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OPTIMUM CONDITIONS FOR THE GERMINATION OF SEEDS  
OF CEDAR GLADE PLANTS: A REVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

Conditions necessary for obtaining maximum germination in certain cedar glade plants, including fourteen perennials, seven spring annuals and sixteen winter annuals, are summarized. Data are obtained principally from published papers. Whereas seeds of spring-germinating species require special pre-treatments, seeds of fall-germinating species require no such pre-treatments. Also, maximum germination of seeds of the former category occurs at somewhat higher temperatures than does that of seeds of the latter.

Compared with seeds of cultivated plants which have been selected for high, rapid, and simultaneous germination, those of wild, native plants often do not

attain a high percentage of germination at any single combination of environmental conditions or at any one time. On the contrary, such seeds may possess some means by which germination can be delayed, occurring either gradually over a considerable time span, or at higher percentages following an extended pre-treatment period.

Braun (1950) considered the cedar glades the most distinctive feature of the Central Basin of Tennessee. The unique flora was described by Gattinger (1901), Harper (1926), Freeman (1933) and Quarterman (1950a,b). Rocky, barren flats containing deep, vertical cracks are formed on Lebanon (Ordovician) limestone. As used by Quarterman (1950b), the term

"cedar glade" is properly applied to the open spaces consisting of exposed rock and thin soil surrounded by woods typically including red cedar. Plants growing in cedar glades, as well as the seeds of such plants, are subjected to hot, dry summers which alternate with cool, moist winters.

Only in recent years has seed germination in cedar glade plants been investigated. Autecological investigators of cedar glade species have used controlled laboratory conditions to determine optimum or near-optimum conditions for germination. Such information has a two-fold use: 1) it can be related to the conditions under which germination occurs in the field and 2) it has practical value in experiments in which the laboratory germination of seeds of cedar glade plants is required.

The present review was compiled using principally results of published papers on seed germination in cedar glade plants, those items of unpublished data obtained by one of the authors being included only when germination results for a given species have not been previously published, or when such germination percentages exceeded those of previously published data. All species in this study were among those included in a check-list of glade plants by Baskin, Caudle and Quarterman (1968). Although a few introduced

species are included, most are either endemic to or characteristic of cedar glades.

Conditions necessary for obtaining maximum germination are indicated in Tables 1-3, in which fourteen perennials, seven spring annuals and sixteen winter annuals, respectively, are listed. Final germination counts were made at the end of a four-week or thirty-day period, although most of the germination typically occurred during the first week or two. In those instances in which germination was considerably less than 100%, it can be assumed that combinations of pre-treatment and germination regimen not yet attempted might result in higher germination figures or that only a fraction of a given seed crop germinates during a given year.

The seeds of perennials (Table 1) that germinate in the spring (all except *Delphinium*) require either scarification or an extended stratification period in order to achieve maximum germination. Seeds of all spring annuals (Table 2) required ten to twenty-eight weeks of stratification. In contrast, seeds of winter annuals (Table 3) never require stratification, high germination percentages being attained at maturity or following periods of from four to twenty-six weeks of dry storage. Pre-treatment requirements in *Delphinium* compare well with those of winter annuals.

TABLE 1: Conditions necessary for maximum germination of seeds of cedar glade perennials.

| Species   | Pre-treatment             | Germination     |     | Reference                      |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------|-----|--------------------------------|
|   |                           | °C              | %   |                                |
| <i>Astragalus tennesseensis</i><br>Gray (Leguminosae)               | scarification             | 25              | 90  | Baskin and<br>Quarterman, 1969 |
|   | scarification & leaching  | 25              | 100 |                                |
| <i>Agave virginica</i> L.<br>(Amaryllidaceae)                       | 8 weeks<br>stratification | 18              | 100 | Baskin and<br>Baskin, 1971a    |
|   |                           | 28              | 100 |                                |
|   |                           | 18/28           | 100 |                                |
| <i>Delphinium virescens</i> Nutt. <sup>a</sup><br>(Ranunculaceae)   | 3.5 mo. dry storage       | 15              | 100 | Baskin and<br>Baskin, 1974c    |
| <i>Desmanthus illinoensis</i><br>(Michx.) Macm.<br>(Leguminosae)    | scarification             | room temp.      | 100 | Latting, 1961                  |
| <i>Dodecatheon meadia</i><br>L. var. <i>meadia</i><br>(Primulaceae) | 8 weeks stratification    | 10              | 85  | Turner and<br>Quarterman, 1968 |
| <i>Echinacea pallida</i><br>Nutt. (Compositae)                      | 16 weeks stratification   | 10/25<br>(dark) | 66  | Hemmerly,<br>unpublished data  |
| <i>Echinacea tennesseensis</i><br>(Beadle) Small<br>(Compositae)    | 16 weeks stratification   | 15              | 67  | Hemmerly,<br>unpublished data  |
| <i>Eragrostis spectabilis</i><br>(Pursh) Steud.<br>(Gramineae)      | 10 weeks stratification   | 10/25           | 100 | Hemmerly,<br>unpublished data  |
| <i>Petalostemon gattingeri</i><br>Heller (Leguminosae)              | scarification             | 25              | 88  | Breeden, 1968                  |

