Florida Statewide Endangered and Threatened Plant Conservation Program (FPCP)

Rare Plants of NE Florida scrub and some considerations in their management

Presentation to Northwest Florida Scrub Working Group

19 May 2015 11:30 am

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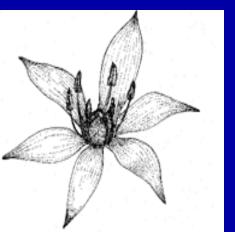
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1650

http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Florida-Forest-Service/Our-Forests/Forest-Health/Florida-Statewide-Endangered-and-Threatened-Plant-Conservation-Program

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Florida Statewide Endangered and Threatened Plant Conservation Program

- Funding from USFWS under the Section 6, US Endangered Species Act. States receive recovery funding for federally-listed plant and animal species.
- > Florida PCP initiated in 1991.
- >Annual allocation around \$189,000.

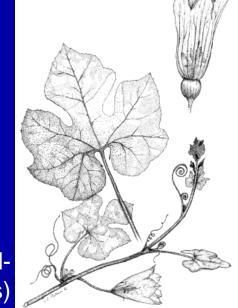


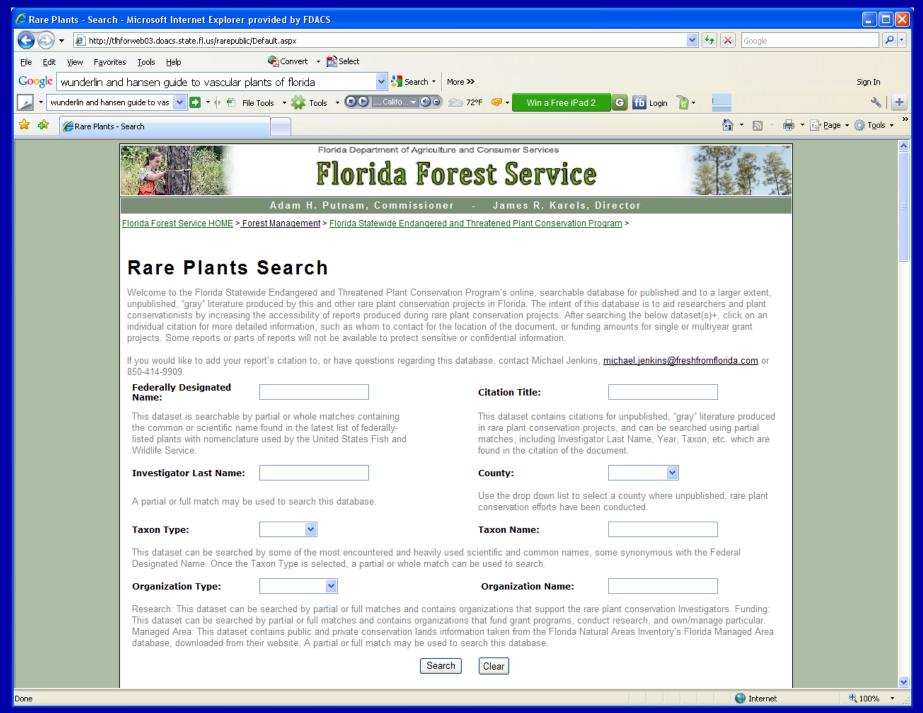
Harper's
Beauty
Harperocallis
flava

Rugel's Pawpaw Deeringothamnus rugelii

Florida Statewide Endangered and Threatened Plant Conservation Program

- ➤ GOAL to restore and maintain existing populations of listed plants on public land and on private lands managed for conservation purposes. Accomplished through:
 - ➤ Plant Conservation Program Biologist
 - >LWRSF Scrub Plant Ecologist
 - >Funded Projects



