

Pondberry

Lindera melissifolia

Guidelines for Landowners Using Conservation Practices

Missouri Department of
Conservation

Common name ▪ Pondberry
Scientific name ▪ *Lindera melissifolia*
State status ▪ Endangered
Federal status ▪ Endangered

Ecology

Pondberry, also referred to as Southern spicebush, is a moderate-sized deciduous shrub found in swampy, sandy depressions of lowland forests. Pondberry usually grows in large clonal clumps and grows anywhere from 1.5 to 8 feet tall. In order to thrive, this plant requires periodically inundated sandy soils in heavily shaded areas, although it can tolerate full sun. Pondberry produces blooms from March to early April before its leaves emerge. It is able to produce new plants either vegetatively, by sending out rhizomes, or by the production of seeds in late summer. Currently, only one known population occurs in the state in southeastern Ripley County. Pondberry can also be found in Arkansas, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina.

Reasons for Decline

Pondberry populations declined as a result of the clearing of bottomland forests and the drainage of wetlands for agricultural use. The seasonally inundated sandy swales where it occurs in Missouri are particularly subject to alterations of the local water table.

Recommendations

Pondberry is associated with mature bottomland hardwood forests and these areas should be protected or restored. Altering the hydrology in areas where pondberry occurs will have a detrimental effect on this shrub. Do not drain, ditch, or fill wetlands, and if possible, restore wetlands in

suitable areas. A survey of the project area should be conducted by a trained biologist in March or early April, prior to altering wooded swales or bottomland forests in southeastern Ripley County.

Promote land management activities that restore lowland forest communities. Areas adjacent to existing pondberry sites should be managed in such a way as to prevent the introduction of nonnative species or possible degradation of the native plant community.

Consider the balance between adverse and beneficial practices when determining the overall effect of a conservation practice.



Photo Credit: Missouri Department of Conservation

Beneficial Practices

- Restoring natural hydrologic regime of wooded sandy swales and bottomland forest in southeastern Ripley County.
- Excluding livestock and wild hogs from areas where pondberry occurs.
- Controlling invasive plants in areas where this species occurs. To minimize harm to this species use a selective herbicide or well timed application with a nonselective herbicide when this plant is dormant.

Adverse Practices

- Degradation or destruction of bottomland forest and wooded sandy swales where pondberry occurs.

- Conducting earthmoving practices or causing erosion that destroys or degrades communities with this species.
- Altering the hydrology of wetlands where pondberry is found.
- Logging, timber stand improvement or timber clearing activities at any known site.
- Establishing invasive vegetation on sites or nearby where it could spread into the native plant community, and thus degrade or destroy habitat for this species.
- Applying a nonselective or broadleaf herbicide in areas where this species is located and actively growing.
- Unmanaged application of pesticides, animal waste or fertilizers that destroys or degrades sites with pondberry populations.
- Livestock grazing.

for impacts to such species are expressed in the Missouri Wildlife Code, rule 3 CSR 10-4.111.

Species listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act must be considered in projects receiving federal funds or requiring permits under the Clean Water Act, with compliance issues resolved in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Information Contacts

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<http://www.mdc.mo.gov/nathis/endangered/>

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 Ecological Services Field Office
 101 Park DeVillie Dr., Suite A
 Columbia, MO 65203
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<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/partners/missouri.html>

Legal

The Missouri Department of Conservation prepared these guidelines for conservation practices with assistance from other state agencies, contractors, and others to provide guidance to those people who wish to voluntarily act to protect wildlife and habitat.

Compliance with these management guidelines is not required by the Missouri wildlife and forestry law or by any regulation of the Missouri Conservation Commission. Other federal, state or local laws may affect construction practices.

“State Endangered Status” is determined by the Missouri Conservation Commission under constitutional authority, and specific requirements