

Miscellaneous

There is a similar cactus species on the western edge of the Tobusch fishhook cactus area. This species, *A. brevihamatus*, is taller and has a more pronounced stem at maturity. It has 4-6 central spines and 12-14 radial spines. The easiest way to distinguish between the two species is at flowering. *A. brevihamatus* flower does not open completely and is greenish with an olivaceous-rosy hue or overtone.

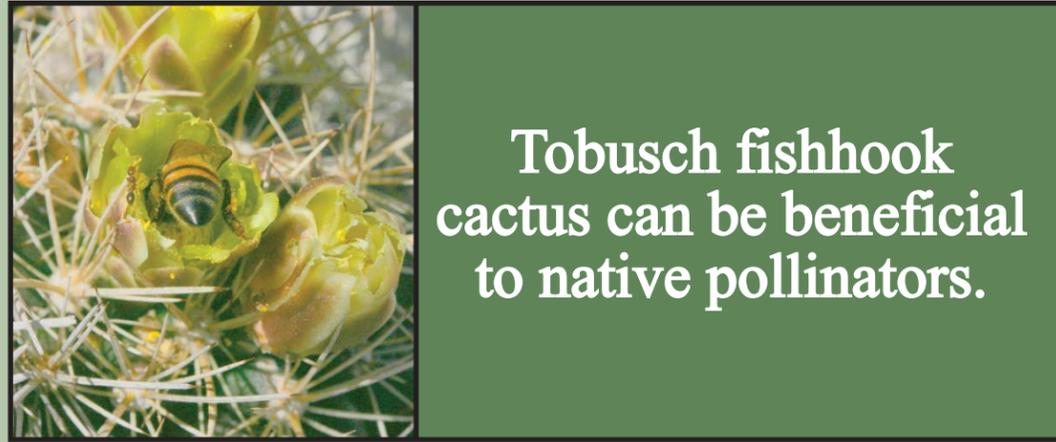


Photo Courtesy of LYNN J. POST

Tobusch fishhook cactus can be beneficial to native pollinators.

How To Help

Agencies are reviewing the current status of Tobusch fishhook cactus. It is noted that this plant may not be as rare as once believed. Assistance from landowners regarding occurrence of this species is needed to bring about a change of status under the Endangered Species Act. Contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field office or TPWD biologist if you would like to share information about this plant occurring on your land. NRCS can provide technical assistance, and in some instances, financial assistance as well.

Information for this pamphlet was provided by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

United States Department of Agriculture
NRCS Natural Resources
Conservation Service

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Photo Courtesy of LYNN J. POST

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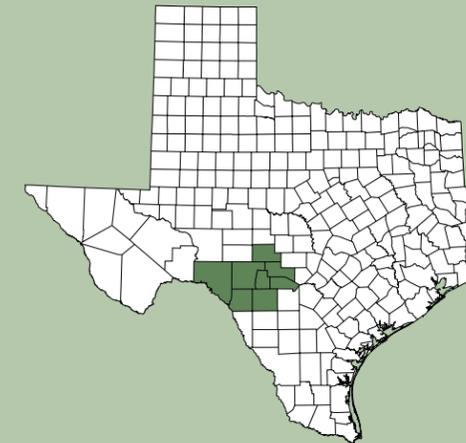
April 2007



Tobusch Fishhook Cactus

Sclerocactus brevihamatus ssp.tobuschii or *Ancistrocactus tobuschii*

Helping People Help the Land



General

Caution: Federal and State listed Endangered. Tobusch fishhook cactus is listed by both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) as endangered throughout its known range. It is known to occur in eight counties of the Edwards Plateau in Texas: Bandera, Edwards, Kerr, Kimble, Kinney, Real, Uvalde, and Val Verde counties.

