Differentiation of Plant Species Having Disjunct Distributions in the Mountains and Coastal Plain of North Carolina

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July 31, 2015

Field Botany and Ecology

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ABSTRACT

The disjunct distribution of plant species is prevalent in many communities. In North Carolina there are species that appear in the mountain communities of the Appalachian, recede in the Piedmont, and once again become visible in the Coastal Plain. Six species found only in the Mountains and Costal Plains of North Carolina were observed to come to a conclusion on wether there are noticeable and substantial differences in the morphological features of the species depending on their natural environment. The species being observed are: Leiophyllum buxifolia (Sand Myrtle), Chamaedaphne calyculata (Leatherleaf), Kalmia carolina (Carolina Laurel), Triphora trianthophora (Three Birds Orchid), Cleistes divaricata (Spreading Pogonia), and Symplocos tinctoria (Horsesugar). They were carefully examined to find any considerable differences in their physical characteristics to determine if those differences were caused because of where those plants inhabit to withstand the conditions which they have to survive in depending on the distinct climates. If there are no differences it will show whether the plant is able to sustain itself in any climate without making any changes to its morphological features.