



Common Name: GEORGIA INDIGO-BUSH

Scientific Name: *Amorpha georgiana* Wilbur

Other Commonly Used Names: Georgia lead plant, Georgia lead bush

Previously Used Scientific Names: none

Family: Fabaceae/Leguminosae (pea)

Rarity Ranks: G3T2/S1

State Legal Status: Endangered

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: FACW

Description: **Woody subshrub** 1 - 3 feet (30 - 100 cm) tall with smooth or nearly hairless stems. **Leaves** up to 7 inches (18 cm) long, alternate, with 11 - 47 leaflets, leaf stalks up to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (20 mm) long. **Leaflets** $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (0.6 - 1.2 cm) long, oblong, with inrolled margins; midvein of each leaflet extends beyond the tip into a tiny, sharp point. **Flower clusters** 1 - $2\frac{3}{4}$

inches (2.5 - 7 cm) long. **Flower** with only 1 purple petal and 10 orange-tipped stamens. **Fruit** pod less than ¼ inch (0.5 cm) long, wider at the tip, tapering to the base.

Similar Species: Indigo-bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*) is a common shrub, 3 - 12 feet (1 - 4 m) tall; its leaflets are ¾ - 1½ inch (1 - 4 cm) long and its leaf stalks are ¾ - 1½ inches (1 - 4 cm) long. The midvein of the leaflet extends into a pointed or swollen tip, and the margins of the leaflets are not inrolled. Goat's-rue (*Tephrosia virginiana*) is a common perennial herb with similar compound leaves that have 15 - 25 leaflets. The leaflets lack the sharply pointed tip, and its stems are hairy. It has typical, 5-petaled pea-family flowers with an erect, yellow banner petal; two pink wing petals; and a pink keel.

Related Rare Species: Florida indigo-bush (*Amorpha herbacea* var. *floridana*) is a low shrub found on the Alapaha River floodplain; the midvein of the leaflet extends beyond the tip into a round, swollen gland. Shining indigo-bush (*A. nitens*), a tall shrub found on rocky slopes and floodplains in several northwest Georgia and Piedmont counties, has 3 - 9 pairs of shiny leaflets, usually without an extended midvein tip. Schwerin's indigo-bush (*A. schwerinii*), a tall shrub, occurs in rocky, upland woods in 5 Piedmont counties; its flowers are white; leaflet margins are slightly inrolled, and the midvein extends beyond the tip into a round gland. All are considered to be of Special Concern in Georgia.

Habitat: Longleaf pine woodlands and savannas, sunny openings around Altamaha Grit and flint kaolin outcrops, and stream terraces. Although classified as a "facultative wetland" (FACW) species, Georgia indigo-bush has not been seen in wetlands in Georgia.

Life History: Georgia indigo-bush flowers are probably pollinated by small bumblebees and small flower bees (Halictids) as well as long-horned beetles and pearl crescent butterflies, all of which have been seen on its flowers.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering (mid-April–early May) although fruits, which may persist until early April of the following year, are helpful in identification. Plants flower and fruit the first and second years after a fire.

Range: Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

Threats: Fire suppression, clearing, and conversion of habitat to pine plantations, agricultural fields, and development.

Georgia Conservation Status: Four populations have been observed; only the Columbia County plants, on private land, have been seen recently.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Apply prescribed fire in longleaf pine stands every 3 - 5 years, or use hand-clearing to maintain openings in the canopy. Avoid clearcutting and other mechanical disturbances.

