

SELAGINELLA RUPESTRIS (L.) Spring
Rock Spike-moss

FAMILY: Selaginellaceae

HABIT: Tufted evergreen perennial, 2-6 cm.; sporulating July-October.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Strikingly similar to a bryophyte. Distinguished by its thick leaves with ciliolate margins.

TOTAL RANGE: Que. to s. Man., s. to n. GA, AL, AR, and e. OK.

STATE RANGE: There are post-1960 collections from 3 counties: Fairfield, Jackson, and Portage. There are pre-1960 specimens from Highland, Hocking, and Licking counties.

STATE STATUS: 1980-1985: Threatened, 1986-1999: Endangered, 2000 to present: Presumed Extirpated.

HABITAT: In open sun on well-drained rock exposures, frequently in barren situations which are only periodically moist.

HAZARDS: Overgrowth by woody species through succession; trampling; rock-climbing.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, probably poor.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect complete, mature specimens; avoid over-collecting.

COMMENTS: This mat-forming fern ally is so like a moss that most people probably overlook it. All known populations in Ohio were very small in extent. Not all of these may still be extant. This species should be sought in appropriate habitats throughout Ohio. More populations likely may be located.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Flora of North America Editorial Committee, eds. 1993+. Flora of North America North of Mexico. 4+ vols. New York and Oxford. (The Selaginellaceae is treated in Volume 2.)

Mohlenbrock, R.H. 1967. Illustrated flora of Illinois: the ferns. Southern Illinois Univ. Press, Carbondale, IL.



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