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Rare Native Trees of Georgia

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Georgia has an abundance of trees -- a number are wetland trees, and a number grow in upland areas. The diversity of tree species in their highly varied habitats is immense across Georgia. Among Georgian trees are a few species of great rarity. These rare native trees are hidden ecological treasures. Rare trees are difficult to find in the field with small populations, so a sharp eye and “tree sense.” are needed. Both the federal and state government lists a number of these rare trees as endangered, threatened, or rare.

Of Georgia’s roughly 280 native tree species, 41 (~15%) could be considered rare in Georgia, although they may be found in abundance in other states. Figure 1 shows the distribution of rarity values among Georgia’s selected rare trees. The trees which could be considered most hard to find and rare, with rarity values of 1-3, are 17 species (6% of all Georgia native trees), with four species being the most rare. Note that one species listed in rarity category 1 is now extinct.

Figure 2 is a species list giving the rarest native trees in Georgia, listed by scientific name, common name, and relative rarity value of 1 - 6, with 1 being the rarest. This figure also provides state and federal listing status. Rarity category 1 is composed of *Franklinia alatamaha* (listed as extinct), *Salix floridana* -- Florida willow, *Torreya taxifolia* -- Florida torreya (on the federal protected species list), and *Tsuga caroliniana* -- Carolina hemlock.

Figure 3 provides a county distribution map for species (other than the *Crataegus* genera) with rarity values of 1, 2, and 3. Figure 4 shows the total number of the rarest tree species found in various Georgia regions. Note the Georgia Coastal Plain has a number of rare tree species.

A roadtrip to find all these tree species would be a wonderful tree adventure! Just exploring to find one rare species would be worthwhile.

	<u>Rarity Value</u> <u>Of Species</u>		<u>Number</u> <u>Of Species</u>
least rare	6	=	7
	5	=	9
	4	=	8
most rare	3	=	8
	2	=	5
	1	=	4

Figure 1: Distribution of rarity values among Georgia's selected rare native trees.

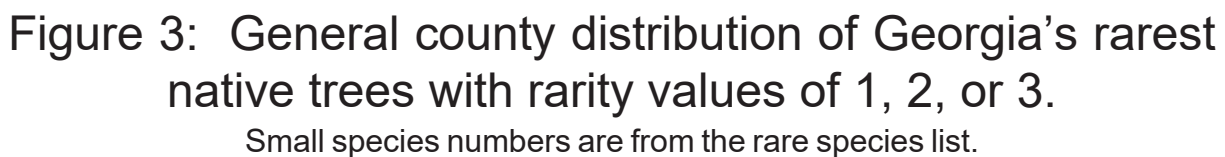
#	scientific name	common name	relative rarity value
1	<u>Acacia farnesiana</u>	sweet acacia	5
2	<u>Acer spicatum</u>	mountain maple	6
3	<u>Aesculus glabra</u>	Ohio buckeye	6
4	<u>Aesculus parviflora</u>	bottlebrush buckeye	4
5	<u>Alnus maritima</u> var. <u>georgiensis</u>	Georgia alder	3
6	<u>Carya laciniosa</u>	shellbark hickory	6
7	<u>Carya myristiciformis</u>	nutmeg hickory	3*
8	<u>Chamaecyparis thyoides</u>	Atlantic white-cedar	3*
9	<u>Cotinus obovatus</u>	American smoketree	3
10	<u>Crataegus pulcherrima</u>	beautiful hawthorn	3
11	<u>Crataegus triflora</u>	three-flower hawthorn	2*
12	<u>Elliottia racemosa</u>	Georgia plume	2*
13	<u>Franklinia alatamaha</u>	Franklin tree	1X
14	<u>Fraxinus quadrangulata</u>	blue ash	4
15	<u>Ilex amelanchier</u>	serviceberry holly	5
16	<u>Illicium floridanum</u>	Florida anise-tree	3*
17	<u>Illicium parviflorum</u>	yellow anise-tree	5
18	<u>Juglans cinerea</u>	butternut	4
19	<u>Leitneria floridana</u>	corkwood	2*
20	<u>Magnolia pyramidata</u>	pyramid magnolia	5
21	<u>Morella inodora</u>	odorless bayberry	3*
22	<u>Prunus mexicana</u>	Mexican plum	5
23	<u>Prunus pensylvanica</u>	fire cherry	6

Figure 2: Rare native tree species list for Georgia.

