

BHWP Code of Ethics for Plant Collecting Activities

Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve collects Pennsylvania native plants for purposes of education, horticulture and conservation. In order to conduct such activities in an ethical manner, BHWP hereby adopts the following code of ethics to guide our collecting activities. The code below addresses ethical issues of two sorts, those regarding our stewardship responsibilities toward native plant populations and those regarding our conduct with respect to land owners and their property rights.

First and foremost, all collecting will be conducted legally. BHWP will comply with all federal and state law pertaining to protected plant species. In particular, any required collecting permits will be obtained. BHWP will not engage in trespass nor participate, however indirectly or covertly, in theft of plants belonging to others.

Regardless of the protected status of any plants of interest, and regardless of whether collecting will be on public or private land, written permission to collect from the land owner will be obtained in advance. Permission may be open and unspecified with respect to what may be collected and when, but if the permission carries restrictions, these will be honored. The landowner will be informed of the results of collecting activity and appropriately acknowledged.

In the process of collecting plant material, BHWP will strive to minimize impacts both to the local plant population and to the property on which it is located. Collecting activities will be conducted so as not to materially diminish the viability of a plant population. Seed collection and cuttings are the preferred collecting methods. Collection of whole plants will be reserved for salvage situations or for species without protected status that are also abundant. Material will only be collected if there is a reasonable prospect that it will survive and thrive at BHWP.

In order to avoid ethical conflicts involving remuneration, BHWP will not offer to purchase plants from landowners, particularly on a per plant basis. However, reimbursement of incidental expenses to the landowner is allowed.

Collected plant material is intended for the grounds of BHWP and is not to be sold. However, plants may be sold that were subsequently propagated from the originally collected plant material provided that the species has been established on the BHWP grounds or in its nursery.

Occasionally, plant material may be acquired by more indirect means than field collection on our own part. For example, donations may be offered of plant material that has already been collected by others. Or, desirable plant material may be purchased from a commercial nursery if a species is not readily available through wild collection. Acquisition by such indirect means does not release BHWP from a high standard of ethical conduct. In such cases, BHWP will strive to determine if the original collection met satisfactory ethical standards, and will not acquire the plant material if it suspects such standards were not met.