



TREES AND PLANTS

RUNNING BUFFALO CLOVER

ABOUT

Running Buffalo Clover (*Trifolium stoloniferum*) is a member of the Bean family. It has white flowers tinged with purple which appear between May and July on a stem with a pair of leaflets unique to this species. The three leaflets of the clover lack the arrow-shaped “watermarks” other clovers have. This species has runners (stolons) that extend from the base of the stem, and is able to root and expand from a small clump of clover to one or more larger ones. It likes partly sunny locations with moist, fertile soil, tolerating only moderate disturbances such as mowing, trampling, and grazing.

DID YOU KNOW?

Between 1940 and 1985 the Running Buffalo Clover was thought to be extinct. However, two populations were rediscovered in West Virginia. Since that discovery, a number of populations have been found in five of the eight states where it was originally distributed. Estimates are that there are two populations in Indiana, 23 in Kentucky, 3 in Missouri, 12 in Ohio and 25 in West Virginia. Like so many rare plants, threats facing the Running Buffalo Clover include habitat loss, population isolation, excessive grazing, loss of insects to pollinate, competition from non-native plants, and susceptibility to new diseases. Also, the populations are so small that it may lead to further inbreeding depression.

For more detailed information visit: www.centerforplantconservation.org.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

What are stolons?

- a) Seeds
- b) Leaves
- c) Runners
- d) Roots

The Answer is C.