Selected References:

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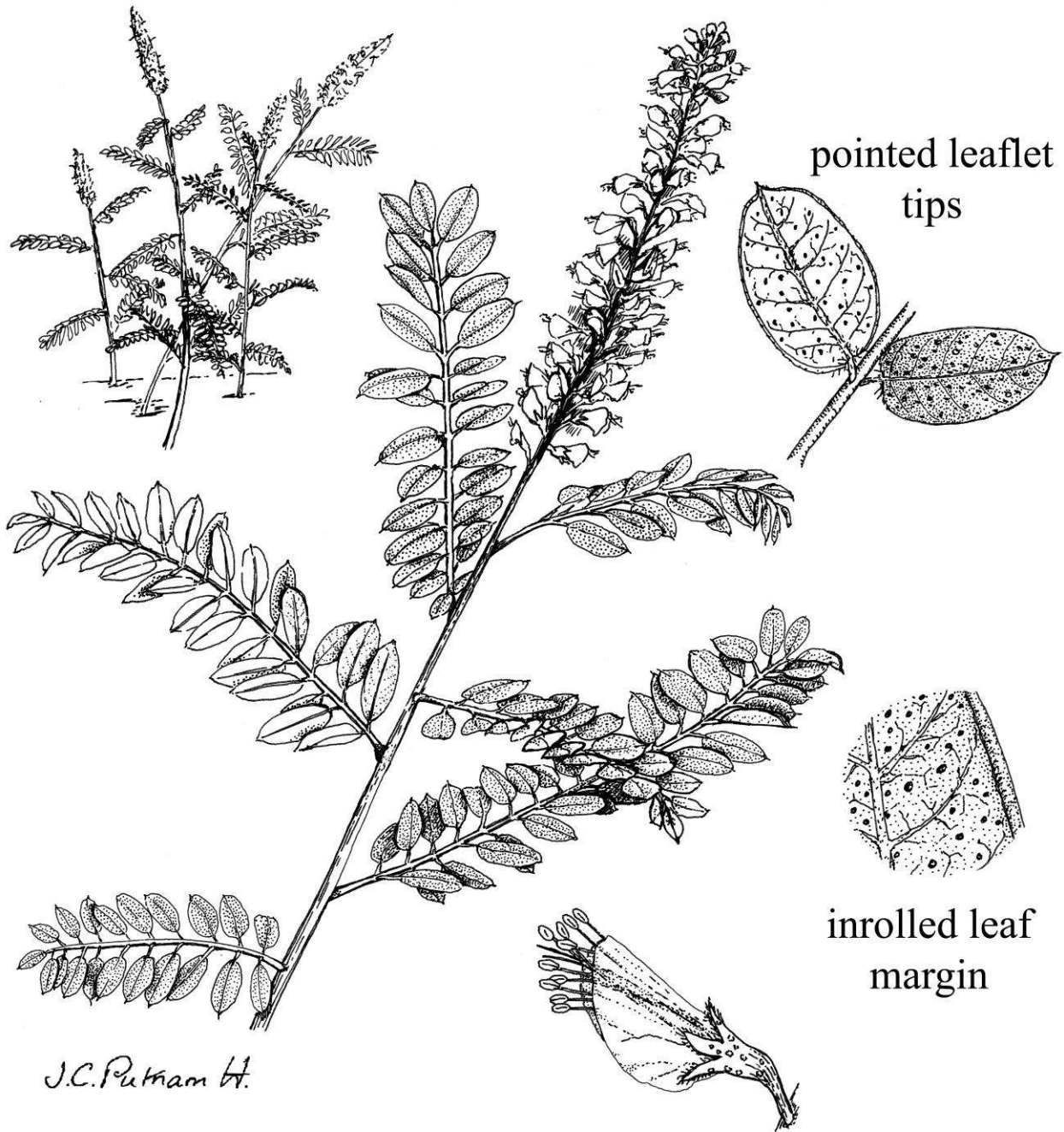
Date Compiled or Updated:

L. Chafin, Sept. 2007: original account

K. Owers, Jan. 2010: updated status and ranks, added pictures

Z. Abouhamdan, April 2016: updated link

GEORGIA INDIGO-BUSH
Amorpha georgiana var. *georgiana*



pointed leaflet
tips

inrolled leaf
margin

flower with single petal
and 10 stamens

J.C. Putnam H.