|   |  |       |     |                                |
|---|--|-------|-----|--------------------------------|
| <i>Petalostemon purpureum</i><br>(Vent.) Rydb.<br>(Leguminosae) | scarification                                | 25    | 97  | Breeden, 1968                  |
| <i>Psoralea subcaulis</i><br>T. and G. (Leguminosae)            | scarification & leaching                     | 30    | 100 | Baskin and<br>Quarterman, 1970 |
| <i>Ruellia humilis</i><br>Nutt. (Acanthaceae)                   | 14 weeks stratification                      | 30    | 76  | Baskin and<br>Baskin, 1970b    |
|   | 1,000 mg/1 GA <sub>3</sub> for               | 25    | 99  |                                |
| <i>Talinum calcaricum</i><br>Ware (Portulacaceae)               | 6 weeks stratification                       | 7/27  | 98  | Ware and<br>Quarterman, 1969   |
| <i>Viola egglestonii</i><br>Brainerd (Violaceae)                | 16 weeks stratification<br>(cold greenhouse) | 10/20 | 95  | Baskin and<br>Baskin, 1975d    |

<sup>a</sup> Field germination occurs in the fall; for other species listed, germination occurs in the spring.

TABLE 2: Conditions necessary for maximum germination of seeds of cedar glade spring annuals.

| Species  | Pre-treatment                                 | Germination |     | Reference                       |
|--|---|-------------|-----|---------------------------------|
|  |   | °C          | %   |                                 |
| <i>Ambrosia artemisiifolia</i> L. <sup>a</sup><br>(Compositae) | 12 weeks stratification                       | 15/25       | 72  | Willemsen, 1975                 |
| <i>Aristida longespica</i><br>Poir (Gramineae)                 | 10 weeks stratification                       | 10/25       | 100 | Hemmerly,<br>unpublished data   |
| <i>Cyperus aristatus</i><br>Rottb. (Cyperaceae)                | 18 weeks stratification                       | 18/28       | 95  | Baskin and<br>Baskin, 1971e     |
| <i>Isanthus brachiatus</i><br>(L.) BSP (Labiatae)              | 14 weeks stratification                       | 25          | 43  | Baskin and<br>Baskin, 1969      |
|  | 1,000 mg/ GA <sub>3</sub> for<br>24 hours     | 15          | 71  | Baskin and<br>Baskin, 1974a     |
|  | 3 separated 14-week<br>stratification periods | 15/30       | 97  | Baskin and<br>Baskin, 1975e     |
| <i>Lobelia gattingeri</i><br>A. Gray (Campanulaceae)           | 16 weeks stratification                       | 25          | 67  | Caudle and<br>Baskin, 1968a     |
| <i>Panicum capillare</i> L.<br>(Gramineae)                     | 28 weeks stratification                       | 25          | 92  | Baskin and<br>Baskin, 1969      |
| <i>Sporobolus vaginiflorus</i><br>(Torr.) wood (Gramineae)     | 6 weeks stratification                        | 25          | 100 | Quarterman,<br>unpublished data |

<sup>a</sup> Introduced species.

