



Outreach

Warnell School of Forestry & Natural Resources

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Endangered Species:

HAIRY RATTLEWEED / COBWEBBY WILD INDIGO / FALSE WILD INDIGO

Baptisia arachnifera

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The hairy rattleweed is a unique plant of the Georgia Coastal Plain. It is perennial, multi-branched, 50-80cm (20-32 inches) tall with a reddish-brown stem covered by dense silvery-white trichomes (plant hairs). It is in the bean family.

Leaves are nearly round or heart-shaped, alternate, 3-8cm (1.2-3.2 inches) long, 2-7cm (0.8-2.8 inches) wide, leathery, with upper surface green, bottom surface yellowish, & covered with long, silvery-white trichomes.

Flowering is in late June to July. Flowers are bright yellow, pea-like, and grow in erect clusters at the branch tips above the leaves. Flowers have 5 petals. Fruiting is in late summer. Fruit is a bean-pod, densely covered with trichomes, 8-15mm (0.3-0.6 inches) long. The pod tapers into a long, thin point nearly as long as the body.

Hairy rattleweed is found on sandy soils in open pine woods or mixed pine-hardwoods in the southeast Coastal Plain. It is found along low, sandy ridges in pine-palmetto-gallberry flatwoods and along sandy roadsides, old fields, and under open pine plantations.

This species is fire dependent and is most abundant after fire. Thinning, cutting, and burning forest sites may improve habitat. Site/soil disturbance, moderate shading, and heavy grazing destroys habitat.

Figure 1 shows a general distribution of this species across the Southeastern United States. This species is federally listed as an endangered species. It is found in only two counties in Georgia. Figure 2 provides the county distribution in Georgia. A number of photographs are provided here showing various aspects of plant growth.

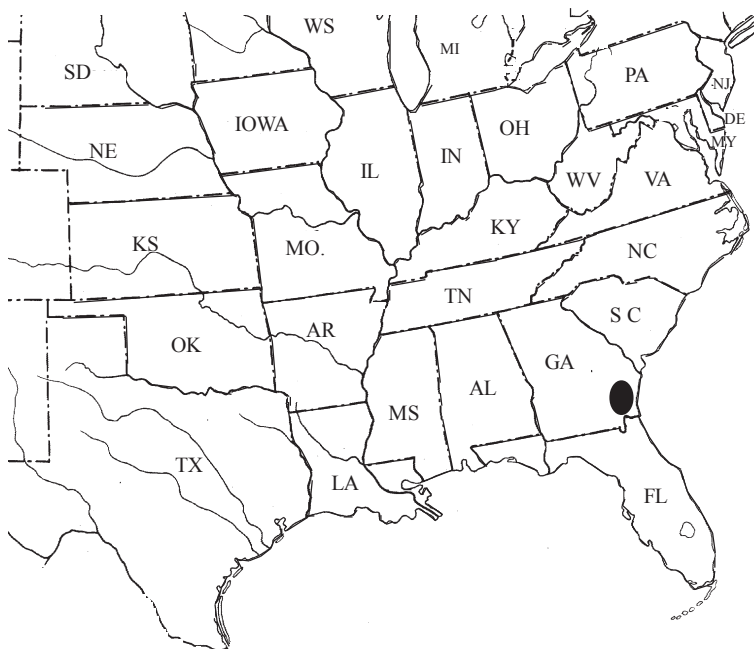


Figure 1: General distribution in the Southeastern US.



Figure 2: County distribution in Georgia.



Habitat views.

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Dr. Kim D. Coder)



Whole plants with flowers.

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Foliage, leaves and flowers. (photo credits Dr. Kim D. Coder)



Flowers, fruit, and fruit split open.

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