#	scientific name	common name	relative rarity value
24	<u>Quercus arkansana</u>	Arkansas oak	5
25	<u>Quercus austrina</u>	bluff oak	4
26	<u>Quercus chapmanii</u>	Chapman oak	6
27	<u>Quercus imbricaria</u>	shingle oak	5
28	<u>Quercus oglethorpensis</u>	Oglethorpe oak	2*
29	<u>Quercus prinoides</u>	dwarf chinkapin oak	6
30	<u>Quercus similis</u>	swamp post oak	4
31	<u>Quercus sinuata</u>	bastard (Durand) oak	4
32	<u>Salix floridana</u>	Florida willow	1*
33	<u>Sambucus simpsonii</u>	Southern elderberry	6
34	<u>Sapindus marginatus</u>	wingleaf soapberry	4*
35	<u>Sideroxylon alachuense</u>	silver bumelia	2
36	<u>Sideroxylon thornei</u>	swamp bumelia	3*
37	<u>Sorbus americana</u>	American mountain-ash	5
38	<u>Torreya taxifolia</u>	Florida torreya	1**
39	<u>Tsuga caroliniana</u>	Carolina hemlock	1*
40	<u>Ulmus serotina</u>	September elm	4
41	<u>Zanthoxylum americanum</u>	Northern prickly-ash	5

symbol key:* = **State of Georgia listed species;**** = **federally listed species;****X = extinct.**

Figure 2: Rare native tree species list for Georgia. (continued)



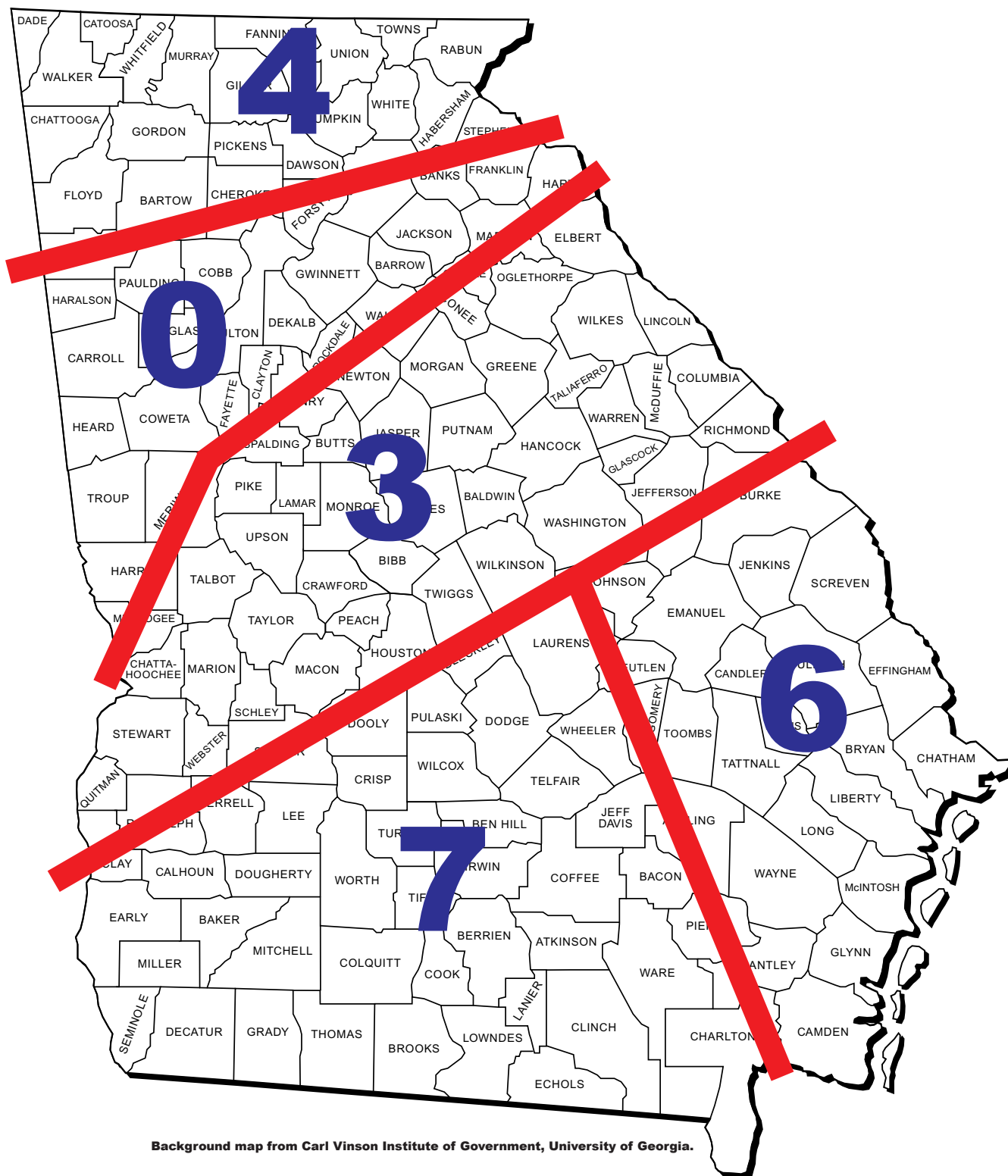


Figure 4: Number of rare native tree species (rarity value = 1, 2, or 3) by areas in Georgia.

Citation:

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