

RARE PLANTS ON EAST LIMESTONE ISLAND: A FOUR-YEAR UPDATE

Joanna L. Smith¹

Laskeek Bay Conservation Society, Box 867, Queen Charlotte, BC V0T 1S0

With its distinctive limestone bedrock, East Limestone Island is home to many interesting plants. In 1998, a vascular plant checklist was published for East Limestone Island, with an emphasis on the occurrence of rare or uncommon species (Smith and Buttler 1999). Most of the rare plants occur in small numbers (< 20 individuals) on cliffs, overhangs, or rock faces that are inaccessible to the introduced Sitka black-tailed deer. The Laskeek Bay Conservation Society tracks the persistence of rare plants to assess the long-term effects of the black-tailed deer and maintain a floral record for the island.

To update the previous inventory and to record the specific locations of the rare plants for future surveys, known sites were visited in June- July 2002 and plants were noted as present or absent. At each site, the exact coordinates (using GPS) were recorded (Figure 1, Table 1). All but three rare plants inventoried in 1998 were still present in 2002 (Table 2). The three species not found, Rattlesnake plantain, *Goodyera oblongifolia* (site M), Menzies' pipsissewa, *Chimaphila menziesii* (site N), and broad-petalled gentian, *Gentiana platypetala* (site K), grow in areas more accessible to deer than the other rare species (i.e. interior forest and open rock). A second effort to locate rattlesnake plantain on Limestone Island was also unsuccessful (S. Stockton, pers. comm). The introduced wall lettuce, *Lactuca muralis*, still occurs on Limestone Island but it is not yet widespread. And finally, a new location for Richardson's geranium, *Geranium richardsonii*, was found on the northwest tip of the island (site F).

Two species of plants on Limestone island, the cut-leafed anemone, *Anemone multifida*, and Richardson's geranium are restricted in Haida Gwaii to this location (Calder and Taylor 1968). Many other species have a limited distribution in the archipelago. The long-term protection of these habitats is important and a regular inventory of these species will aid in tracking short-term changes in their populations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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REFERENCES

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- Smith, J. and I. Buttler. 1999. Plants recorded on East Limestone Island, with a particular emphasis on the occurrence of rare and uncommon species. In: Gaston, A.J. (ed.) Laskeek Bay Conservation Society 8. Laskeek Bay Conservation Society, Queen Charlotte City, BC. Pp. 31-41.

¹ Current address: School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, University of Washington, Box 355020, Seattle, WA 98195

Figure 1.
Locations of rare plants on Limestone Island 2002 (see Table 1). Map is not to scale.

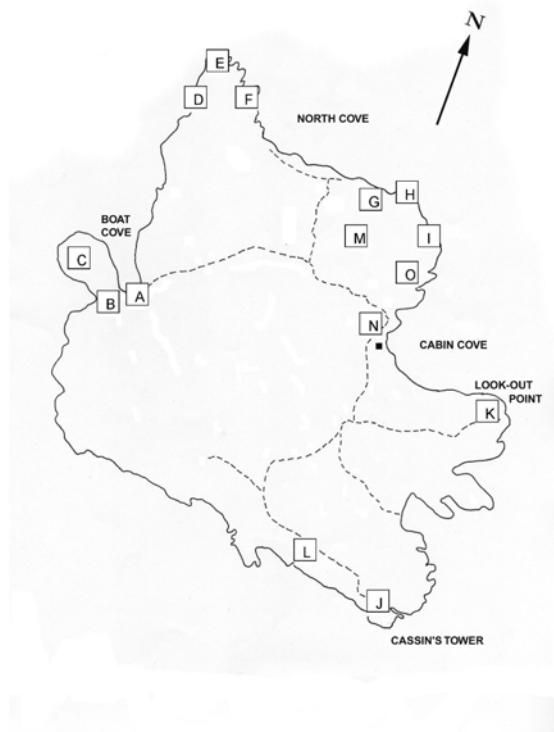


Table 1.
Locations of rare plants on East Limestone Island (see Fig. 1)

Site	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	± m	Description
A	52° 54.521'	131° 37.025'		Boat Cove
B	52° 54.510'	131° 37.086'	17	Anemone Cove
C	52° 54.523'	131° 37.109'	13	NW point Anemone Cove
D	52° 54.739'	131° 36.907'		Almost to N tip of ELI
E	52° 54.743'	131° 36.885'	8	N tip, just east of tip
F	52° 54.742'	131° 36.831'		SH3, NE side of N tip
G	52° 54.616'	131° 36.625'	28	N shore, past F1 to east
H	52° 54.650'	131° 36.551'	25	NE shore, at curve of ELI
I	52° 54.564'	131° 36.50'		E shore, rock ramp before cabin
J	52° 54.237'	131° 36.613'		Cassin's tower area, south slope
K	52° 54'	131° 36'		Look-out Point
L	52° 54'	131° 36'		South ridge, along shoreline
M	52° 54'	131° 36'		Interior Plot 3 (RGIS)
N	52° 54'	131° 36'		Near cabin, 3m NW of front door
O	52° 54'	131° 36'		Shoreline Plot 1 (RGIS)

Table 2
Updated inventory of rare plants on Limestone Island 2002 (see Smith and Buttler 1999).

Site	Species	Common name	Present
A,B,F	<i>Anemone multifida</i>	cut-leafed anemone	v
A-C,K	<i>Aquilegia formosa</i>	red columbine	v
A	<i>Chaemecyparis nootkatensis</i>	yellow cedar	v
A	<i>Polemonium pulcherrimum</i>	showy Jacob's ladder	v
B,D,E	<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon berry	v
B,D,E,G,K	<i>Dodecatheon pulchellum</i>	few-flowered shooting star	v
B,G,K	<i>Fritillaria camschatcensis</i>	northern rice root	v
B	<i>Lactuca muralis</i>	wall lettuce (introduced)	v
C,I,J	<i>Castilleja unalaschcensis</i>	Unalaskan paintbrush	v
D-E	<i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>	coastal strawberry	v
D-E	<i>Rosa nutkana</i>	Nootka rose	v
E,F,I	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	curled dock	v
F,H,I	<i>Geranium richardsonii</i>	Richardson's geranium	v
H	<i>Minuartia tenella</i>	slender sandwort	v
J-L	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	self heal	v
J	<i>Rosa nutkana</i>	Nootka rose	v
J	<i>Sisyrinchium littorale</i>	shore blue-eyed grass	v
K	<i>Gentiana platypetala</i>	Broad-petalled gentian	X
M	<i>Goodyera oblongifolia</i>	rattlesnake plantain	X
N, O	<i>Chimaphila menziesii</i>	Menzies' pipsissewa	X