TABLE 3: Conditions necessary for maximum germination of seeds of cedar glade winter annuals.

| Species   | Pre-treatment  | Germination           |     | Reference                             |                      |
|---|--|-----------------------|-----|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
|   |  | °C                    | %   |                                       |                      |
| <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> <sup>a</sup><br>(L.) Heyn. (Cruciferae)       | 1 mo. dry storage  | 10                    | 100 | Baskin and Baskin, 1972b              |                      |
| <i>Arenaria patula</i><br>(Michx. (Caryophyllaceae)                       | none   | 15                    | 73  | Caudle and Baskin, 1968b,             |                      |
| <i>Bupleurum rotundifolium</i><br>L. (Umbelliferae)                       | 2 mo. dry storage  | 15/6<br>(dark)        | 81  | Baskin and Baskin, 1974b              |                      |
| <sup>a</sup> <i>Draba verna</i> L.<br>(Cruciferae)                        | 5 mo. dry storage  | 15                    | 100 | Baskin and Baskin, 1970a              |                      |
| <i>Geranium carolinianum</i><br>(L. (Geraniaceae)                         | 1.5 dry storage and scarification                              | 5, 10, 15,<br>20, 25  | 100 | Baskin and Baskin, 1974d              |                      |
|   |  | 15/6, 20/10,<br>30/15 | 100 | Baskin and Baskin, 1974d              |                      |
|   | 3 mo. dry storage  | 35/20                 | 100 | Baskin and Baskin, 1974d              |                      |
| <i>Helenium amarum</i> (Raf.) <sup>a,b</sup><br>H. Rock (Compositae)      | none   | 15                    | 100 | Baskin and Baskin, 1973a              |                      |
|   |  | 10/25                 | 100 |                                       |                      |
| <i>Holosteum umbellatum</i> <sup>a</sup><br>L. (Caryophyllaceae)          | 26 weeks dry storage   | 10                    | 70  | Baskin and Baskin, 1973b              |                      |
| <i>Leavenworthia crassa</i><br>Rollins (Cruciferae)                       | 4 mo. dry storage  | 10                    | 87  | Caudle and Baskin, 1968b              |                      |
| <i>Leavenworthia exigua</i><br>Rollins var. <i>exigua</i><br>(Cruciferae) | 4-5 mo. dry storage  | 15                    | 72  | Baskin and Baskin, 1972c              |                      |
| <i>Leavenworthia stylosa</i><br>Gray (Cruciferae)                         | 5 mo. dry storage +<br>5 days moisture + 25-<br>day dry period | 22/26                 | 84  | Zager, Quarterman,<br>and Waits, 1971 |                      |
| <i>Leavenworthia torulosa</i><br>Gray (Cruciferae)                        | 5 mo. dry storage  | 15                    | 58  | Baskin and Baskin, 1971b              |                      |
| <i>Leavenworthia uniflora</i><br>(Michx.) Britt.<br>(Cruciferae)          | 5 mo. dry storage  | 12/23                 | 95  | Baskin and Baskin, 1971b              |                      |
|   |  | 20                    | 95  |                                       |                      |
| <i>Phacelia dubia</i> L. var.<br><i>dubia</i> (Hydrophyllaceae)           | 2 mo. dry storage  | 15                    | 90  | Baskin and Baskin, 1971c              |                      |
| <i>Sedum pulchellum</i><br>Michx. (Crassulaceae)                          | 4 mo. dry storage  | 10                    | 85  | Caudle and Baskin, 1968b              |                      |
| <i>Torilis japonica</i> (Houtt.) <sup>a</sup><br>DC. (Umbelliferae)       | none   | 20/10                 | 95  | Baskin and Baskin, 1975c              |                      |
| <i>Valerianella umbilicata</i><br>(Sull.) Wood.<br>(Valerianaceae)        | 4 mo. dry storage  | 30/16                 | 86  | Baskin and Baskin, 1976               |                      |
|   |  |                       |     |                                       | f. <i>patellaria</i> |
|   |  |                       |     |                                       | f. <i>intermedia</i> |

<sup>a</sup> Introduced species.<sup>b</sup> Also considered a spring annual.

In summarizing optimum temperatures for germination, the following patterns emerge: seeds of spring-germinating perennials and spring annuals require, in most instances, somewhat higher temperatures (commonly 25 C) than do those of winter annuals, which usually germinate best at 10 or 15 C. Alternating temperatures (most often 10/25 C) provided maximum results only in approximately one-fourth of the species tested.

Comparisons were made with respect to required pre-treatment, germination temperature and maximum germination obtained on the bases of annual vs. perennial habit, indigenous vs. introduced species and time of field germination. The only consistent relationship was that between seeds of spring-germinating species which required, in all cases, special pre-treatment in contrast to seeds of fall-germinating species which required no such pre-treatment, being capable of germinating at high percentages at maturity or following dry storage. It is obvious that in the field pre-treatment requirements postpone germination until the following spring, thus avoiding the subjection of seedlings to winter conditions. In species lacking such requirements, the seedlings which result from fall germination have adaptations which enable at least some of them to survive the winter.

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