



Common Name: BLUE RIDGE ST. JOHN'S-WORT

Scientific Name: *Hypericum buckleyi* M.A. Curtis

Other Commonly Used Names: mountain St. John's-wort, Buckley's St. John's-wort

Previously Used Scientific Names: Spelling variant – *Hypericum buckleii* M.A. Curtis

Family: Clusiaceae (mangosteen) or Hypericaceae/Guttiferae (St. John's-wort)

Rarity Ranks: G3/S1

State Legal Status: Special Concern

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: FAC

Description: Mat-forming **shrub** up to 12 inches (30 cm) tall. **Leaves** up to 1 inch (0.4 - 2.5 cm) long and ½ inch (0.2 - 1.2 cm) wide, opposite, oval with rounded tips and tapering bases; leaves are covered with translucent (not black) **glandular dots**, best seen when leaf is held to the light; base of the leaf does *not* have a narrow groove or notch between the base of the leaf and the top of the leaf stalk. **Flowers** almost 1 inch (2.5 cm) across, usually solitary or in small clusters at the tips of branches; **petals** 5, bright yellow; **stamens** numerous and showy. **Fruit** an oval, pointed capsule, ¼ - ½ inch (0.8 - 1.2 cm) long.

Similar Species: St. Andrew's-cross (*Hypericum stragulum*) is also a low, matted shrub; its flowers have 4 petals and its leaves are grooved across the base and usually widest above the middle. Lloyd's St. John's-wort (*H. lloydii*) is a mat-forming shrub found around Piedmont granite outcrops and Altamaha Grit outcrops; it has 4-angled stems and narrow, inrolled leaves with a narrow groove at the base of the leaf blade.

Related Rare Species: Two Special Concern species, glade St. John's-wort (*Hypericum dolabriforme*) and barrens St. John's-wort (*H. sphaerocarpum*), grow on limestone glades in northwest Georgia; both are slender, erect shrubs to 18 inches (45 cm) tall. Also see bog St. John's-wort (*H. adpressum*) and Georgia St. John's-wort (*Hypericum erythraeae*) on this website.

Habitat: High elevation rock outcrops and balds.

Life History: Blue Ridge St. John's-wort reproduces sexually as well as vegetatively by the spread of underground stems (rhizomes). No studies of the reproductive biology of Blue Ridge St. John's-wort have been carried out, but its flowers are likely pollinated by bees who are attracted to its showy flowers and abundant pollen since, like most members of this genus, Blue Ridge St. John's-wort probably does not produce nectar. It depends on insect visitors to effect cross-pollination in order to produce fruit.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering (June–August) but the low, matted shrubs with opposite leaves, growing in rock crevices, are distinctive all year.

Range: Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

Threats: Clearing or logging on or around outcrops; trail construction through habitat.

Georgia Conservation Status: Six populations are known, all on National Forest land, and are somewhat protected by their rugged habitat.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Avoid trampling and trail construction through populations. Avoid logging near rock outcrops.

Selected References:

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Lance, R. 2004. Woody plants of the southeastern United States: a winter guide. University of Georgia Press, Athens.

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<http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>

Radford, A.E., H.E. Ahles, and C.R. Bell. 1968. Manual of the vascular flora of the Carolinas. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

Weakley, A.S. 2007. Flora of the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia, 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, Mar. 2007: original account

K. Owers, Feb. 2010: added pictures



