roadsides, ROWs
60-80 estimated occurrences
50 historic occurrences (15 in Allegheny County)
86 occurrences including current and historic
35-40 new finds by Joe Isaac
Current extant occurrences approximately 65-70.

Steve – problem with keys to determine between *H. divaricatus* – leaves slightly petiolate and glandular.

Joe – largest population 3/10 of mile along roadside, most of 25 new populations along roadsides.

Many roadsides in SGL, almost always adjacent to dry open woods, unlikely to be developed or sprayed.

Chris Tracy thinks he saw it along roadside in Armstrong Co. last year. Unconfirmed.

All recent occurrences in SW though, no recent observations in central and NW PA where there are many historic. Some historic occurrences may have been misidentified.

e. *Ipomea lacunosa*- currently on watchlist, proposed OFF watch list.

Decision keep ON watch list.

Jack Holt – all current extant populations are along crop fields and roadsides.

John Kunsman – was native along lower Susquehanna according to Porter's flora prior to dams. Thinks any 'native' populations that may be found should be protected. Wants to track any native populations.

Janet asks if still want collects from ag field? John – no, natives only.

Extant populations 27+.

f. *Juncus torreyi* – Mark Bowers – PT, proposed PR.

Decision : Refer to VPTC

25 occurrences, many of them historic.

Many populations in ditches, puddles, transient disturbed wetland habitats.

Common in OH wetlands and disturbed areas – Jim Bissell.

First plant to colonize bison wallows in Kansas – Pat Bonislowsky.

Janet – collection from planted wetland in Chester Co.

Jim Bissell – knows of a few extirpated populations on Presque Isle and one in another NW PA wetland. Conneaut Lake population destroyed.

Steve – how to deal with plants that are rare, found in high quality habitats but also junky habitats, G5, previously discussed designating 'special populations' but Chris was uncomfortable with it. Autumn says special populations will be necessary because of

Harvey's Lake case. DCNR needs to figure out if 'special populations' can also be considered PT/PE or just a general species of special concern. More discussion about how the court case and special populations will affect ER are necessary.

Wes Knapp – some sedges including *Juncus torreyi* are expanding recently.

John Kunsman and Jim Bissell agree with PR.

Steve Grund further elaborates on need for special populations due to court ruling. Steve thinks we should only protect in undisturbed habitats. Autumn wonders what we do for all the species in disturbed habitats.

Table the decision for this species and the related discussion for VPTC.

g. *Oxydendrum arboretum* – Loree Speedy, PT, proposed PR.

Decision: PR

13 extant sites plus Joe Isaac's approximately 10 sites and Darlene Madrish's site that is larger than 100 acres. Darlene's site was very disturbed, polluted, logged, some was lost due to mining. Some of Joe's sites also extensive.

Very common across state line.

h. *Passiflora lutea* – Joe Isaac, PE, proposed PT.

Decision: PT.

Plenty of sites – about 15 new ones although few individuals per site.

Found on mine spoil, roadsides, and some natural areas.

Mark Bowers wonders how many plants are reproducing. Joe says it is because the observation windows for reproduction are very small.

i. *Polymnia uvedalia* – Mark Bowers, N, PT, proposed PR.

Decision PR.

Persistent in closed canopy forest, also grows in openings like roadsides and ROWs. Extensive populations.

John Kunsman and Joe Isaac comfortable with rare.

Not in OH or MD according to NatureServe. Kartesz has specimens listed for them though.

41 occurrences listed on proposal.

j. *Ranunculus hederaceus*, Jack Holt, PX, proposed PE.

Decision: TABLED therefore remains PE due to automated PX to PE when rediscovered.

Recently collected in farm pond in PA. Why only in bad habitat? Lots of similar habitat in PA where it is not known.

1929 collection in PA along Octoraro Creek, called alien then.

Recent MD collection in high quality spring pools.
Common in Europe, known from Newfoundland, historic from PA, MD, and a few states south.

Coastal in the Carolinas.

Steve and Wes Knapp - discussed strange distribution.

Wes talked about *Schoenoplectus* that was first introduced in 1800s, reintroduced recently and spreading across US.

Wes recommends contacting Brett Ford from F&A.

Steve – need more research.

Wes – questions nativity given range and that two extant populations in US are from last 2 years.

