



Common Name: CAROLINA BOG MINT

Scientific Name: *Macbridea caroliniana* (Walter) Blake

Other Commonly Used Names: Carolina birds-in-a-nest

Previously Used Scientific Names: *Macbridea pulchra* Elliott

Family: Lamiaceae/Labiatae (mint)

Rarity Ranks: G2G3/S1

State Legal Status: Rare

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: OBL

Description: Perennial **herb** with erect, 4-sided **stems**, 2 - 3 feet (60 - 90 cm) tall. **Leaves** $2\frac{3}{8}$ - 5 inches (6 - 13 cm) long, $\frac{1}{2}$ - $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches (1.5 - 4 cm) wide, opposite, oval with pointed tips and tapering bases, both surfaces covered with tiny gland dots; lower leaves with leaf stalks, upper leaves without; leaf nodes swollen and pale. **Flower clusters** at the tips of the main stem and branches, with many rounded, leafy, overlapping bracts surrounding the bases of the flowers. **Flowers** $\frac{3}{4}$ - $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches (2 - 4 cm) long, dark pink with white and purple stripes, tubular with hood-like **upper lip** and spreading, 3-lobed **lower lip**. **Fruit** contains 4 seeds (nutlets), each about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3.5 - 4.3 mm) long.

Similar Species: Purple obedient-plant (*Physostegia purpurea*) has similar stems and leaves but its two-lipped, pink-purple flowers are in an erect, often branching, elongated cluster at the top of the plant.

Related Rare Species: Slender-leaf obedient-plant (*Physostegia leptophylla*, Special Concern) has square stems up to 5 feet (140 cm) tall with bluntly toothed, opposite leaves, the uppermost pair clasping the stem; its tubular, pink-purple flowers are in a loose spike; it occurs mainly in coastal counties. Narrow-leaved obedient plant (*P. angustifolia*, Special Concern) is similar but has sharply toothed leaves; it occurs in Baker and Calhoun counties.

Habitat: Blackwater creek swamps with high phosphorus levels in the soil; frequent associates include swamp black gum, red maple, tulip poplar, and *Triadenum walteri*; Atlantic white cedar swamps in the western Fall Line sandhills; roadside ditches through these habitats.

Life History: Carolina bogmint is a deciduous, perennial herb that reproduces vegetatively by rhizomes and sexually by seeds, which are frequently produced. Pollinators observed on its flowers include bumblebees and skipper butterflies.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering (mid-July–early September).

Range: Coastal Plain of Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina .

Threats: Conversion of wetlands to agriculture, pine plantations, and developments. Clearcutting in floodplains. Destruction of streamside habitat by road and bridge construction.

Georgia Conservation Status: Six populations have been observed, but only 2 have been seen in the last 35 years. One population occurs on private land, the other on a military installation.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Avoid clearcutting, filling, ditching, and draining wetlands. Protect streams and floodplains during road and bridge construction.

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Date Compiled or Updated:

L. Chafin, June 2008: original account

K. Owers, Feb. 2010: added pictures



CAROLINA BOG MINT
Macbridea caroliniana



cross-section
of stem

gland-dotted
leaf surface

calyx and
bract

J.C. Putnam 64.