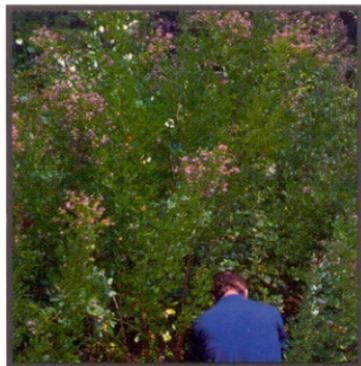


Lespedeza Bicolor *Lespedeza bicolor*



Lespedeza bicolor—flowering



Lespedeza bicolor—back &
front of leaves



Lespedeza bicolor—flower

Plant: Perennial leguminous shrub, ascending or arching, branched, 1–3 m (3–10 ft) tall, from a woody rootcrown.

Stem: Ascending stems, 0.5–2 cm (3/16–3/4 in) in diameter, *appressed* hairs to hairless, often gray-green.

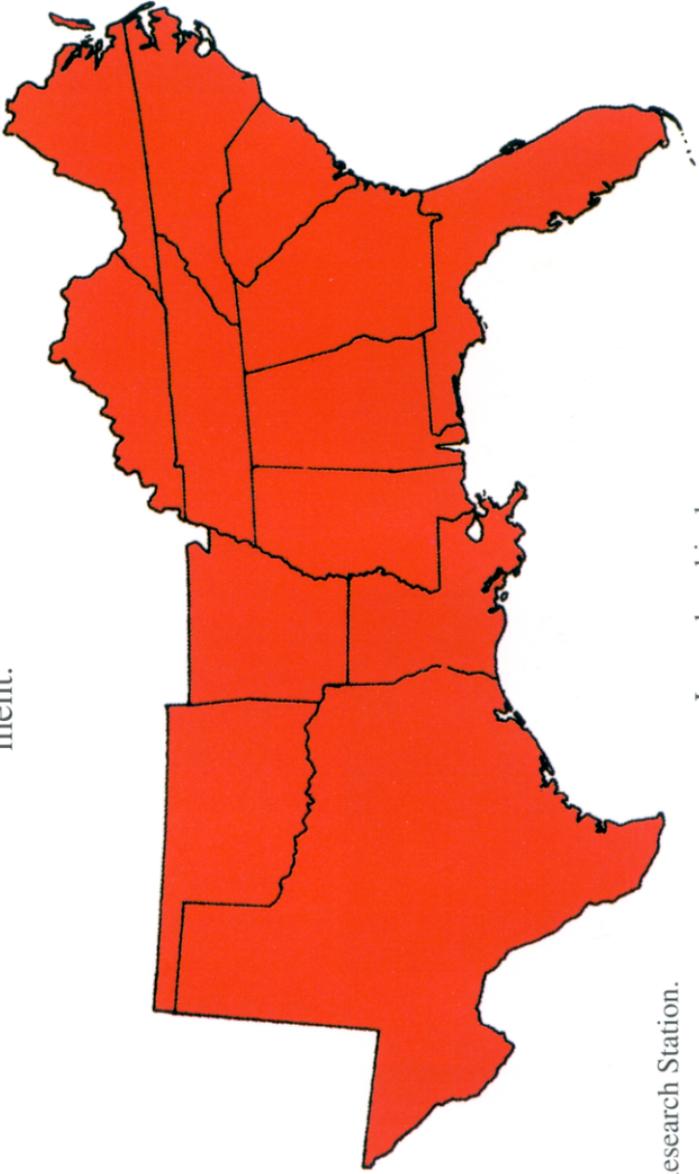
Leaves: Alternate, 3-leaflet leaves, petioles 2–4 cm (3/4–1 1/2 in), leaflets elliptic to ovate, 2–5 cm (3/4–2 in) long and 1–3 cm (1/2–1 1/4 in) wide, lower surface lighter green. *Stipules* narrowly linear, 1–8 mm (1/16–5/16 in) long.

Flowers: June–September. Clusters (*racemes*) of 5–15 well-spaced flowers from upper leaf axils and exceeding the upper leaves, 10–40 cm (4–16 in) long with clusters subtended by an ovate bract, 0.5–1.5 mm (1/64–1/16 in) long. Petals rosy purple and white (bicolored), 8–11 mm (5/16–7/16 in) long. *Calyx* sparsely to very hairy, lobes 2.5–4.5 mm (1/8–1/4 in) long with lower lobe 1 mm (1/16 in) longer.

Fruit and Seeds: August to November. Flat leguminous pod, broadly elliptic, 6–8 mm (1/4–5/16 in) long, with densely *appressed* hairs.

Range: Throughout the Southeast.

Ecology: Nitrogen fixer. Planted for wildlife food and soil improvement. An exotic invader of forests that will reproduce and spread even under a medium to dense overstory. Burning encourages encroachment.



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(Added photo by Ted Bodner)

Lespedeza bicolor