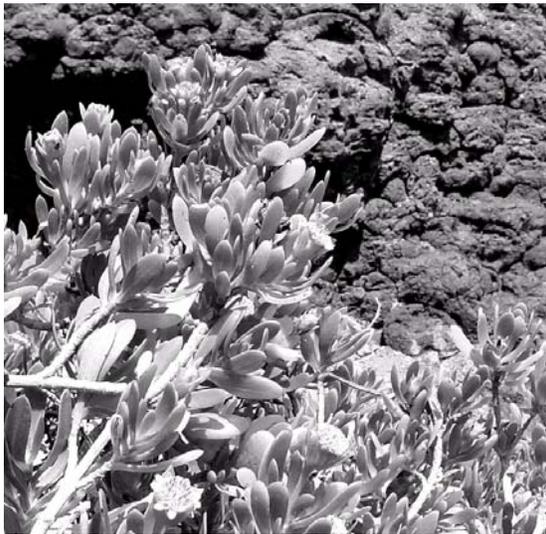


***Borrichia arborescens* (L.) DC.**
ASTERACEAE

sea ox-eye

Synonyms: *Bupthalmum arborescens* L.
Borrichia argentea DC.
Borrichia glabrata Small.



General Description.—Sea ox-eye, also known as tree oxeye, silver sea ox-eye, oxeye daisy, sea daisy, seaside tansy, gull feed, clavelón de playa, and fleur-sorleil bord de mar, is an evergreen, low shrub usually 1 m or less in height with stem diameters of 1 cm, which forms mounds and mats. Older plants have numerous stems. The plants are supported by short rhizomes and a moderate number of lateral roots. The stems are gray with a white, brittle wood and a 3-mm pith. Twigs bear deep leaf scars. The foliage tends to be crowded at ends of twigs. The simple, opposite, sessile leaves are fleshy and yellow-green, light-green, or gray-green, oblanceolate to spatulate, entire, and 3 to 8 cm long. The foliage is resinous and aromatic. Sea ox-eye flowers are usually solitary, terminal heads about 2.5 cm across on peduncles 2 to 5 cm long. The corolla and the ray florets are bright yellow and the disk florets are orange-yellow. The black achenes are 3 to 4 mm long with a pappus in the form of a dentate cup less than 1 mm long. The chromosome number is $2n = 28$ (Howard 1989, Liogier 1997, Long and Lakela 1976, Nelson 1996)

Range.—Sea ox-eye is native to southern Florida, the Bahamas, Bermuda, the West Indies, Mexico and Guatemala (Liogier 1997). Although it is

planted as an ornamental, it is not known to have naturalized outside the native range. *Borrichia x cubana* of southern Florida is believed to be a natural hybrid of sea ox-eye and *Borrichia frutescens* (L.) DC. (Nelson 1996).

Ecology.—Natural sea ox-eye grows near the seashore, usually within the influence of salt spray. Because the species is low in stature, grows slowly, and is intolerant of shade, it must occupy areas with low competition from other vegetation. It finds these conditions on headlands, seaside rocks, dunes, beach strands, low hammocks, and the edges of mangroves and brackish marshes. Sea ox-eye will grow in more favorable conditions if artificially protected from competition. Almost any soil will do, including both acid and alkaline soils. Sea ox-eye tolerates both excessively drained and poorly drained conditions. Mean annual rainfall may range from 900 to 1500 mm. It is drought resistant (Gillman 1999).

Reproduction.—Sea ox-eye blooms in spring and summer in Florida (Long and Lakela 1976) and throughout the year in Puerto Rico (author's observation). It is pollinated by insects. Seeds collected in Puerto Rico averaged 0.00115 g/seed or 870,000 seeds/kg. Only 16 percent of this collection germinated when placed in moist potting mix. Workman (1980) recommends propagating sea ox-eye by sowing in pots. Also, the plant can be propagated by cuttings (Gillman 1999). Seed dispersal appears to be by water (storm surges) and strong winds. Once established, plants widen by constant layering of the semiprostrate stems. New clumps probably are established by the rooting of broken stems moved by storms.

Growth and Management.—Growth of sea ox-eye is slow. Branch extension is about 10 to 30 cm/year. Although, stems and branches die, as long as conditions remain favorable, clonal plants may live almost indefinitely. Newly established plants should be protected from overtopping by grass, brush, and trees. It is important not to

regularly irrigate sea ox-eye plants used in landscaping (Gillman 1999).

Benefits.—Sea ox-eye is available commercially and is widely planted as an ornamental. It is recommended for foundation plantings and as a border shrub (Workman 1980), particularly where salt and salt spray are prevalent and in xeric (unwatered) gardens (Knox 2002). It also attracts butterflies (Gilman 2002). A tea is prepared from branch tips and leaves to relieve colds, coughs, and fish poisoning (Garland 2002).

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