



Rare Plants of Louisiana

Crataegus triflora – three-flowered hawthorn

Rose family (Rosaceae)

Rarity Ranks: S1/G2

Range: AL, AR, GA, LA, MS, TN

Recognition:

- 1) Large deciduous thorny shrub
- 2) Flowers with 5 white petals and often born in 3's
- 3) Leaves doubly serrate and unlobed, widest at or below the middle



Photo by George Yatskievych, Missouri Botanical Garden

Flowering Time: March-April; **Fruit -** September-October

Light Requirement: Shade to sun

Wetland Status: Does not occur in wetlands

Habitat: Calcareous woodlands on clayey soils derived from marine deposits, containing shell fragments and other materials high in calcium carbonate. Associated species include Durand oak (*Quercus sinuata* var. *sinuata*), parsley hawthorn (*Crataegus marshallii*), little hip hawthorn (*C. spathulata*), cockspur hawthorn (*C. crus-galli*), and aromatic sumac (*Rhus aromatica*).

Threats:

- 1) Conversion of habitat to intensively-managed pine plantations – including chemical and mechanical site prep and dense spacing of planted trees
- 2) Conversion to agriculture
- 3) Residential and commercial development
- 4) Fire exclusion – fire was a historical process maintaining calcareous woodlands and imbedded prairies



Beneficial management practices:

- 1) Removal of off-site loblolly pine, while favoring shortleaf pine, if present, and managing for dry-site hardwood species
- 2) Prescribed burning to maintain open character of calcareous woodlands



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Three-flowered hawthorn specimen, ruler = 2". Note leaf shape and serration, and note flowers in the upper part of specimen being in 3's. One or more of the 3 flowers may not get fertilized, so fruits may not be in 3's. Specimen image provided by LSU Herbarium.

References:

Phipps, J. B., R. Lance, & K. A. Dvorsky. 2006. *Crataegus* series *Bracteatae* and *Triflorae* (Rosaceae). *Sida* 22(2): 1009-1025.

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