

Verbascum virgatum Stokes, WAND MULLEIN. Biennial herb, thick-taprooted, rosetted (year 1 and throughout year 2), year 2 producing a wandlike shoot, unbranched (occasionally 1–2-branched just below inflorescence), erect, 40–195 cm tall; shoots hairy throughout, pilose with mixed dendroid-forked and unbranched hairs and glandular hairs with tack-shaped heads. **Stems:** several-ridged but mostly cylindric, to 7 mm diameter, with 2 ridges descending from each leaf, typically with nonglandular hairs and inconspicuous, short glandular hairs on shoot and densely glandular-hairy in inflorescence with some nonglandular hairs; year 2 stem woody at base and covered with bark; solid. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate (basal leaves) and sessile (cauline leaves), without stipules; petiole broad and commonly winged, 2–9 mm long, broad and indistinct from blade, whitish and shaped like base of midrib having narrow, bladelike wings; blade of basal leaves oblanceolate or oblong to narrowly obovate, 100–300 × 30–80 mm, of cauline leaves oblanceolate changing in series to lanceolate, 40–150 × < 35 mm, long-tapered (basal leaves) or cordate to clasping or fused to stem at base (cauline leaves), mostly crenate to irregularly dentate with large teeth having smaller, low teeth, obtuse to acute at tip, conspicuously pinnately veined (lower leaves) or appearing palmate (sessile cauline leaves) with most veins sunken on upper surface and raised on lower surface, dull and soft-hairy, lower surface with denser pubescence and whitish principal veins; from base to inflorescence increasingly glandular-pubescent with decreasing nonglandular hairs. **Inflorescence:** racemelike, terminal, with many evenly spaced flowers, later at the lower nodes with condensed axillary branches (fasciculate) forming (1–)2–4(–5) flowers, bracteate, densely covered with conspicuous, tack-shaped glandular hairs; bractlet subtending pedicel ovate, 7–9 mm long, ± = calyx, sessile or short-petiolate, entire, acuminate to long-acuminate at tip, lower surface and tip often purplish; pedicel 2–5 mm long, < calyx, bracteoles absent. **Flower:** bisexual, ± radial, in range 25–30 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, in range (5–)7–9 mm long, green; tube < lobes; lobes ± equal, acute; **corolla** 5-lobed, cymbal-shaped (rotate), easily dislodged in bud and flower, bright yellow, glabrous; tube 1 mm long, broadening to a saucer-shaped throat 5–6 mm wide, glossy and red-purple around lower throat and with starlike pigmentation pointing toward lobes, points of star often with tufts of hairs; lobes rounded, 7–10 mm long, upper 2 lobes somewhat smaller and more fused than other lobes; **stamens** 5, fused to lower throat; filaments curved, 7.5–9 mm long, somewhat compressed front-to-back below midpoint, conspicuously villous with long, red-purple glandular hairs (sometimes hairs cream-white approaching anther) along 1 side for most of length; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, symmetrically or asymmetrically fan-shaped, to 3 mm long, orange, when asymmetric the oblique anthers formed on lower side, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen orange; **nectary disc** at base of ovary, ringlike, fine, greenish; **pistil** 1, ca. 10 mm long; ovary superior, 5-sided subspheroid, ± 1.5 mm, green, densely hairy with some glandular hairs, 2-chambered, each chamber with many ovules attached to center; style exerted, 9–10 mm long, greenish, fine-pubescent and lower style with radiating glandular hairs; stigmas 2, fused and hairlike. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscing by 4 valves, many-seeded, spheroid, 7–10 mm. **Seed:** thimble-shaped with truncate ends and 4 regular sides, 0.6–0.75 × 0.4–0.5 mm, brown, with 2–3 sinusoidal longitudinal ribs having fine linear ridges on the ribs. Mid-April–early July.

Naturalized. Biennial herb from Europe first recorded in range during summer, 2003, from grassland at Cornell Corners (SMM) but within a week observed also well-established at SMMNRA Cheeseboro (SH). *Verbascum virgatum* is typically a 1-stemmed plant with a basal rosette and an erect, terminal inflorescence producing handsome, bright yellow flowers. The plant often remains as a dry stalk with its old, spheric fruits, sometimes for a year or more. Flowering in any given year is unpredictable, depending, of course, on establishment of basal rosettes during the previous year.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson