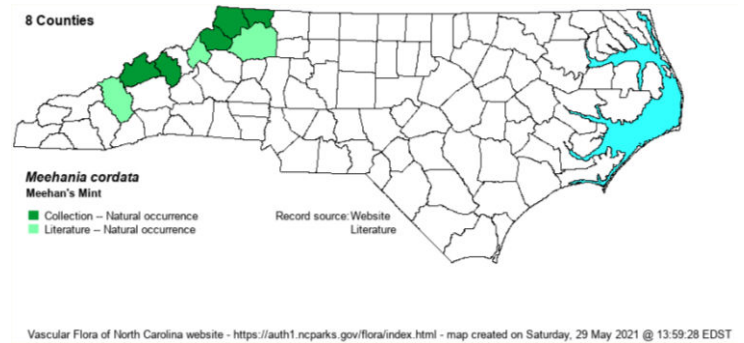


Meehan's Mint (*Meehania cordata*)



Abundance

Infrequent to fairly common in the Amphibolite Mountains of Ashe and northern Watauga counties.

Habitat

Favors high pH soils, over amphibolite rock, and can be found in somewhat rocky sites and from mesic to moist conditions.

Phenology

Blooms from late May to late June, and fruits in June and July.

Identification

This is an odd mint, completely unlike any other flowering plant in the state. It is somewhat leaning and trailing and can form carpets. Plants can be only about 6" tall but often 1' wide or more, with a few pairs of opposite leaves on quite long petioles (about 2" long). Each leaf blade is quite violet-like, being ovate with a cordate base, scalloped margins and a rounded tip, about 1.5-2" long and wide. At the ends of the one to several branches grow the small clusters of flowers, each flower being about 1.3-1.5" long (large for the size of the plant), mostly lavender-blue in color. They are erect to leaning, with a tubular lower portion and a curved hood over the opening. As the species tends to grow in carpets low to the ground, a patch of the plants in full bloom is quite striking and unforgettable. Even just in leaf, the colony can be identified by experienced biologists, but inexperienced ones would likely call the plants as violets, or worse, as the exotic Ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*). Exploring the mountains of Ashe and Watauga counties may well yield some of the plants, though they bloom after the main spring wildflower push in mid-April to mid-May; they do not normally start flowering until later in May.



Plants commonly confused with Meehan's Mint

Hairy Skullcap (*Scutellaria ovata*)



Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*)



Violet foliage (*Viola spp.*)



Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*)

