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Laurel Voran LLC

Michigan monkey-flower preservation, native restoration & horticultural services

MICHIGAN MONKEY-FLOWER PRESERVATION at OLD SETTLERS' PARK: 2020



Thick mat of monkey flower shares a stream bank with budded marsh marigold. April 20, 2020

We are fortunate to have a thriving population of Michigan monkey flower at Old Settlers' park. After the mild winter of 2019-20, monkey flower colonies are more robust than usual at this time of year, as pictured above. Though off to a strong start, Michigan monkey flower is an endangered species and without continued active management and protection, this population would surely be overtaken by taller, more aggressive competitors during the growing season. With our help, monkey flower has made a great recovery at Old Settlers' park and it is important that we continue to protect it and its environment, keeping this unique ecosystem intact and allowing future generations to admire this extremely rare plant.

What is Michigan monkey flower?

- Scientific name: *Mimulus michiganensis* (synonym: *Erythranthe michiganensis*)
- Semi-aquatic, herbaceous, perennial.
- Ideal habitat: mucky soil of stream edges, alkaline environment (pH 7.66 - 8.21) and cold (47 - 62 °F) flowing water.
- Habit: Stems to approx. 15", trailing horizontally, rooting in at each leaf node to form low mats of plant colonies.
- Flowers: Bright yellow, shaped similar to snapdragons, heaviest bloom from mid -June thru late July
- Natural range: Grows only in Grand Traverse region and straits of Mackinac. Only approximately 17 populations remain. It is a rare and endangered plant, listed on state and federal endangered species lists. It is endemic to this region, growing best in the unique environment such as is found along portions of the Big Glen Lake shoreline.
- Several scholarly professional references site the colonies at Glen Lake as some of the largest and healthiest populations. The vigor our our population is due to the fact that we have the perfect environment for it and are actively caring for it, keeping competitors at bay.
- Threats: development, encroaching species, changes in hydrology.

PROPOSAL for 2020:

Continuation of *Mimulus michiganensis* (Michigan monkey flower) preservation at Old Settlers' Park: With same budget as last year, maintain current populations and continue to open up clogged but existing seeps to which we can transplant monkey flower, thus increasing the number of colonies.

PROPOSED ROJECT FUNDING AND BUDGET for 2020:

Continued unique partnership between county, neighbors, a lake association and a local business:

\$1,440.00 contributed by neighbors and Laurel Voran LLC. (\$480 each entity)

\$960 contributed by Glen Lake Association

\$960.00 contributed by Leelanau county

WORK PERFORMED:

- Manage competing plants:

-Jewel weed, watercress, Canada thistle, mint, various grasses.

These plants would choke out the monkey flower if left untended. Each one is best removed at a different time during the growing season. Removing them opens up spaces into which the monkey-flower colonies can expand. Over time we have shifted the balance between competitors and monkey-flower. Except for Canadian thistle, we do not intend to eradicate any of the competitors, but rather maintain a more healthy balance between them and the monkey-flower.

- Seasonal cutbacks of surrounding area, enhancing view from popular viewing platform
- Haul debris off site
- Maintain valid Endangered Species Permit required by DNR to work with the monkey flower
- Answer questions from visitors regarding monkey flower
- Monitor for damage/disease and respond appropriately

Thank you for your time and consideration toward continued support of this important project.

Laurel Voran

5.18.20