



Common Name: GODFREY'S WILD PRIVET

Scientific Name: *Forestiera godfreyi* L. C. Anderson

Other Commonly Used Names: none

Previously Used Scientific Names: none

Family: Oleaceae (olive)

Rarity Ranks: G2/S1

State Legal Status: Endangered

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: none

Description: Deciduous **shrub or small tree**, 8 - 16 feet (2.5 - 5 meters) tall, main **stems** arching or leaning. **Leaves** 2 - 3 inches (5 - 8 cm) long, 1 - 1½ inches (2.3 - 4 cm) wide, oval, opposite, margins finely toothed above the middle, hairy on the lower surface. **Leaf stalks and twigs** hairy. **Female and male flowers** on separate plants. **Female flowers** in clusters of 5 - 10, each flower with 1 pistil, 2 - 4 non-functional stamens, and 6 small bracts. **Male flowers** (see photo) in clusters of 12 - 15 flowers, each flower with 3 - 5 showy, white stamens, 4 - 5 tiny sepals, and no petals; each male flower cluster surrounded by 4 small and 2 tiny, pale yellow bracts. Both female and male flower clusters are held close to the stem and appear to be single flowers. **Fruit** is up to ½ inch (0.8 - 1.2 cm) long, oval, waxy, dark blue.

Similar Species: Swamp privet (*Forestiera acuminata*) occurs in wetlands, and has long-pointed leaf tips and small teeth all along the leaf margins. Upland privet (*F. ligustrina*) has two lines of hairs on the twigs, small teeth all along the leaf margins, and nearly hairless leaf stalks; it flowers mid-late summer.

Related Rare Species: See Florida wild privet (*Forestiera segregata*) on this website.

Habitat: Coastal maritime forests over shell mounds on barrier islands.

Life History: Godfrey's privet is dioecious, meaning that female and male flowers are on different plants. The female-flowering plants of Godfrey's privet often grow in patches somewhat separated from patches of male-flowering plants. Typically, late winter-flowering plants are wind-pollinated, but the clustered arrangement of Godfrey's privet flowers mimics a single, showy flower and suggests that the plant has evolved to attract insect pollinators, although none have been documented. The fruits are probably dispersed by small animals.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering (late January-late February) and fruiting (February-May). Leaves may be recognized through the summer.

Range: Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina

Threats: Destruction of habitat by clearing and development, and by unauthorized excavation of shell mounds. Invasion by exotic pest plants.

Georgia Conservation Status: Only one population of Godfrey's wild privet is known; it occurs in a state park.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Protect coastal forests from clearing and development. Protect shell mounds from digging and disturbance. Eradicate exotic pest plants. Direct trails and recreation activity away from plants.

Selected References:

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Date Compiled or Updated:

L. Chafin, Feb. 2008: original account

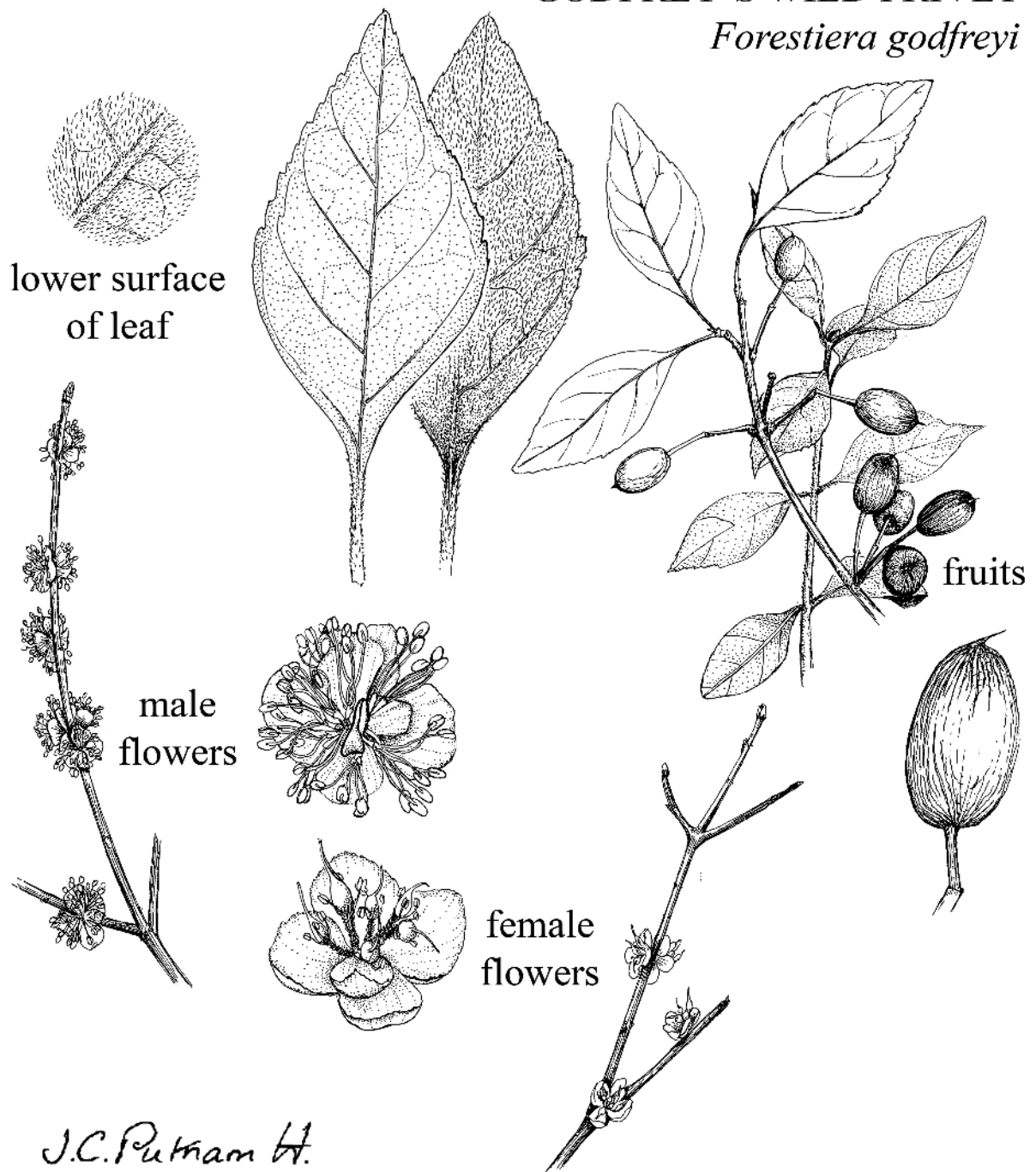
K. Owers, Jan. 2010: added pictures

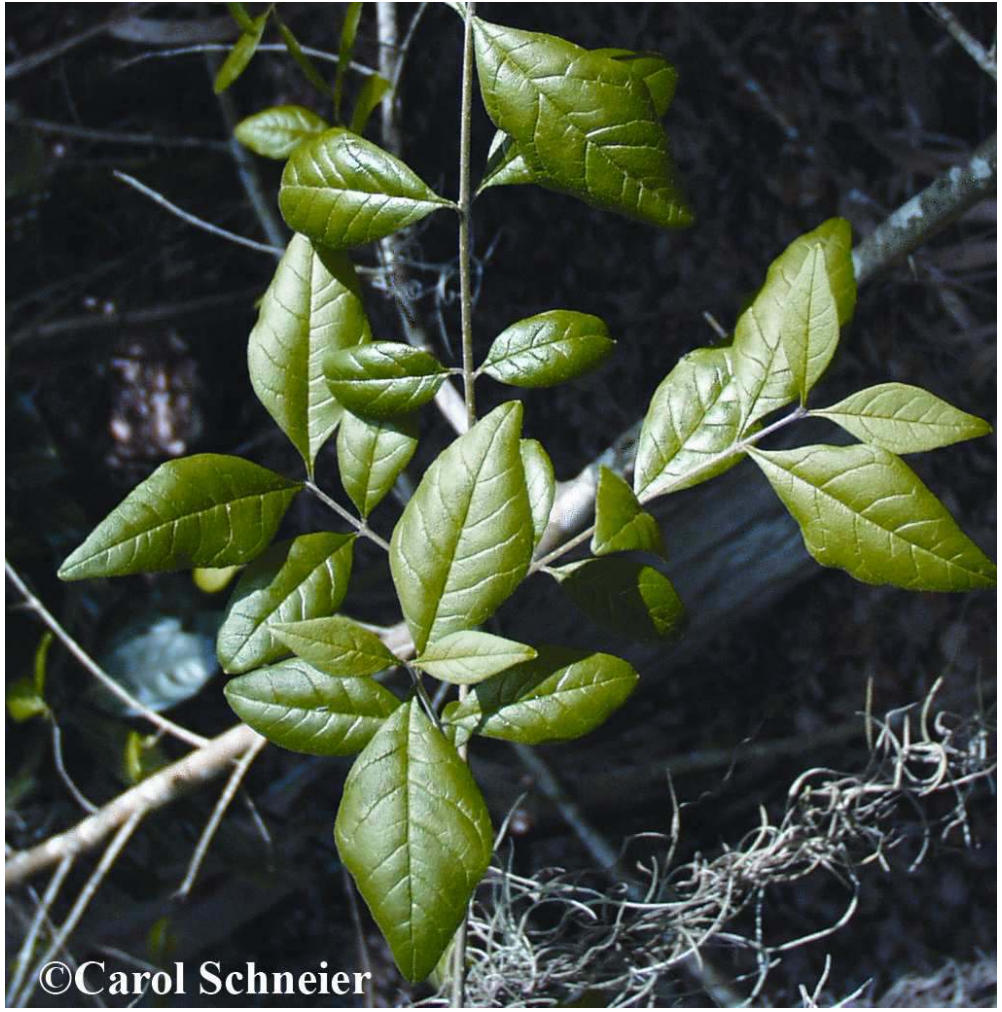


Male flowers

GODFREY'S WILD PRIVET

Forestiera godfreyi





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