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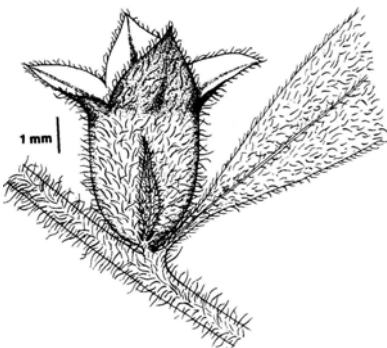
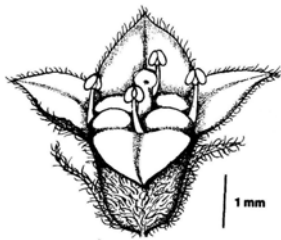
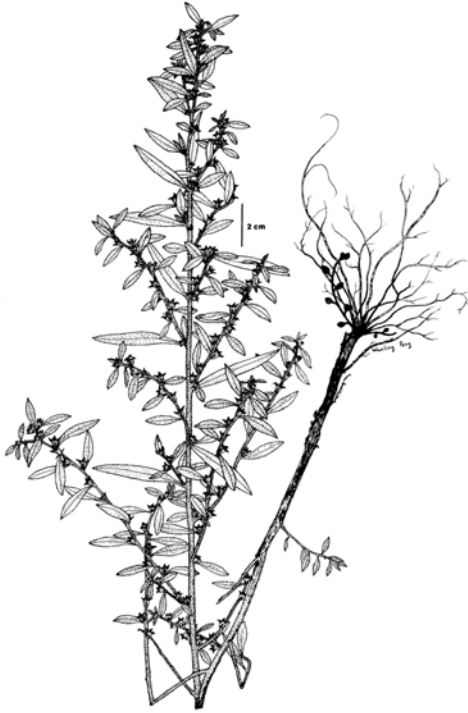
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Conserving South Carolina's At-Risk Species:

Species facing threats to their survival

Raven's seedbox

(*Ludwigia ravenii*)



Description

Raven's seedbox is a relatively newly described species. Superficially the plant resembles hairy primrose-willow (*Ludwigia pilosa*) and globefruit primrose-willow (*Ludwigia sphaerocarpa*) but careful morphological study and field observations revealed that they differ significantly in floral details and breeding system. Raven's seedbox is a branched, leafy perennial herb, usually 3.5-9 dm tall, densely covered with short, somewhat coarse hairs. Numerous inconspicuous flowers are borne in the leaf axils. The flowers have green sepals and no petals. It flowers from July-September and bears fruit from August-October. Seeds are light brown, elliptic-oblong with slightly curved ends. Where it occurs, it does not appear to grow aggressively. Consequently, the populations consist of scattered individuals instead of large colonies, as is typical in *L. pilosa* and other species.

Range

Known from the Coastal Plain of southeastern Virginia, eastern North Carolina, southeastern South Carolina and north-eastern Florida, the species has a somewhat spotty distribution. At least seventeen of the nearly 30 occurrences known are historic; knowledge of current status of these populations (as well as additional inventory of suitable habitat within the range) is needed. At present, 5 to 6 occurrences are known to be in existence. In South Carolina, the species is known from Beaufort, Berkeley, and Hampton counties.

Habitat

Raven's seedbox is restricted to open, wet, peaty places, such as ditches and the margins of swamps, ponds, and bogs. It almost always occurs in wetlands under

natural conditions, but may also rarely occur in non-wetlands.

Status

NatureServe's Rounded Global Status is G1 - Critically Imperiled. Its Global Status was last reviewed on July 21, 2016. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was petitioned to list the species in April 2010 and in September 2011 issued a 90-day finding indicating listing may be warranted.

Threats

The ditches and powerline rights-of-way occupied by the species are subject to many threats including herbicide use, excavation and deepening of ditches, road widening and paving.

Management/Protection Needs

Identify and monitor existing populations of Raven's seedbox and protect from threats such as herbicide use and habitat alteration. Encourage increased survey efforts for the species. Protect known sites.

References

- NatureServe. 2017. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://explorer.natureserve.org>.
- Peng, C.-I. 1984. *Ludwigia ravenii* (Onagraceae), a new species from the Coastal Plain of the southeastern United States. *Systematic Botany*. 9(2): 129-132.

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Illustrations from Peng, C.-I. 1984. *Ludwigia ravenii* (Onagraceae), a new species from the Coastal Plain of the southeastern United States. *Systematic Botany*. 9(2): 129-132. (Pictured top-bottom: plant, flower, and mature fruit)