

Neches River Rose-mallow *Hibiscus dasycalyx*

Candidate species

Global and State Rank: G1S1

DESCRIPTION:

Shrubby perennial growing 3-7 feet tall usually with several stems per clump.

Leaves 2-4 inches long, linear, arrowhead-shaped with three deep lobes.

Flowers are large and showy, 3-6 inches wide, with five white petals 2-4 inch long.

Flowers appear in early-June to August, and are white to cream-colored, with red or purple near center.

Five sepals and 12 bracteoles of calyx are densely pubescent (distinguishing it from other Hibiscus).

Fruits appear in July-November.

OCCURRENCE: Cherokee, Houston, Trinity counties.

HABITAT:

Wetlands areas in open sun. Usually found where plant bases are normally in standing water late-winter and spring, but with water elevation slowly dropping during summer.

Has community dominance within that narrow band between high and low water levels in wetlands exposed to open sun.

SOURCE OF IMPACTS:

Wetland drainage, conversion of small wetlands to stock ponds, stream channelization, urban and highway development, herbicide use, brush clearing.

STATUS:

1995 status survey found species at only three locations – one each in Cherokee, Houston, and Trinity counties. Two more sites were later found in Trinity County, and another in Houston County. One more population was recently discovered on Davy Crockett National Forest land in Houston County. However, some sites are declining in numbers and probably require some form of management.

RECOVERY EFFORTS:

- o Conservation Agreement in place for population owned by Temple-Inland Forest Industries (Trinity County).
- o Conservation Agreement was in place for land owned by Champion, Incorporated, a logging corporation (Trinity County). However, ownership has changed on this land and its status is unknown.
- o Population on private land in Houston County has been purchased by Natural Area Preservation Association, a land trust organization. Some additional land at this site might be purchased for possible mitigation for a planned road alignment.
- o Species has been reintroduced into two sites on Davy Crockett National Forest land in Houston County.
- o Stephen F. Austin State University has recently completed a study on species's genetics and habitat requirements. They propagate plants for reintroduction purposes.