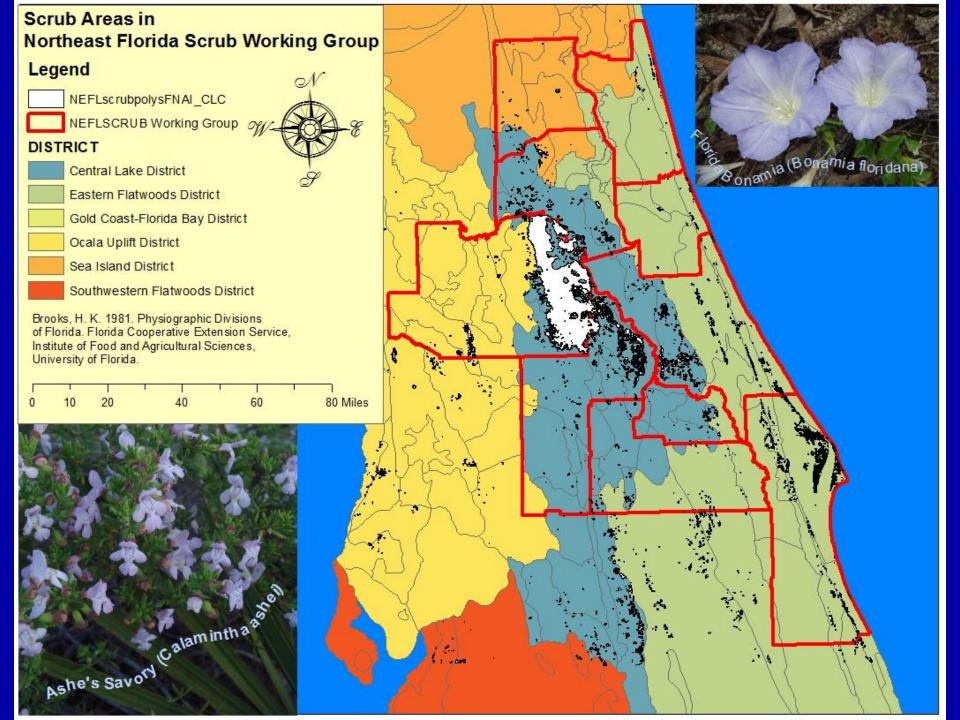


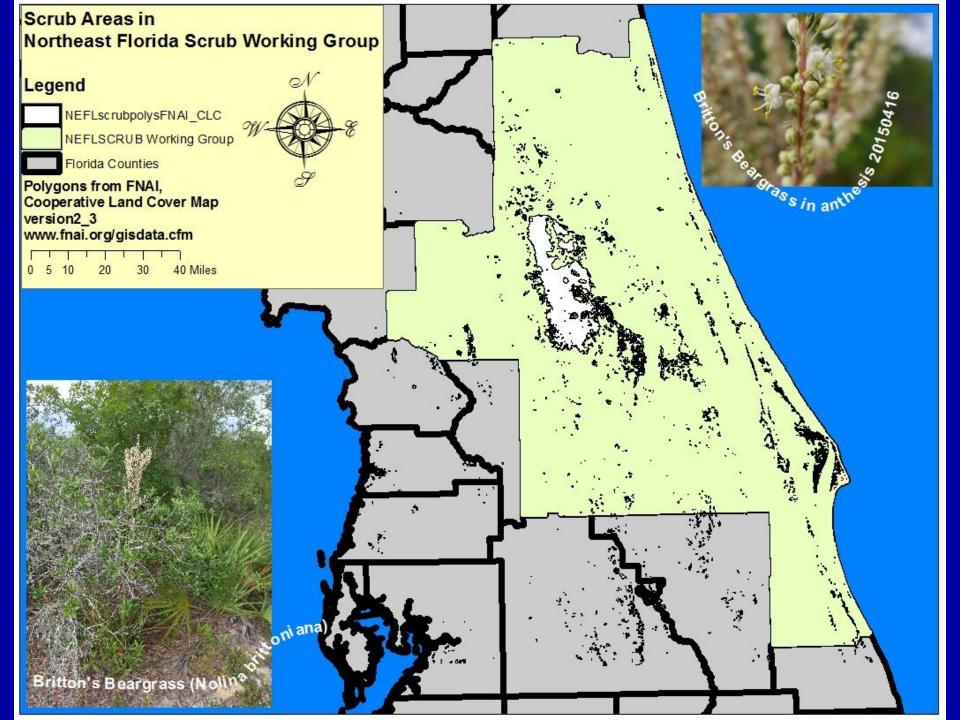
Goal of Talk: Northeast Florida Scrub Working Group

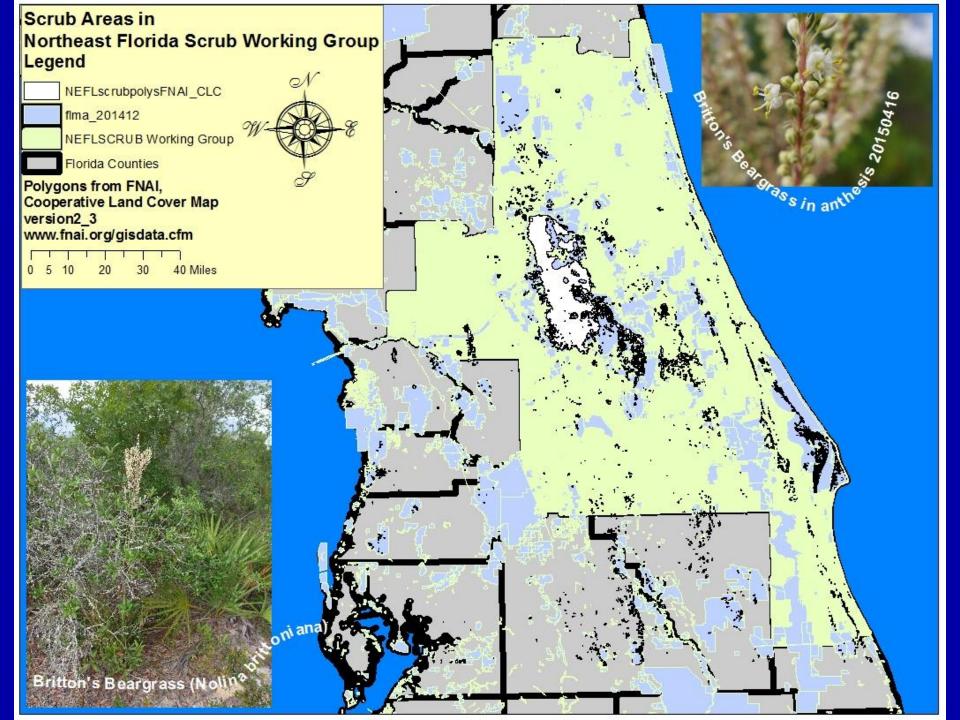
- ➤ Quickly, overview of rare plants within NE Florida scrub and some suggestions and definitions in rare plant management and biology.
- Each selected rare plant species found within the many scrub habitats in Northeast Florida.