PLANT SYMBOL - SCBRT
Federally and State Listed - Endangered

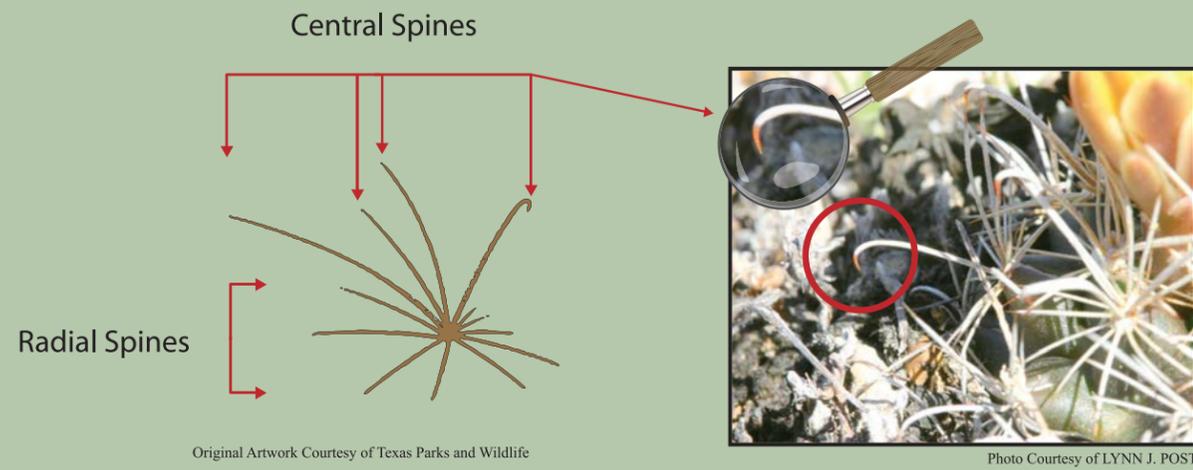
Identification

The stem of Tobusch fishhook cactus is usually a solitary, dark green, low-growing cylindrical cactus. Stressed plants may appear purple, red, or orange. Mature flowering plants are 1-2 inches in diameter with rare individuals growing up to 4 inches in diameter. They usually emerge from the ground only an inch or two. The plant is normally single-stemmed, but damage to the stem may cause the plant to produce multiple stems. This is a very small plant that may actually shrink below the soil during drought. The stem is covered with spines approximately 1/2 inch long. Spines are yellowish in color, sometimes red-tipped, turning gray with age. There are 3-5 central spines and 7-9 radial spines per group. The upper two central spines form an erect "V." Most important in the Tobusch fishhook cactus is the one hooked central spine. These spines are approximately 1 1/2 inches long. Occasionally the smaller central spines will come up in the middle of the "V" giving the appearance of a "W."



Photo Courtesy of LYNN J. POST





Tobusch fishhook cactus begins to produce flowers in mid-January in the southern-most populations. Flowers throughout its range are in full bloom in February. Flowering ends by late March. Flowers are clear, bright yellow. Flowers may also be a creamy yellow or yellowish-green (upon opening), turning golden-yellow with age, approximately 1-1½ inches long and wide. Fruits are egg-shaped, green with a rosy pink tinge color, maturing by May, and are approximately 1 inch long with 2-6 scales.

Habitat

Habitat for Tobusch fishhook cactus consists of patchy openings scattered within a mosaic of woodlands, scrublands, and grasslands in the Edwards Plateau. The Tobusch fishhook cactus occurs on very shallow gravelly soil over fractured massive limestone in openings within live oak/juniper woodlands. These openings are primarily populated with herbaceous cover such as grasses and forbs. It may sometimes occur in association with spike moss. It most commonly grows on Tarrant, Ector, and Eckrant soil series, which have soil textures of rocky loams, clay loams, and clays. They are almost always found in Steep Adobe range sites or gravelly river wash areas. Tobusch fishhook cactus also occurs in pinyon pine/oak woodlands in the western part of the Edwards Plateau.



Conservation Practices

Beneficial Conservation Practices: Brush management (removal of individual brush species either by hand or selective mechanical methods such as excavator or skid steer), prescribed grazing, prescribed burning during cool season (prior to bloom) performed at no shorter frequency than once every five years

Non-Beneficial Conservation Practices: Brush management (mechanical, such as dozing), overgrazing

