



Hawaiian cotton



Plant Botanical Name:

Gossypium tomentosum

USBG Plant Location:

Conservatory

Conservatory Room Location:

Hawaii

Plant Threat Level:

Vulnerable

Also known as Hawaiian cotton, *Gossypium tomentosum* was once extremely common to the dry and rocky coastal areas of the Hawaiian islands. It now faces significant threats due to land development and the spread of alien invasive weeds. This plant is rare by all standards including ICUN, the World Conservation Union, and is also protected under the Endangered Species Act. Although closely related to commercial cotton, the fibers of *Gossypium tomentosum* have not been used to produce cotton on a large scale. It is important in research and breeding programs aimed at producing disease resistance in commercial cotton. It was crossed with other cotton strains to create disease-resistant varieties. Historically, native Hawaiians used the bright yellow flowers to make dye.

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