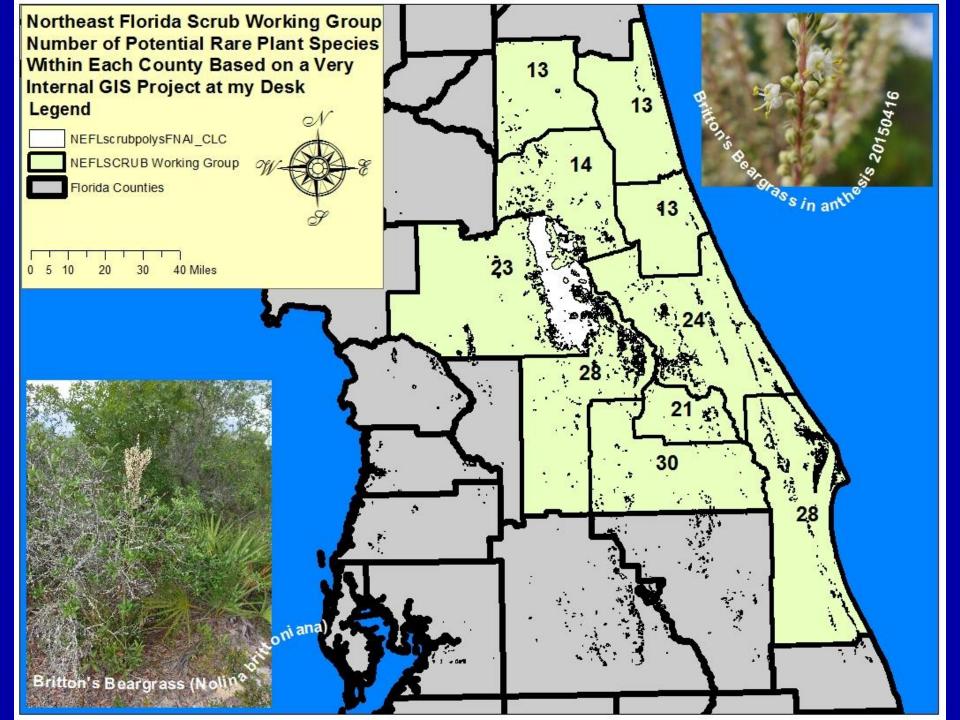
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NE FL Rare Scrub Plants

- ➤ 50 species of rare xeric soil scrub plants picked from internal GIS rare plant project, "ArcWunderlin". Please ask for county lists of rare plants and latest rare plant list.
- 22 species of plants found within NE FL Working Group counties are endemic to Florida.
- ▶ 9 species are federal listed by USFWS as Endangered. 26 listed as Endangered by State of Florida (Florida Administrative Code 5B40 rule, Preservation of the Flora of Florida's Regulated Plant Index, administered by FDACS, Division of Plant Industry).
- → 4 species are federal listed by USFWS as Threatened. 14 species listed as by Threatened by the State of Florida.
- ➤ 5 of the 50 species are tracked by FNAI and not listed at all, of the 50 species selected, 8 are not tracked by FNAI.

Scrub Rare Plant Management Considerations

- Rx fire is good anytime but best in April and May and the drier the better. Serious concern among scrub botanists that winter burning over long periods of time does not favor rare plants.
- ➤ Be careful of rare plants in roads and firebreaks. May be the only place plants exist. Mowing is better than harrowing/disking and can be beneficial to rare plants. One firebreak disk can destroy all known populations of a species. Hand remove fuels from around rare plants.
- Be careful of scrub restoration where invasive grasses are infesting nearby areas or on site. Sometimes unmowed areas can somewhat block seeds from coming in. Mechanical treatments notorious for spreading invasive plants.
- Some areas are "better left alone" and should only be restored with fire.
- Scrub habitats vary widely and plants respond differently to different fire regimes and restoration techniques. This merits doing small-scale restoration first, seeing what works on site and going with that.

Rare Plant Management Tips

- Killing oaks (e.g., Sand Live Oaks) is good BUT MUST be followed up with Rx fire or periodic follow ups (e.g., hand crews w/saws, mowing). For example, girdling oaks is great but the increased sunlight from canopy reduction will increase germination of oaks, which can get much more thicker than what was being restored. Rx fire can get rid of these but if that is not an option, follow up treatments to small oaks must be done. A commitment is necessary from land manager to do this because if oaks come back and are not killed, the oaks will dominate for decades. Here it is better to not have opened up the canopy at all.
- Annual mowing can be beneficial to rare plants, except where invasive plants are being introduced. Having very wide, often-mowed firebreaks can provide habitat for rare plants and reduce dangerous fire spread.

Rare Plant Management Tips-What can I do tomorrow to help my rare plants on site?

- First do a thorough rare plant survey using in-house data or Florida Natural Areas Inventory's FLEO (Florida Element Occurrence data). There may be no data for an area if it has never been properly surveyed.
- While documenting plants with GPS, note which populations could use a "Fuel Buster".
- Fuel Buster is where a single person (or more) can open up the habitat significantly around a rare plant population and then commit to following it up on an annual basis. Without follow-up you can make the habitat worse than when you started.
- Fuel Busters can be as easy as a one person with a pair of loppers and be done in one hour or can be with large chainsaw crew. Rx fire or annual follow-up with hand crew/mowing is necessary.
- Fuel Busters can significantly increase plant fitness and germination/recruitment of new individuals in a small population.



Rare Plant Management Tips-What can I do tomorrow to help my rare plants on site?

> Fuel Buster

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Asclepias curtissii A.Gray Curtis's Milkweed G3 S3 N LE Narrow Florida Endemic FNAI-No Apocynaceae Dogbane Family

