

# The Occurrence of Four Rare Plants in Cook County

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## ABSTRACT

*Geranium bicknelli* Britt. and *Chamaesyce polygonifolia* (L.) Small, both state endangered, were recently found in Cook County where no extant populations had been known. While known in Cook County from one station each, additional populations of state threatened *Cakile edentula* (Bigelow) Hook. ssp. *lacustris* (Fern.) Hulten and state endangered *Ammophila breviligulata* Fern. were also discovered.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Populations of *Geranium bicknelli* Britt. (northern cranesbill) and *Chamaesyce polygonifolia* (L.) Small (seaside spurge), both state endangered, were recently discovered in Cook County. Prior to these finds, no extant stations for the two species were known from the county; all existing sites previously known in Illinois are located within Lake County (Herkert, 1991). In addition, new populations of *Cakile edentula* (Bigelow) Hook. ssp. *lacustris* (Fern.) Hulten (sea rocket), a state threatened species, and *Ammophila breviligulata* Fern., a state endangered species, were also found in Cook County. Each species had previously been represented by only one station in Cook County (Illinois Natural Heritage Database). Voucher specimens or photographs have been deposited at the Morton Arboretum.

### *Geranium bicknelli*

In June 1993, 29 of these plants were discovered on a recently-burned railroad right-of way in Northbrook growing in close proximity to *G. carolinianum* L.

### *Cakile edentula* ssp. *lacustris*

On September 19, 1993, *C. edentula* was found on the Montrose Harbor beach on Chicago's lakefront. Alan Stokie (personal communication) indicated that he had observed the species there in the late 1980's and counted six individual plants in September 1992. This information prompted a systematic search of Cook County beaches which revealed 23 populations of *C. edentula*, two of which are quite large: 150

at South Boulevard Beach in Evanston and 240 at Rainbow Beach in Chicago. (See Table 1)

***Chamaesyce polygonifolia***

The above mentioned beach survey also resulted in the discovery of 13 populations of this species, the three largest of which are 250 at Tower Beach in Winnetka, 600 at Rainbow Beach in Chicago, and 200 south of the South Water Filtration Plant in Chicago. (See Table 1).

***Ammophila breviligulata***

Three small populations of this plant were discovered in Evanston (where they may have been planted as part of a dune restoration), Winnetka, and Wilmette.

The greatest threats to the continued existence of the above three plants are beach cleaning, vehicular trespass, and trodding by thousands of human feet. It is interesting that many of the populations are afforded protection from these activities by their locations near boat racks, retaining walls, and other man-made structures, on beaches with limited access, and amidst *Cenchrus longispinus* (Hack.) Fern.

#### LITERATURE CITED

Herkert, J.R. editor. 1991. Endangered and Threatened Species of Illinois: Status and Distribution, Volume 1- Plants. Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board, Springfield, Illinois.

Table 1. Number of populations and individuals of *Chamaesyce polygonifolia* and *Cakile edentula* ssp. *lacustris* in Cook County.

	<i>Chamaesyce polygonifolia</i>		<i>Cakile edentula</i>	
	Populations	Individuals	Populations	Individuals
Glencoe:	1	(19)	1	(5)
Winnetka:	4	(19)(4)(250)(50)	6	(14)(5)(3)(8)(9)(3)
Wilmette:	2	(30)(23)	6	(21)(10)(4)(1)(29)(10)
Evanston:	4	(5)(2)(6)(19)	7	(150)(1)(90)(3)(12)(1)(12)
Chicago:	2	(600)(200)	3	(12)(240)(11)