Steve – want to consult experts regarding nativity.

Rebecca – found in nursery trade? Jack and Janet said farmers haven't planted anything unusual and haven't imported cattle from Europe.

Autumn – suggested TU since nativity unknown.

DNA tests for similarity?

Chris Hardy – leave it up to plant authority?

k. *Senna marilandica* – Joe Isaac, TU, PE, proposed N or PR.

Decision PR.

Grows in disturbed areas like ROWs, tolerated mowing.

Approximately 30 new populations, one up to 3 acres.

Abundant across state line.

l. *Valerianella radiata* – Jack Holt, N (not listed in PA flora), proposed Watch list.

Decision: Watch list.

Found 2 populations.

Uncertain of nativity.

Tim Draude thinks he may have seen some in Lancaster, PA.

Autumn – description of ER changes, especially to TU species

Loree – update PNHP database ASAP since delays in data input make it difficult for us to assign correct statuses.

Steve and John – Mostly a current TU species.

m. *Amelanchier Canadensis* – N, UEF proposed PR.

5 populations, 6 plants extant, Coastal Plain habitat,

Decision PE.

Jack knows of another site with 12 plants.

Carol Loeffler suggests PE.

Janet mentions few pure *A. Canadensis* – taxonomic problems.

n. *Cardamine maxima*, N, TU proposed PR/PT.

Decision: PT.

Thought that it is a sterile hybrid, not a good species.

Have observed set seed.

6 extent populations in PA, a few historic. Jefferson sites not entered yet.

o. Cardamine pratensis var. palustris, PE, TU proposed PE.

Decision: PE.

Was going to be recognized by F&A via newsletter.

Hydric, high quality fens with different leaflets and usually different color from introduced variety.

Tim – need firm expert agreement of good species. Rollins didn't decide yes, Tony Reznicek thinks good species.

p. Coeloglossum viride, TU proposed PE.

Decision PE.

No extant populations.

Other status change decisions tabled since we are running short of time.

6. Eric Burkhart, PSU – The deep and tangled roots of PA's ginseng industry.

Status of ginseng and the industry, attitudes.

Drop in ginseng reported by dealers since the late 1980s.

About 1/3 of harvester addresses were invalidly reported to DCNR to skip taxes.

Comments suggest more enforcement needed and by organizations besides DCNR.

Promote agro-forestry of ginseng and consider genetics

VPTC meeting – email notes to Bonnie

1. Go through other TUs.

a. Fraxinus quadrangulata – Steve – 1 collection in PA from 1980s. **Decision PE.**

b. Gnaphalium sylvaticum – John would like it to be PH but questions nativity. Table – **Decision still TU.**

c. Isoetes valida – N, TU - ID problems (John) but at least rare, if real species (Wes).

Britton and Brown published that it is a true species and cited PA paper. **Decision PR.**

d. Lechea minor – N, TU a recent record by Janet maybe? Historic locations otherwise extirpated. **Decision PE.**

e. Panicum yadkinense - TU - 3 records from Jack and Janet. 1 specimen at Carnegie (Bonnie). Not recognized in F&A. Recognized in *Dichanthelium* treatment (Wes).

Under-collected, just recognized as a species. Steve recommends PT **Decision PT.**

f. Viola selkirkii – N, TU more common than we thought. PR or watchlist. 30 records in N PA. Not weedy. **Decision PR.**

2. Ratified changes made at the RPF unanimously.

3. Code of conduct for botanical artists that Steve sent around. Steve will send it again.

Important so that conservation science community and botanical gardens will trust artists

with locations of rare species. Agreeing to code of conduct will be required for membership to organization. Agreement that this is a useful and appropriate subject for the VPTC and that we are interested in signing on to a final version if we agree with the wording.

4. *Erigenia bulbosa*. Propose PR. John – Agree not in danger of extirpation from PA but only 4 populations on Piedmont and rare in MD on Piedmont. Protecting genetic resources. Chris Tracey is concerned about *Microstegium* invading *Erigenia* habitat so it may be in danger in W PA as well. Susquehanna drainage is Special Population. John says this fits in rare category according to act definitions. **PR but review differently E to W**. Wes and Steve agree we should have regional classifications.

5. Location for fall meeting. Penn Nursery or Millersville.