Life History Research

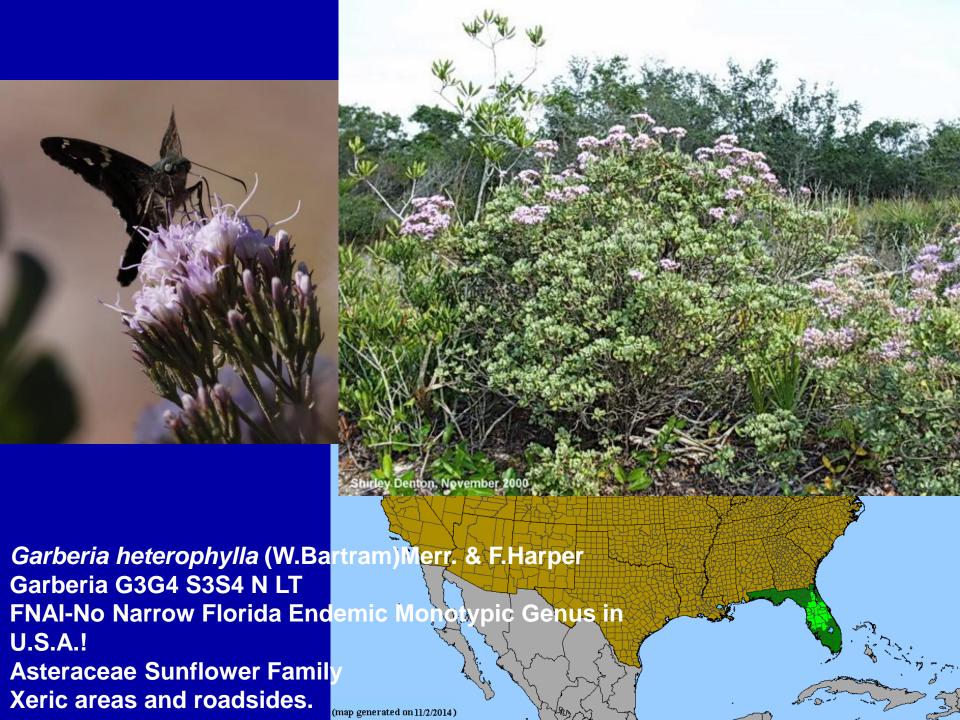
Southeastern Naturalist 9(2):259-274. 2010

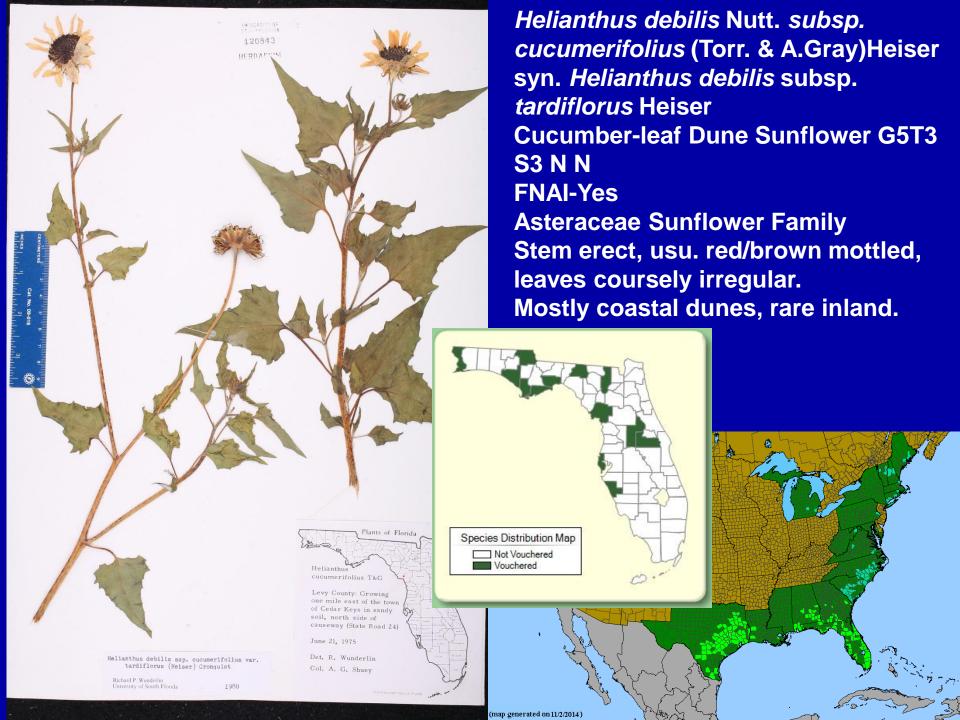
The Effect of Shrubs on the Establishment of an Endangered Perennial (Asclepias curtissii) Endemic to Florida Scrub

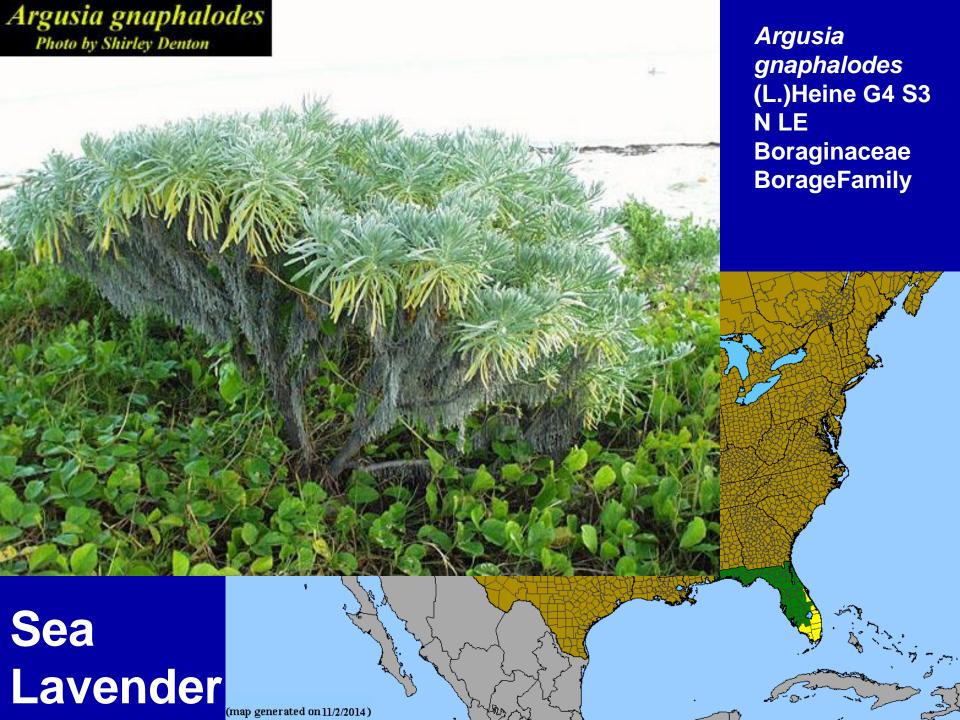
Patrick Mondo¹, Kristen D. Marshall Mattson² and Cynthia C. Bennington

