

Hairy Thoroughwort

Eupatorium pubescens

Family: Asteraceae **Genus:** *Eupatorium* **Species:** *pubescens*
Average Height: 30 inches **Bloom Time:** June–October
Elevation Range: Most common in the Piedmont, and elevations 200–800'. **Geologic/Soil Associations:** Does well on acidic nutrient-poor soils but is also found on circumneutral clayey soils.

Soil Drainage Class and Moisture Regime: Well-drained. Xeric (extremely dry) to Mesic (somewhat moist). **Light and Aspect:** Full sun. Flat terrain, and slopes facing East, South, and West.

Habitat Associations: Old fields and well established old-growth grasslands, including remnant prairie, savanna, and woodland. Power line rights-of-way, un-sprayed roadsides. Low elevation grassland species, frequent throughout the Piedmont region, and less common in ecoregions east and west. For a reliable trail-side view of the species, visit the hilltop prairie at Preddy Creek Park in northern Albemarle County.

Flora Associations: A moderately conservative species, *Eupatorium pubescens* is found in habitats that have had sufficient time to recover from disturbance. Other species that self-assemble at a slow pace growing with it include *Agalinis tenuifolia* (slender-leaf false foxglove), *Cirsium pumilum* (pasture thistle), *Aristida purpurascens* (purple three-awn grass), *Andropogon gyrans* (Elliot's bluestem), and *Liatris squarrosa* (scaly blazing star). Finding these species together may be an indication that the soil beneath them is unplowed, and that an old-growth grassland may be at hand.

Fauna Associations: *Eupatorium* flowers are very popular with many kinds of insects, including long-tongued bees, short-tongued bees, wasps, flies, butterflies, skippers, moths, and beetles. Most of these insects seek nectar, although bees may collect the pollen and beetles likely eat it. *Haploa clymene* (clymene moth) caterpillars feed on thoroughwort foliage. If you look closely you might find the well camouflaged predator, *Misumenoides formosipes* (the white-banded crab spider), waiting beneath a flower ready to pounce on an unsuspecting pollinator. Mammalian herbivores rarely dine on this plant because of its bitter foliage.

Notes: Hybridizes readily with some other members of the genus, including the closely related *E. rotundifolium*. In the illustration here we have included a few *E. rotundifolium* leaf and upper stem traits to show a variant of *E. pubescens* we frequently encounter.

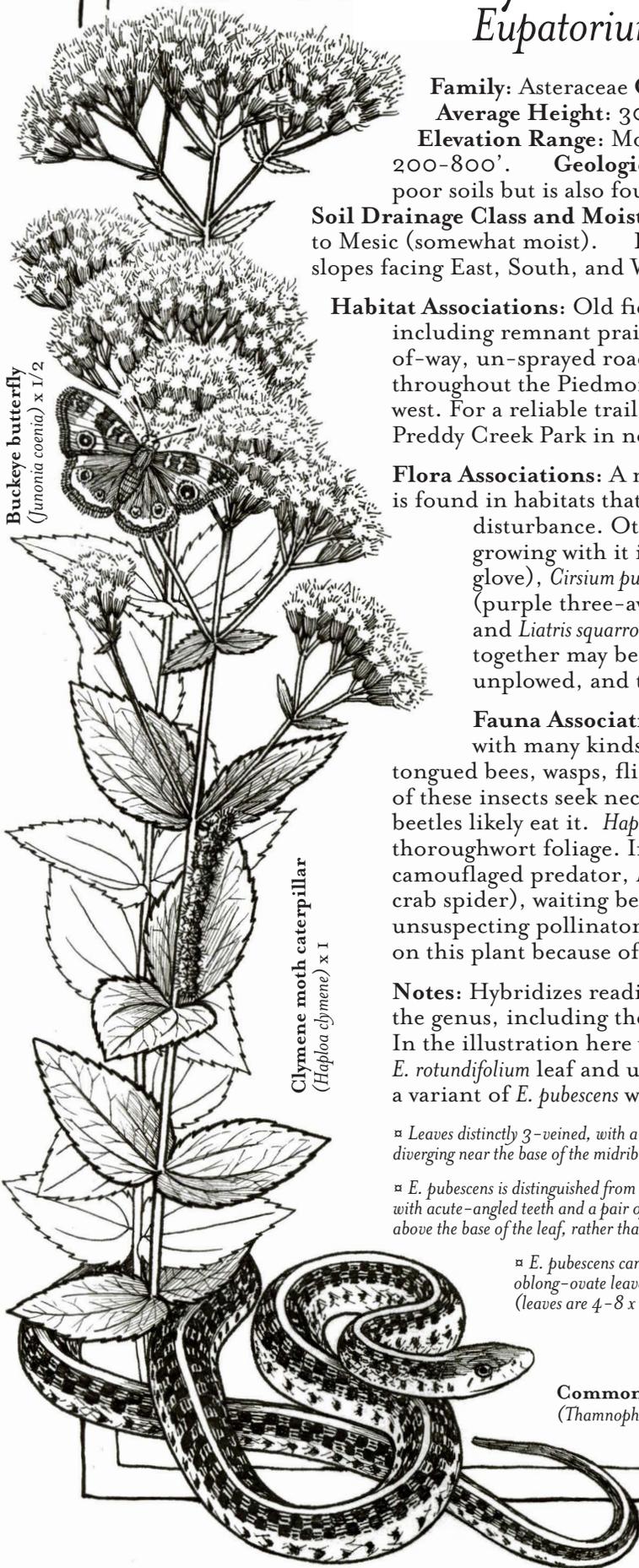
▣ Leaves distinctly 3-veined, with a principal pair of prominent veins diverging near the base of the midrib.

▣ *E. pubescens* is distinguished from *E. rotundifolium* by having leaves with acute-angled teeth and a pair of veins emerging from the mid-vein above the base of the leaf, rather than from the base.

▣ *E. pubescens* can be identified by its hairy stems and oblong-ovate leaves positioned tightly against the stem. (leaves are 4–8 x 2–6 cm)

White-banded crab spider
(Misumenoides formosipes) x 2

Common garter snake
(Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis) x 1/2



Buckeye butterfly
(Junonia coenia) x 1/2

Clymene moth caterpillar
(Haploa clymene) x 1

Clymene moth
(Haploa clymene) x 1

Brown-legged grass carrier
(Isodontia auripes) x 2

