SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Source: Endangered and Threatened Species of the Southeastern United States (The Red Book) FWS Region 4 -- As of
2/91

# LARGE-FLOWERED SKULLCAP

(Scutellaria montana)

FAMILY: Lamiaceae

STATUS: Endangered, Federal Register, June 2O, 1986

DESCRIPTION AND REPRODUCTION: This is a perennial herb of the mint family growing 3O to 55 centimeters (12 to
22 inches) tall with opposite leaves that are 5 to 8 centimeters (2 to 3 inches) long and 3 to 5 centimeters (1 to 2 inches) wide.
Blue and white flowers appear in May and early June. The fruit, a light brown nutlet, matures in late June or early July.

RANGE AND POPULATION LEVEL: Large-flowered skullcap occurs in northwestern Georgia Counties in Floyd (four
populations); Gordon (one population); and Walker (two populations), and in two southeastern Tennessee Counties, Hamilton
(two populations) and Marion (one population). Historically, large-flowered skullcap is also reported from Catoosa County,
Georgia, and overall was probably a more widespread species.

Less than 7,OOO plants are known to exist, with over 9O percent of these occurring at two of the 1O known sites. These two
sites are at least partially protected. One of these sites, located in Floyd County, Georgia, contains about 1,3OO plants with
about 1,1OO of these being on land owned by The Nature Conservancy. The remainder of this population occurs on adjacent
unprotected lands. The other large site, located in Marion County, Tennessee, contains about 5,OOO plants, about 2O percent
of which are on land owned and managed by the Tennessee Department of Conservation's Division of Forestry. The remainder
of this site is on private property. One privately-owned site in Floyd County, Georgia, contains about 25O plants and is the
third largest population. The seven remaining sites have populations ranging from 4 to 6O plants.

HABITAT: This mint is found only at the southern end of the Ridge and Valley Physiographic Province in Georgia and
Tennessee. It occurs on dry to slightly moist rocky slopes under a canopy of mature hardwoods (primarily oaks and hickories).
All known sites show little or no evidence of disturbance due to logging or grazing by livestock. Increment boring of trees on
these sites demonstrates that the trees are from 7O to over 2OO years old, depending on the site.

REASONS FOR CURRENT STATUS: The most significant potential threats to the large-flowered skullcap are logging,
wildfires, livestock grazing, and residential development. Approximately 8O percent of the site with the largest known
population has been subdivided for future residential development. A large portion of the second largest population is on
protected land owned by The Nature Conservancy, but about 2OO plants at this site, and all of the third largest population,
occur on privately-owned land and are currently afforded no protection from future timber harvesting or land use changes. All
remaining populations are extremely small and are vulnerable to even slight modifications of their habitat. Large-flowered
skullcap is covered under State plant protection laws in both Georgia and Tennessee, but the State regulatory mechanisms
provide little or no protection against the habitat disturbances that are the primary threat to this species. A final threat to
large-flowered skullcap is its small numbers and limited distribution. In some populations loss of even a few individuals through
natural fluctuations in numbers or through human-induced habitat alterations could eliminate the population and thereby reduce
the likelihood that the species will continue to exist.

MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION: In the heavily populated, farmed, and timbered area of the Ridge and Valley
Province where large-flowered skullcap occurs, the mature, undisturbed hardwood stands that the plant requires are quite
limited. Long-term preservation of large-flowered skullcap may depend largely on how effective these areas can be protected.
Cooperation between both public and private interests will likely be necessary if this is to be successful. Workers at Shorter
College in Rome, Georgia, are presently conducting detailed demographic and autecological studies on this plant.

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