- ➤ Seed germination was significantly enhanced by shade (*P* < 0.0001) but not by leaf litter.
- \triangleright Seedlings growing in the shade of close neighboring shrubs had significantly higher rates of survival (P < 0.001) than those seedlings planted in gaps.
- ➤ Extant plants tended to grow close to shrubs, and seeds tended to land near shrubs, but neither of these distances were less than would be expected by random chance (*P* > 0.10 in both cases).
- The facilitation of seedling establishment by woody plants has been documented in other arid environments, but not in Florida scrub.











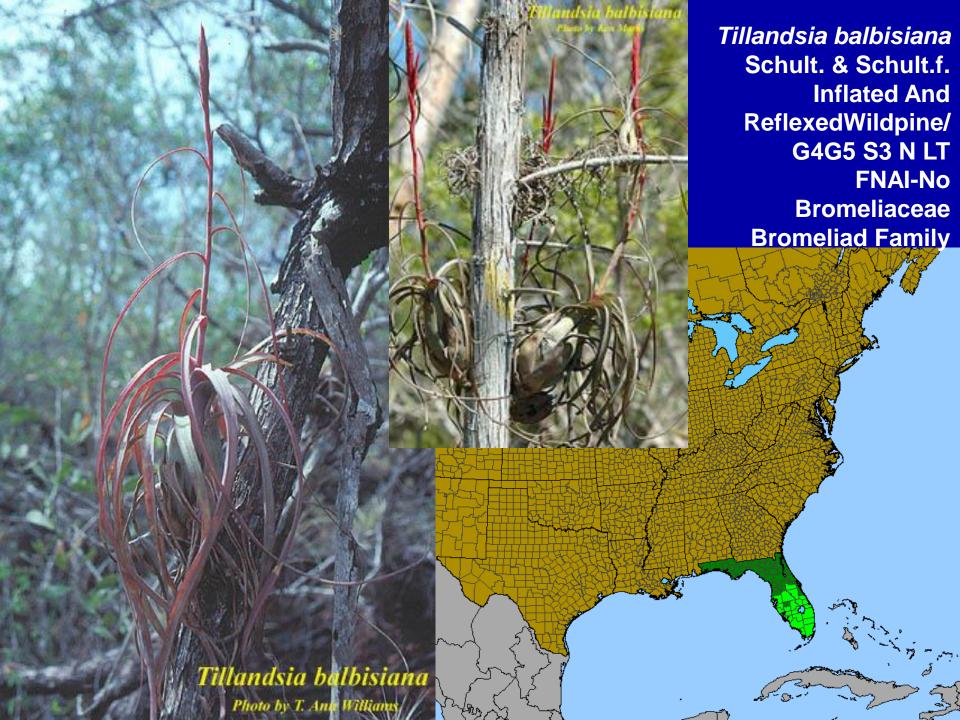
Argusia gnaphalodes (L.)Heine G4 S3 N LE Boraginaceae BorageFamily

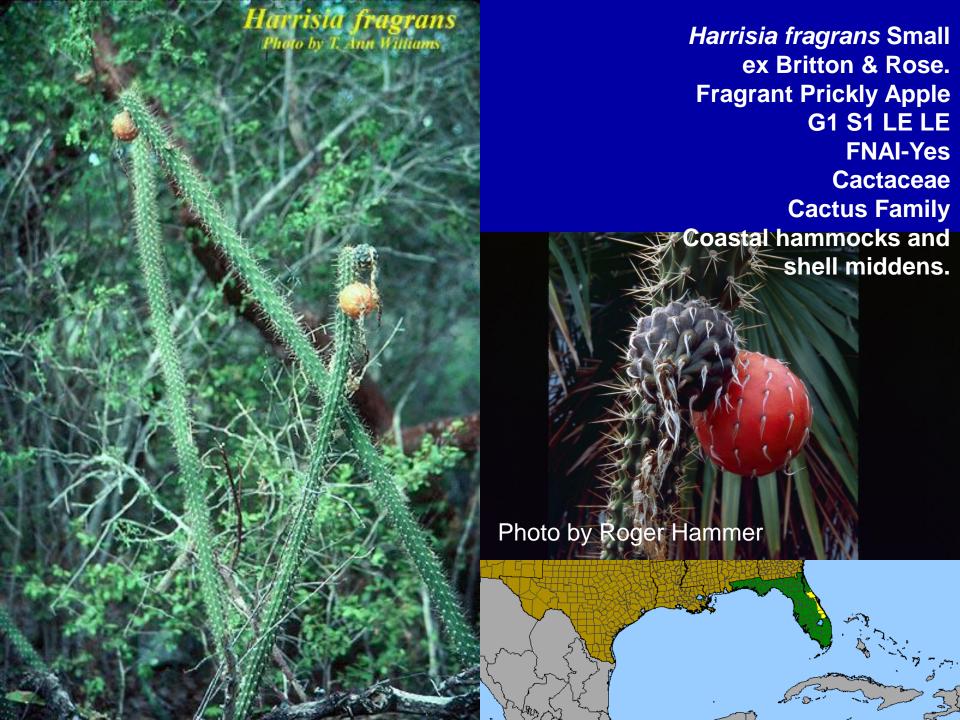
Sea Lavender

- Sea lavender is a shoreline erosion control plant. It helps to trap sand and stabilize the dunes on which other plants can become established.
- ➤Rx fire adapted? Massive numbers of plants may recruit following storms if seed sources are present (Institute for Regional Conservation website 2015).

