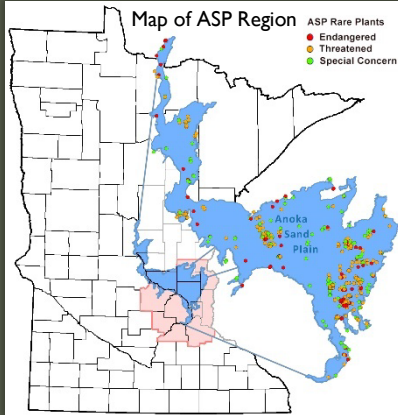


Anoka Sand Plain Rare Plant Rescue Program 2023 Newsletter



Program Overview

Anoka Sand Plain Rare Plant Rescue Program is a collaborative partnership focused on protecting rare plants in the Anoka Sand Plain (ASP) region. The ASP spans across several metro counties and supports 59 of MN's state-listed species (or nearly 20%) while representing only 2.2% of MN's land area. Our team collaborates with the MN Department of Natural Resources, landowners and developers to rescue rare plants from permitted development project areas before construction begins. We accomplish this with a team of ecologists and dedicated volunteers who help us to quickly mobilize and implement rescues. Rescued plants are transplanted into permanently protected natural areas with ecologically appropriate habitat and are monitored overtime.

2023 Accomplishments

- Rescued over 900 state threatened and endangered plants from destruction at 3 new development project sites! This includes black huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*), Fuller's bristle-berry (*Rubus fulleri*), swamp blackberry (*Rubus semisetosus*), bristle-berry (*Rubus stipulatus*), and lance-leaved violet (*Viola lanceolata*).
- Transplanted over 600 rescued rare plants and plants from seed germination trials including: 48 Fuller's bristle-berry (*Rubus fulleri*), 72 black huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*), 495 lance-leaved violet (*Viola lanceolata*), 29 twisted yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris torta*) plants and toothcup (*Rotala ramosior*) seed into permanently protected natural areas.
- Implemented follow-up monitoring of previous rescue transplants to calculate survival rate and document success rates of locations, methods, and other tactic experimentations.



Participants rescuing *Gaylussacia baccata* from a development site.



Volunteers potting rescued *G. baccata* for later transplanting.

- Collected seed from 5 rare plant ASP populations for genetic preservation in the MN Landscape Arboretum's Rare Plant Seed Bank.
- Began stem cutting and/or germination experimentations on black huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*), bristle-berries (*Rubus sp.*), and cross-leaved milkwort (*Polygala cruciata*) to improve methods and success rates of rescue and propagation efforts.
- Collaborated with the City of Blaine to adjust land management practices around a rare population of state endangered slimspike three-awn (*Aristida longespica*) located in a public park and working to design an informational sign in support of the species.

Looking Forward

- Many 2023 rescued plants are overwintering at the MN Landscape Arboretum to help recuperate from uprooting and improve transplant success. In 2024, these plants will be ready to be moved into their new permanently protected homes!
- As the original habitats are lost, we will continue to seek out and survey new suitable habitats for the rescued transplants. Rare plants are rare for a reason; they often have particular habitat constraints that are not always common to find or even well understood.
- Research efforts continue as we expand our knowledge about these rare species. We will continue to conduct trials in the field, the lab, and the greenhouses to improve strategies and increase our success.
- Conservation Plans are also being developed for the rare species of the ASP. These are informative documents that outline methods and protocols for rescue and conservation tailored to the unique needs of each species.
- We are anticipating additional rescue events in 2024. Please stay tuned and [sign up here](#) to join our contact list!



C. baccata recovering in a greenhouse until fall transplanting.



Volunteers preparing to rescue *Rubus* sp and *Viola lanceolata*.

To our Supporters

We couldn't have achieved such a successful year without the help of our volunteers and partners! Rescue event notifications often come on short notice, so your ability to respond and show up ready to work makes a huge difference!

Thank You!



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*Funding for this project was provided from the [Outdoor Heritage Fund](#) to restore, protect, and enhance Minnesota's wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife.