

Plant Fact Sheet

Yellow wild indigo *Baptisia sphaerocarpa* Nutt. BASP

Contributed by: USDA/NRCS East Texas Plant Materials Center

Alternate names

Also known as *Baptisia viridis* Larisey.

Uses

This plant can be used for native landscaping and dried flowers.



Description

Yellow wild indigo is a native, perennial warm season forb. It is a member of the Fabaceae (pea) family. The erect plant grows to 2 to 3 feet tall. The plant begins growth in the spring. It produces small, yellow flowers (up to 1/2" long) which sit atop yellowish-green flower stems and has bluish-green foliage. The plant blooms from May-June. The yellow flowers develop into round, brown seed pods (to 3/4" diameter). The seeds mature within the pods and are harvested in late summer. Yellow wild indigo will cross with other *Baptisia* species.

Adaptation

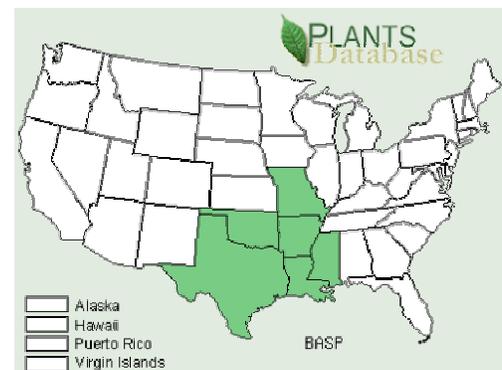
The range of adaptation for this plant is Texas east to Mississippi and north to Missouri. It prefers well-drained soil in full sun or partial shade. The plant tolerates drought and poor soils.

Establishment

Freshly harvested indigo seeds germinate well. Late summer, early fall plantings may have better success than spring plantings. If seeds are planted in spring, stratification or scarification will be needed. Indigo can also be propagated by stem cuttings. Take stem cuttings early in the spring when stems are soft.

Management

Yellow wild indigo is a low maintenance plant. After the plants bloom, they tend to spread open and lose their compact appearance. Trimming foliage after planting helps maintain a rounded, compact form.



Species occurrence of *Baptisia sphaerocarpa*

Pests and Potential Problems

Generally, yellow indigo has no serious insect or disease problems. However, at the East Texas Plant Materials Center, caterpillars have been noted eating plant foliage on a regular basis.

Availability

Yellow indigo hybrids are beginning to enter the native plant market. Check with your local nursery for availability.

Prepared by:

M. Brakie – Asst. Manager
USDA/NRCS East Texas Plant Materials Center
Nacogdoches, Texas
September 2004

References

- Hatch, S.L., K.N. Gandhi, L.E. Brown 1990. Checklist of the vascular plants of Texas- MP-1655. Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, College Station.
- Leebens, M.J. and Milligan, B.G. Pollination biology in hybridizing Baptisia (Fabaceae) populations. *Am. J. bot.* Apr. 1998. v. 85 (4).
- Missouri Botanical Garden. *Baptisia sphaerocarpa*. In: Missouri Botanical Garden. URL: <http://www.mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder/Plant.asp?code=A769>. (accessed 3 September 2004).
- The University of Tennessee. *Baptisia*. In: University of Tennessee. URL: http://www.agriculture.utk.edu/newsandinfo/PlantofMonth/0304_POM.htm (accessed 17 September 2004).
- USDA.NRCS.2004. The PLANTS Database, Version 3.5 (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA.

For more information about this and other conservation plants, please contact your local NRCS Field Office or Conservation District, or visit Plant Materials Program website at <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> and the PLANTS website at <http://plants.usda.gov>.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write the USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.