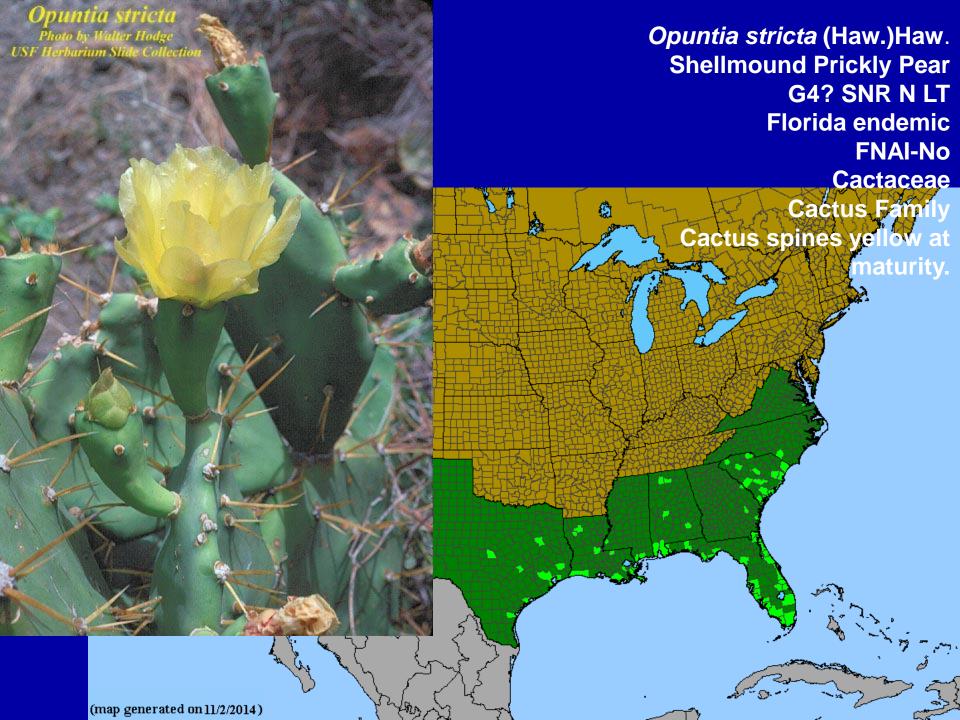


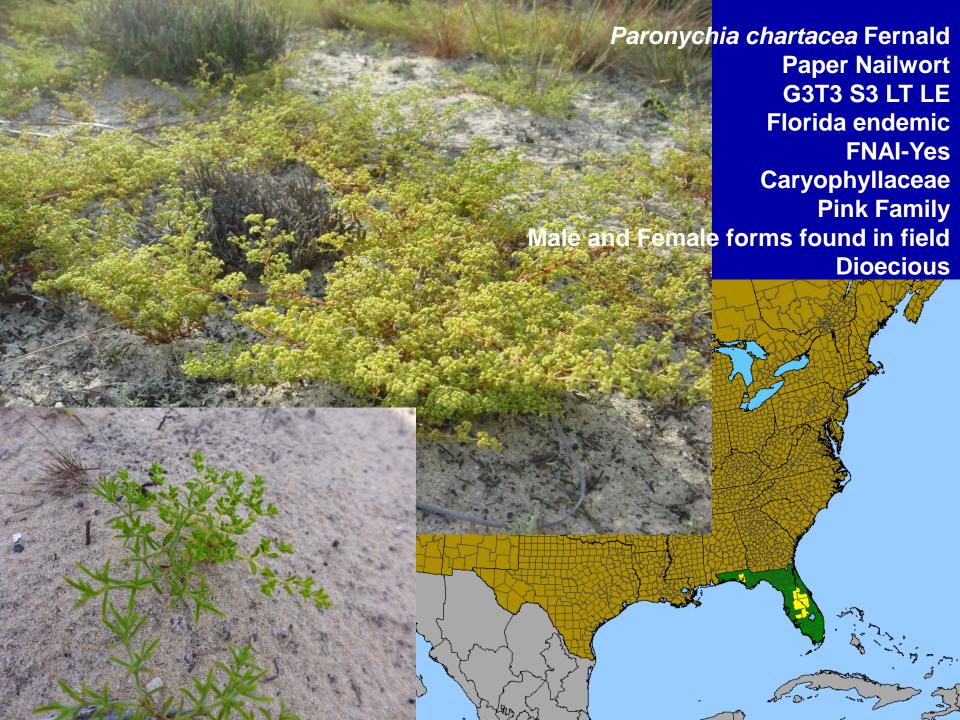


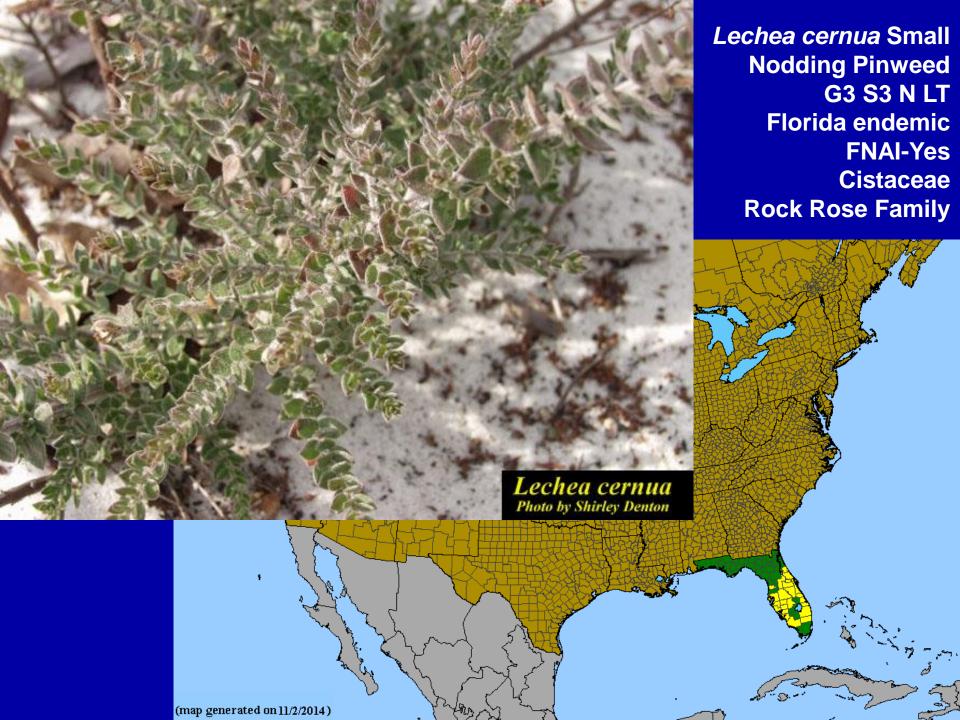


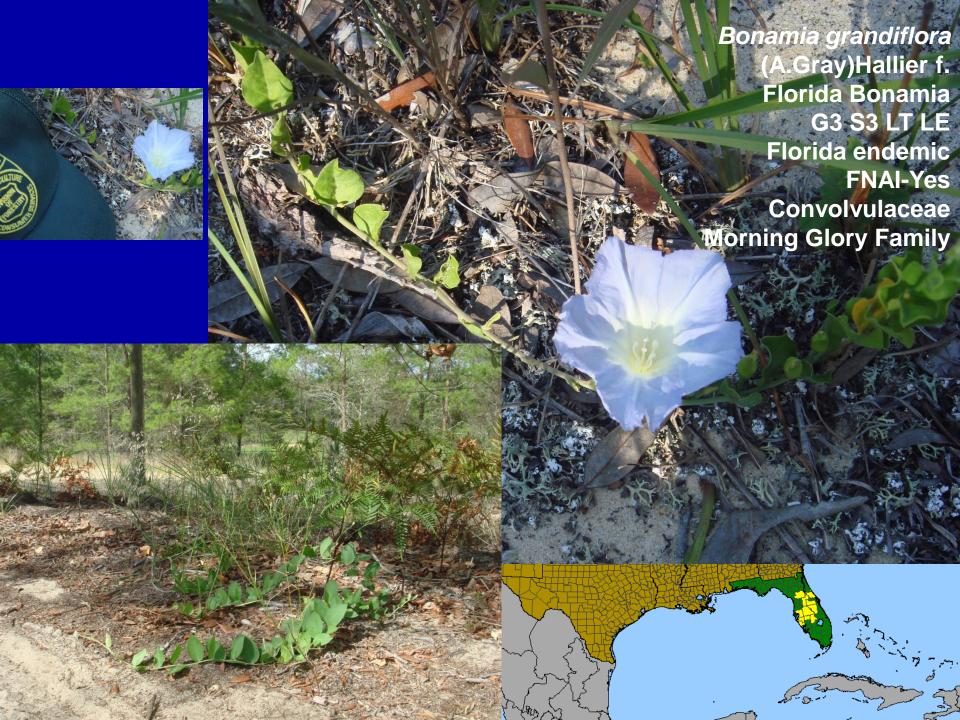


