

## Update on Some Rare Plants of the Black River State Forest

By David Seils



(DNR Graphic)

I have developed a special interest for the Black River State Forest. Several yearly visits to the family cabin have lead to an increasing interest in the flora and fauna of the area.

Evolving from an interest in plants to amateur botanizing, I have discovered the unique assemblage of Atlantic Coastal Plain disjunct species and other “Rare” plants that occur in the BRSF. Many of the Coastal Plain disjunct species are considered “Rare” in Wisconsin.

Following is an update of some past “Rare” plant discoveries and notes on some new observations.

### Coastal Plain Disjuncts plants

**Meadow Beauty** (*Rhexia virginica*)-This showy little plant (“Special Concern”) is still flourishing in a road-side ditch southeast of Hatfield, and originally located by Dr. Emmet Judziewicz. I am still perplexed why I have not found at least one other population of this plant in the area. I know there are several other populations throughout the BRSF and surrounding areas. <http://wisplants.uwsp.edu/scripts/detail.asp?SpCode=RHEVIR>



(Emmet Judziewicz photo)

**Virginia bartonia** (*Bartonia virginica*)-I have discovered several new locations of this slender, inconspicuous plant. This is also a “Special Concern” species in Wisconsin. A plant seemly mostly stem, with tiny scale like leaves, which I have found to prefer moist, mossy areas in forest openings. <http://wisplants.uwsp.edu/scripts/detail.asp?SpCode=BARVIR>



**Cross-leaf milkwort** (*Polygala cruciata*)-I have found this plant in even greater numbers than Virginia bartonia. Another small, showy plant that appears to prefer similar habitats as Virginia bartonia. It is similar to *Polygala sanguinea* but with leaves in whorls around the stem. This is also a “Special Concern” species. <http://wisplants.uwsp.edu/scripts/detail.asp?SpCode=POLCRU>

(Emmet Judziewicz photo)

**Long sedge** (*Carex folliculata*)-A “Special Concern” sedge that I have found growing in skunk cabbage seeps along the Morrison Creek. Distinctive in its large broad leaves and drooping spikelets. <http://wisplants.uwsp.edu/scripts/detail.asp?SpCode=CARFOL>

### Non-Coastal Plain Disjunct plants

**Dwarf milkweed** (*Asclepias ovalafolia*)-A large population of this “Threatened” milkweed discovered by Dr. Judziewicz along Palm Rd. presumably has been extirpated. I hope I am wrong and that I have been looking in the wrong area. However, I have located a few plants farther west along the Black River uplands.



<http://wisplants.uwsp.edu/scripts/detail.asp?SpCode=ASCOVA> (continued on page 7) (Derek Anderson photo)