



Common Name: CUMBERLAND ROSINWEED

Scientific Name: *Silphium mohrii* Small

Other Commonly Used Names: Mohr's rosinweed, shaggy rosinweed

Previously Used Scientific Names: *Silphium incisum* Greene

Family: Asteraceae/Compositae (aster)

Rarity Ranks: G3?Q/S1?

State Legal Status: Special Concern

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: none

Description: Perennial **herb** with a very hairy, leafy **stem**, 1.5 - 5 feet (40 - 160 cm) tall, branched near the top. **Lower leaves** up to 10 inches (26 cm) long and 5½ inches (14 cm) wide,

lance-shaped with long-pointed tips and rounded or tapered bases, margins sometimes toothed, very hairy, with a **leaf stalk** up to 6 inches (15 cm) long. **Stem leaves** becoming gradually smaller up the stem, oval, opposite or alternate, and lacking a leaf stalk. **Flower heads** with 10 - 20 pale yellow ray flowers up to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (2 cm) long; many small, yellow disk flowers; and several whorls of pointed, green bracts. **Fruit** about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6 - 10 mm) long, dry, seed-like, winged; one fruit potentially occurs at the base of each ray flower.

Similar Species: Cumberland rosinweed is distinguished from most other *Silphium* species in northwest Georgia by its very hairy, leafy stems and large, hairy basal leaves. Starry rosinweed (*Silphium asteriscus*) is also hairy but its leaves are primarily on the stem, the basal leaves withering early in the year.

Related Rare Species: Rosinweed (*Silphium radula*, Special Concern) also occurs in rocky hardwood forests. It was last seen in Georgia in Catoosa County in 1948. It is also very hairy, but has 16 - 35 ray flowers per head.

Habitat: Sunny openings in rocky hardwood forests.

Life History: Cumberland rosinweed is a perennial herb that reproduces sexually. The heads of Cumberland rosinweed, like the heads of most members of the composite family, contain both ray flowers and disk flowers. Unlike most composites, however, the ray flowers of rosinweed are female and fertile, and produce seeds, while the disk flowers are male only and do not produce seeds. As a result, each head produces fewer than 20 fruits in a ring around the outside of the head. Pollination studies for this species have not been conducted but other rosinweeds are pollinated by long-tongued bees, butterflies, and skippers, and are visited and perhaps pollinated by a variety of other insects. The seeds of rosinweeds are flattened and slightly winged and are probably dispersed by the wind.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering (June–August) or fruiting (August–September); freshly fruiting heads will usually have 13 fruits, one at the base of each withered ray flower (disk flowers do not produce fruits).

Range: Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee.

Threats: Clearing, logging, and development of hardwood forests. Canopy closure from lack of fire or other natural disturbance.

Georgia Conservation Status: Only one population is known, on private land on Lookout Mountain.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Protect hardwood forests from development and clearcutting. Use prescribed fire to create openings in forests.

Selected References:

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Author of Species Account: Linda G. Chafin

Date Compiled or Updated:

L. Chafin, Aug. 2008: original account

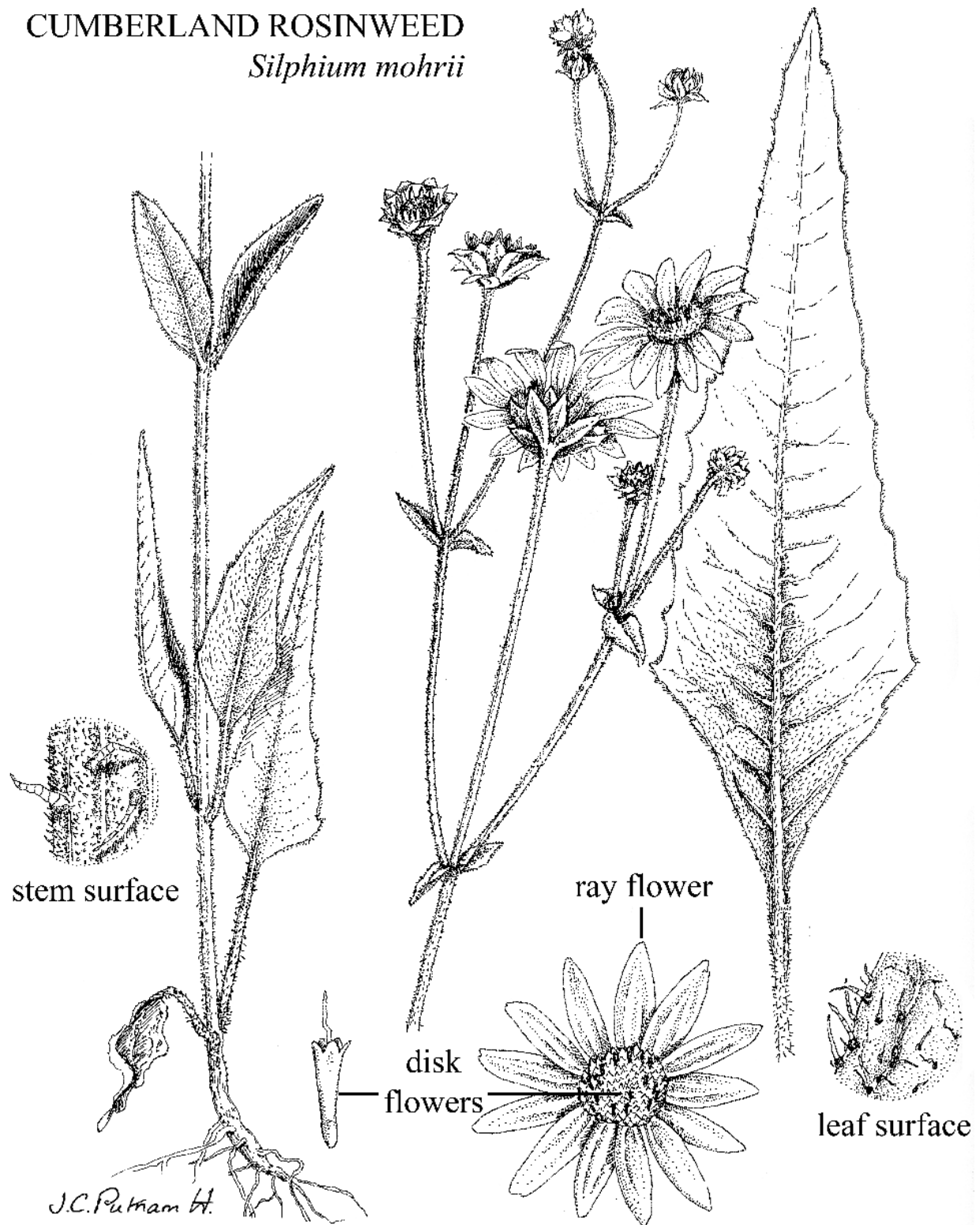
K. Owers, Feb. 2010: added pictures



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Basal leaf

CUMBERLAND ROSINWEED

Silphium mohrii





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