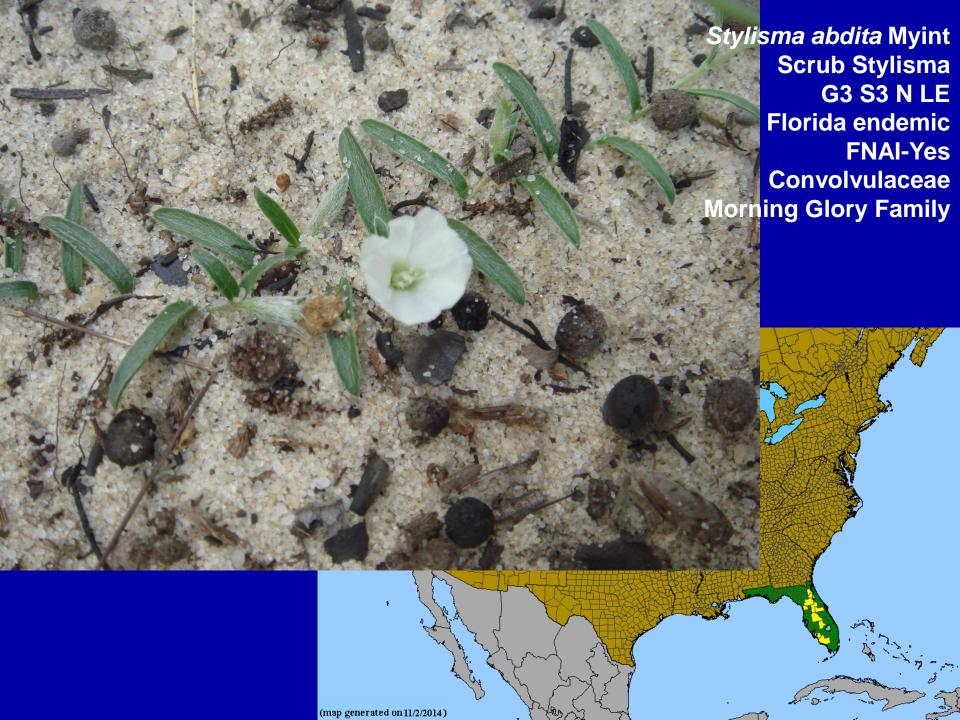










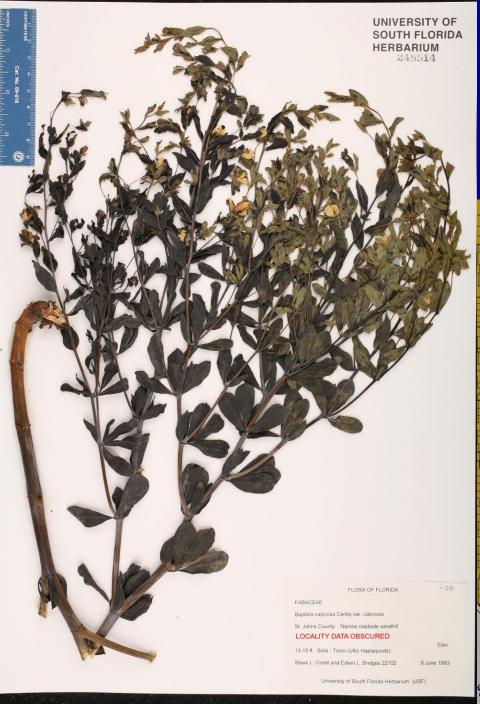




Chamaesyce cumulicola Small
Sand Dune Spurge
