



Common Name: TALLAHASSEE HEDGE-NETTLE

Scientific Name: *Stachys hyssopifolia* Michaux var. *lythroides* (Small) J.B. Nelson

Other Commonly Used Names: none

Previously Used Scientific Names: *Stachys lythroides* Small

Family: Lamiaceae/Labiatae (mint)

Rarity Ranks: G5T1Q/S1

State Legal Status: Special Concern

Federal Legal Status: FACW

Federal Wetland Status: none

Description: Perennial **herb** with branching, sprawling, 4-angled **stems** up to 32 inches (80 cm) tall, with spreading hairs on the angles of stems and on the leaf nodes. **Leaves** up to 1½ inches (4 cm) long and ¾ inch (1 cm) wide, narrowly oblong with blunt tips; opposite and set at right angles to adjacent pairs of leaves; hairless, with very short or no leaf stalks, and with low teeth along the edges. **Flower clusters** spaced along the upper stem, each cluster with 2 or more flowers and 2 leafy bracts. **Flowers** up to ½ inch (1.3 cm) long, pale pink with darker pink spots; upper lip hood-like, lower lip down-curved and 3-lobed; calyx with five narrowly triangular, sharply pointed lobes. **Fruit** consists of 4 tiny nutlets enclosed by the calyx.

Similar Species: Hyssopleaf hedge-nettle (*Stachys hyssopifolia* var. *hyssopifolia*) has linear or lance-shaped leaves and its stems are nearly hairless. Florida hedge-nettle (*S. floridana*) is a weedy plant with long leaf stalks, hairy stems, and 3 - 6 flowers per flower cluster.

Related Rare Species: Epling's hedge-nettle (*Stachys eplingii*), hispid hedge-nettle (*S. hispida*), broad-toothed hedge-nettle (*S. latidens*), and Nuttall's hedge-nettle (*S. nuttallii*) are of Special Concern. All occur in wet to moist hardwood forests in north Georgia.

Habitat: Wet borders of ponds and sinkholes, depressions and moist slopes in longleaf pine forests, and clearings in bottomland forests.

Life History: Tallahassee hedge-nettle is a perennial herb that reproduces sexually. Its flowers are visited by a variety of insects – including bees, butterflies, skippers, and moths – seeking nectar and pollen but they are probably pollinated only by long-tongued bees which probe for nectar at the base of the flower tube. The shape of the flower and arrangement of the stamens bring the pollen-bearing anthers in contact with the back of the bee, where pollen is deposited out of reach of the bee's legs. The pollen is then brushed off on another flower's stigma rather than being carried to the bee's nest. Flowers are followed by fruits consisting of 4 tiny nutlets which are dispersed by gravity and small animals.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering (late June–September).

Range: Georgia and Florida.

Threats: Conversion of habitat to pine plantations and developments. Fire suppression and encroachment by woody plants.

Georgia Conservation Status: Only one population is known; it is on private land.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Apply prescribed fire to longleaf pine stands every 2 - 3 years, primarily in the growing season. Avoid placing firebreaks through or around wetlands; allow fires to burn through wet areas. Protect sites from mechanical clearing and conversion to pine plantations and developments.

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L. Chafin, Sept. 2008: original account

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TALLAHASSEE
HEDGE NETTLE
Stachys hyssopifolia
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