

***Chromolaena geraniifolia* (Urban) King & H.E. Robins.** geranium-leaf eupatorium  
ASTERACEAE

Synonyms: *Osmia geraniifolia* (Urban) Britt. & Wilson  
*Eupatorium geraniifolium* Urban



**General Description.**—Geranium-leaf eupatorium, a name assigned by the author in the absence of a local common name, is an evergreen shrub up to 2 m in height and 1 cm in stem diameter. The plant usually has several stems arising from the root crown. The root system is composed of fibrous lateral and fine roots. Geranium-leaf eupatorium produces relatively few branches. The foliage, which has a chrysanthemum-like odor, tends to be concentrated near the branch ends. The opposite leaves, which have a short petiole, are densely pubescent, 2 to 6 cm long by 1.5 to 5 cm broad, and deeply lobed or coarsely toothed. Inflorescences are small terminal corymbs of oblong-cylindrical heads. The corolla of the small flowers is blue. The fruits are dark-colored achenes, 4 to 5 mm long with a pappus 4 mm long (author's observation, Liogier 1997).

**Range.**—Geranium-leaf eupatorium is endemic to Puerto Rico. It occurs mainly in mountainous areas of the central part of the island (Liogier 1997). It is not known to have been planted or naturalized elsewhere.

**Ecology.**—Geranium-leaf eupatorium can be locally common in scattered populations. It may be

found on a wide variety of soils but most frequently is found on well-drained, medium-textured, often rocky soils that develop over igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic (including ultramafic) rocks. The species is most common in areas of volcanic rock. Geranium-leaf eupatorium grows on sites that receive from about 1200 to about 3000 mm of mean annual precipitation at elevations of 400 to 1,000 m (Liogier 1997). The species is moderately intolerant of shade; it grows well in openings and under the canopy of low basal-area forest. Geranium-leaf eupatorium occurs in remnant and middle- to late-secondary forests, old road cuts and fills, bluffs, and unstable slopes. It grows as scattered individual plants and in small clumps under favorable conditions.

**Reproduction.**—Geranium-leaf eupatorium was observed in bloom in March by the author. It flowers and fruits abundantly. Seeds collected near Cayey, Puerto Rico, averaged 0.00033 g/seed or 31 million seeds/kg. These seeds were sown on moist filter paper and yielded 67 percent germination between 7 and 24 days after sowing. The seeds are dispersed by the wind. Seedlings and successful natural reproduction are not common.

**Growth and Management.**—Individual stems of geranium-leaf eupatorium live about 5 years. Plants live much longer because of sprouting that replaces senescent stems. No management guidelines have been published. Planting is probably the best way of establishing new populations, and natural reproduction probably can be encouraged by creating openings with scattered patches of bare soil in forests near seed sources.

**Benefits.**—Geranium-leaf eupatorium is a pretty plant and contributes to the aesthetic appeal of the forest. It helps stabilize the soil and furnishes cover for wildlife.

#### References

Liogier, H.A. 1997. Descriptive flora of Puerto Rico and adjacent islands. Vol. 5. Editorial de la

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