Threatened and Endangered Species in Forests of Wisconsin

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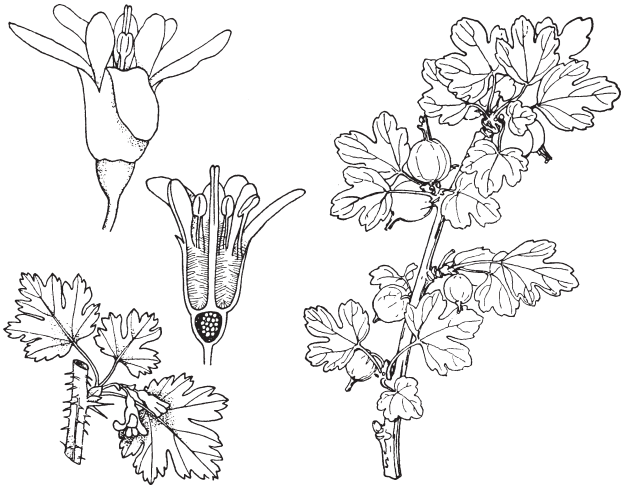
WISCONSIN
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Hawthorn-leaved Gooseberry

(Ribes oxyacanthoides)

Federal Status: Not Listed
State Status: Threatened



Description: In spring the hawthorn-leaved gooseberry shrub bears small, white, tubular, bell-shaped flowers singly or in groups of two or three. Spines occur where the flower stem meets the branch. Young branches are yellow-gray and slightly hairy; older branches are reddish-brown and smooth with peeling strips of gray bark. Arching branches may take root when they touch the ground, producing new plants. The leaves of this shrub resemble miniature maple leaves.

Habitat: Hawthorn-leaved gooseberry is a shrub of cool, rocky sites. In Wisconsin it grows in four northwestern counties on "shattered-rock" slopes and at low sites where cold air collects.

Forestry Considerations: Trees growing near hawthorn-leaved gooseberry plants may be lightly thinned, as long as the forest canopy remains relatively intact. This rare shrub is adapted to light shade and the cool air of shady sites. Farther from the site, selective harvest would be compatible with the continued survival of the hawthorn-leaved gooseberry.