



Common Name: CUTHBERT'S HOLLY

Scientific Name: *Ilex cuthbertii* Small

Other Commonly Used Names: none

Previously Used Scientific Names: *Ilex longipes* var. *cuthbertii* (Small) G.A. Krakow

Family: Aquifoliaceae (holly)

Rarity Ranks: G1?/SH

State Legal Status: Special Concern

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: none

Description: **Shrub** or small tree up to 30 feet (10 meters) tall, with densely hairy twigs. **Leaves** $\frac{3}{8}$ - $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch (8 - 30 mm) wide, and 2 - 3 times as long as wide, oval, hairy on both surfaces, with blunt tips and narrowly tapering bases; leaf margins entire or occasionally with small, inconspicuous, gland-tipped teeth; leaves borne mostly on short spur shoots. **Female and male flowers** on separate plants, mostly in clusters, small, white or yellowish-green with 5 lobes, on stalks $\frac{3}{8}$ - $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch (1 - 3 cm) long; sepals with long hairs on the margins. **Fruit** about $\frac{3}{8}$ inch (8 - 10 mm) wide, round, and red, dangling on a stalk $\frac{3}{8}$ - $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch (1 - 3 cm) long.

Similar Species: Possum haw (*Ilex decidua*) leaves are gray-green, often with inrolled margins; the hairs on the lower leaf surface are primarily on the midvein; and the flower and fruit stalks are less than $\frac{3}{8}$ inch (1 cm) long. Georgia holly (*I. longipes*) leaves are hairless on the upper surface or with hairs only on the veins, and the leaf margins are always toothed; the sepals do not have long hairs on the margins.

Habitat: Upland forests just north of and along the Fall Line, often with circumneutral soils.

Life History: Cuthbert's holly is dioecious, that is, it bears female and male flowers on separate plants; female-flowered plants will not produce fruits unless a male-flowered plant is close enough to supply pollen. No studies of reproduction in this species have been conducted, but hollies are usually pollinated by small bees and other insects. Holly fruits are important to wildlife, especially birds.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering (April–May) and fruiting (September–October).

Range: Narrowly endemic to an area along the Fall Line near Augusta, Georgia and adjacent South Carolina.

Threats: Destruction of habitat by logging and clearing for development.

Georgia Conservation Status: Cuthbert's holly has not been seen in Georgia in many decades.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Protect upland forests from clearing and development.

Selected References:

Krakov, G.A. 1989. A systematic study of *Ilex ambigua*, *Ilex decidua*, and related taxa. M.S. Thesis, University of Georgia, Athens.

NatureServe. 2007. NatureServe Explorer. Arlington, Virginia.
<http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>

Small, J.K. 1933. Manual of the southeastern flora. Published by the Author, New York (Science Press Printing Company, Lancaster, Pennsylvania).

Weakley, A.S. 2008. Flora of the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia, Northern Florida, and surrounding areas. University of North Carolina Herbarium, Chapel Hill.
<http://www.herbarium.unc.edu/flora.htm>

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Date Compiled or Updated:

L. Chafin, Oct. 2008: original account

K. Owers, Feb. 2010: added pictures





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