**Rare Plants of Louisiana**

*Celastrus scandens* - climbing bittersweet
Bittersweet Family (Celastraceae)

**Rarity Rank:** S1/G5

![State and Global Rarity Rankings](image)

**Range:** Eastern two-thirds of U.S. and Canada

**Recognition:**
- A high-climbing or tangle-forming woody vine that climbs by twining; rhizomatous and thicket forming
- Leaves are alternate, deciduous, with membranous blades that are oval to lance-shaped, 5 to 10 cm long by 2 to 5 cm wide; leaf margins entire or serrate; leaf tips sharp-pointed
- Flowers greenish-white, small, about 5 mm across, with 5 petals, born in terminal panicles or racemes
- Fruit an orange capsule that splits upon drying, exposing scarlet arils and seeds; persistent and showy, therefore used for ornamental purposes

**Flowering Time:** May to June; fruit ripening August to October

**Light Requirement:** Full sun to shade

**Wetland Indicator Status:**
FACU – usually occurs in uplands, but occasionally in wetlands

**Habitat:**
Rich, mesic soils of southern mesophytic forests (loess bluffs), salt dome hardwood forests, and high sites in bottomland hardwoods.

**Threats:**
- Conversion of native forests to other forest types or agriculture
- Unnatural rates of erosion
- Lack of status information

**Beneficial Management Practices:**
- Manage remaining rich soil native forests in an ecologically sound manner
- Conduct more field surveys to update data on known occurrences and to detect additional populations
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LA River Basins: Mississippi, Vermilion-Teche

References:


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For more information, please visit our Web pages at
www.wlf.la.gov/wildlife/louisiana-natural-heritage-program or 225-765-2811
www.BTNEP.org or 1-800-259-0869