



Rare Plants of Louisiana

Physostegia longisepala – long-sepaled false dragon-head Mint family (Lamiaceae)

Rarity Ranks: S2S3/G2G3

Range: LA, TX

Recognition:

- 1) Rhizome branching to produce 1-many elongate, horizontal secondary rhizomes
- 2) Lowest 4-8 stem nodes bear stalked leaves, upper leaves sessile
- 3) Axis bearing flowers (= raceme) densely hairy
- 4) Calyx lobes 2.5-3.5 mm long (frequently tipped with a short, sharp, abrupt point).
- 5) Corolla deep lavender to reddish violet (flower color is often variable, however this character is reportedly reliable in this species)

Flowering Time: May-June

Light Requirement: Shade – Sun (negatively affected by excess shade)

Wetland Indicator Status: Not determined/available

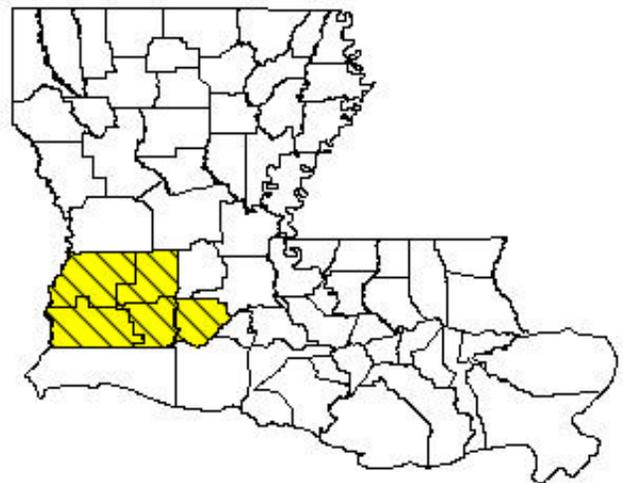
Habitats: Bottomland hardwood forests along small to mid-size streams and interior fresh marshes in flat terrain of southwest Louisiana. Associates include laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), and green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*). Long-sepaled false dragon head also occurs in disturbed wet areas and many Louisiana occurrences are in roadside ditches.

Threats:

- 1) Dredging/scraping of ditches for maintenance
- 2) Herbicides used in roadside management
- 3) Overstocking of forests (excessive shading)
- 4) Exotic species, especially Chinese tallow tree (*Triadica sebifera*), pose a serious threat in becoming very dense and shading out plants
- 5) Hydrological alterations – draining marshes or damming streams to create reservoirs

Beneficial management practices:

- 1) Identify and avoid long-sepaled false dragon-head in broad-spectrum herbicide applications
- 2) If possible avoid scraping of ditches where it occurs or perhaps scrape at a shallower depth.
- 3) Thinning of overstocked forests
- 4) Aggressively control Chinese tallow tree infestations





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Long-sepaled false dragon-head habitat in Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana. Forest is shady but still allows enough light to support a healthy population.



Long-sepaled false dragon-head in a roadside ditch. This species has some resistance and can survive in human-created habitats.

References:

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