

***MECARDONIA PROCUMBENS* (PLANTAGINACEAE)
NEW TO THE FLORA OF MISSISSIPPI**

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ABSTRACT

The first known occurrence in Mississippi of *Mecardonia procumbens* is reported here. The plants were in a disturbed area on the United States Army Corps of Engineers Engineer Research and Development Center campus in Warren County. A photograph of a specimen in situ is provided.

Two plants of *Mecardonia procumbens* (Miller) Small (baby jump-up, yellow water-hyssop) (Fig. 1) were discovered in 2020 in Warren Co., Mississippi. They were mature individuals established in a previously disturbed area. No additional specimens were observed during a search of the general vicinity around roads, sidewalks, and parking areas. Based on the overall distribution of the species in the USA (Fig. 2), however, it probably already occurs elsewhere in Mississippi.



Figure 1. *Mecardonia procumbens* growing near the edge of a road and parking area interface, Warren Co., Mississippi.

Voucher specimen. Mississippi. Warren Co.: Vicksburg, United States Army Corps of Engineers Engineer Research and Development Center campus, N side of Chesapeake Road, S of intersection with Tennessee Road, 32.29701° N, 90.86993° W, two plants near the edge of the road and parking area interface, with *Eragrostis cilianensis*, *Euphorbia maculata*, *Leucospora multifida*, and *Mollugo verticillata*, 19 Aug 2020, Philly 2205 (ERDC).

Mecardonia procumbens is considered native to tropical and subtropical portions of the Americas but has become established on every continent except Antarctica (Plants of the World Online 2019). Kartesz (2015) and USDA,NRCS (2020) depict its range in the continental USA as occurring from southern Arizona to Florida. Recent collections from Arkansas (in 2013 and 2016) and South Carolina (in 2016) have expanded the known distribution represented in these sources. A search of the SERNEC Data Portal (2020) resulted in additional county records in states where *M. procumbens* had been documented previously. A composite distribution map based on these three sources and the new locality in Warren Co., Mississippi, is shown in Figure 2.

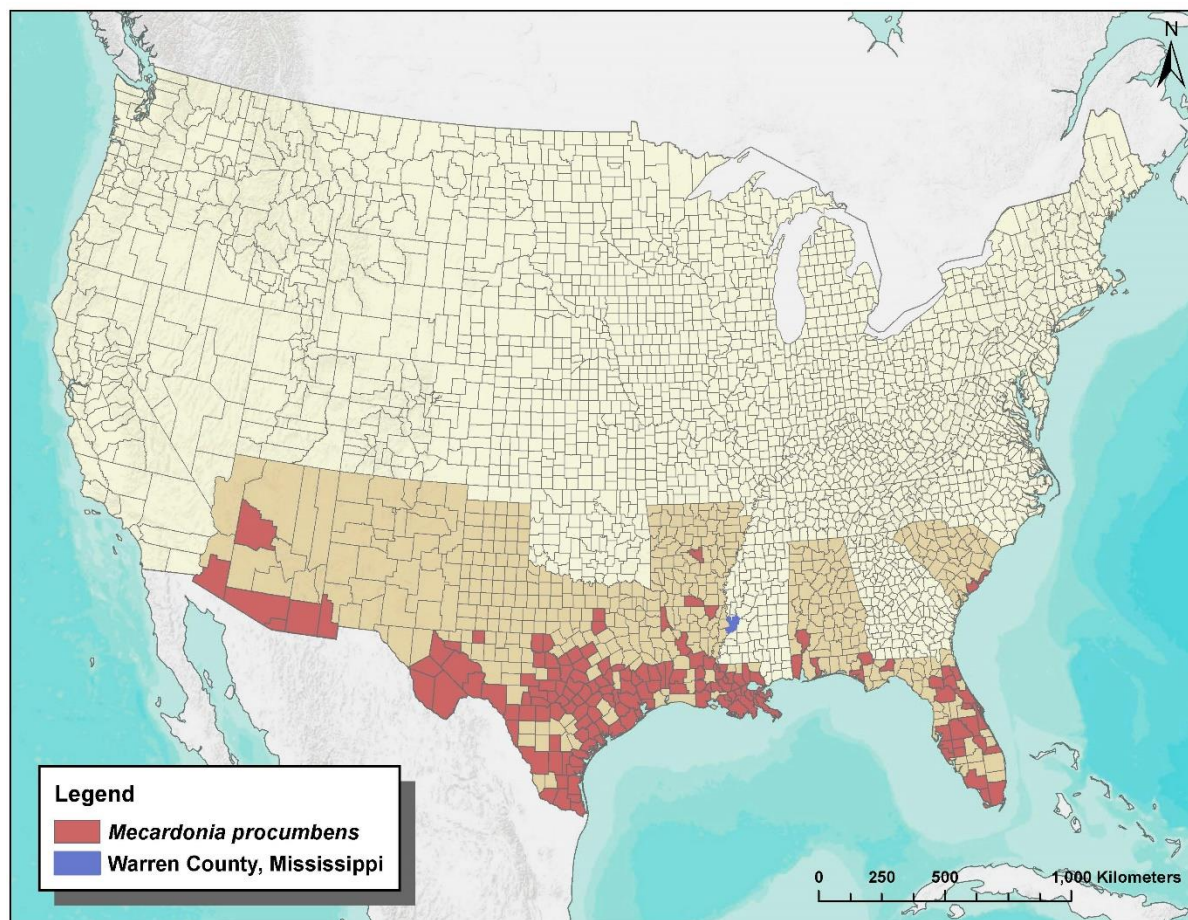


Figure 2. Composite distribution map of *Mecardonia procumbens* in the continental USA based on Kartesz (2015), USDA,NRCS (2020), SERNEC Data Portal (2020), and the new locality in Warren Co., Mississippi.

Mecardonia procumbens is considered a wetland plant wherever it occurs in the USA (Lichvar et al. 2016). It is considered a facultative wetland hydrophyte (usually occur in wetlands, but may occur in non-wetlands) in all regions with the exception of the Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plains (AGCP), where it is considered an obligate wetland hydrophyte (almost always occur in wetlands). However, many of the records from disturbed localities in the AGCP, including the site in Warren County, may lack wetland hydrology, hydrophytic vegetation, and hydric soils. These descriptions suggest that a review of its wetland indicator status within the AGCP region is needed —*M. procumbens* perhaps should be regarded as a facultative wetland hydrophyte.

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