G2 S2 N LE
Florida endemic
FNAI-Yes
Euphorbiaceae
Spurge Family

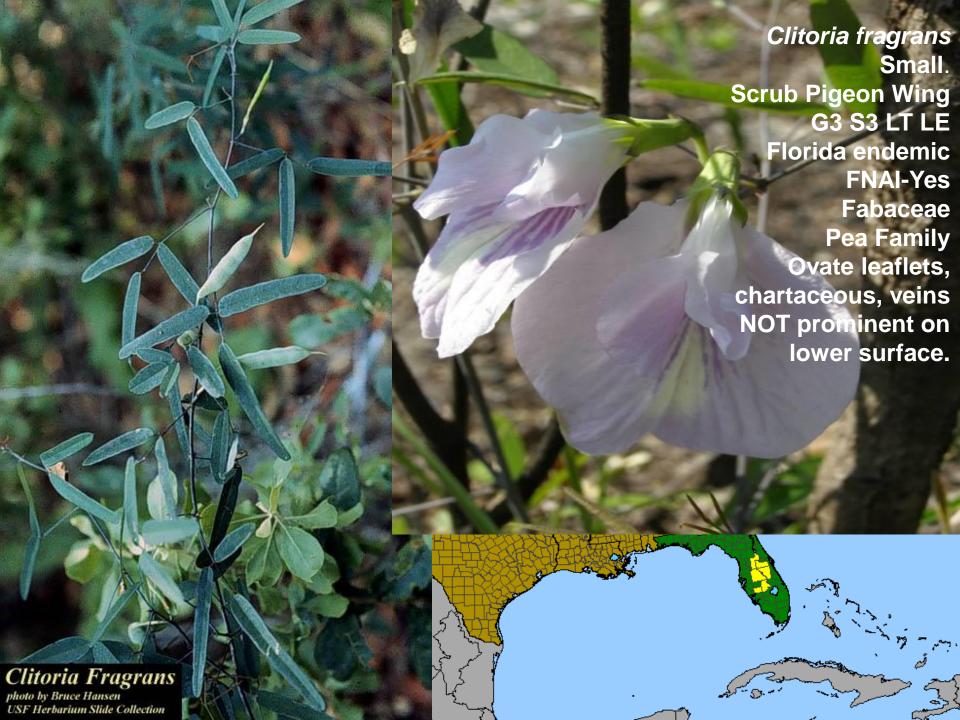




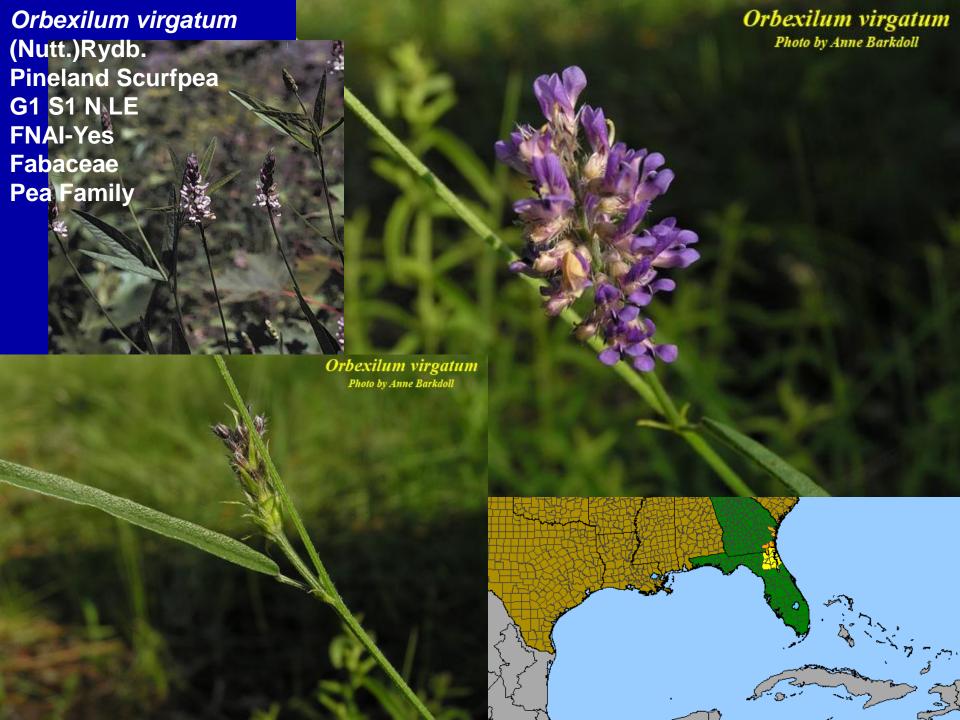


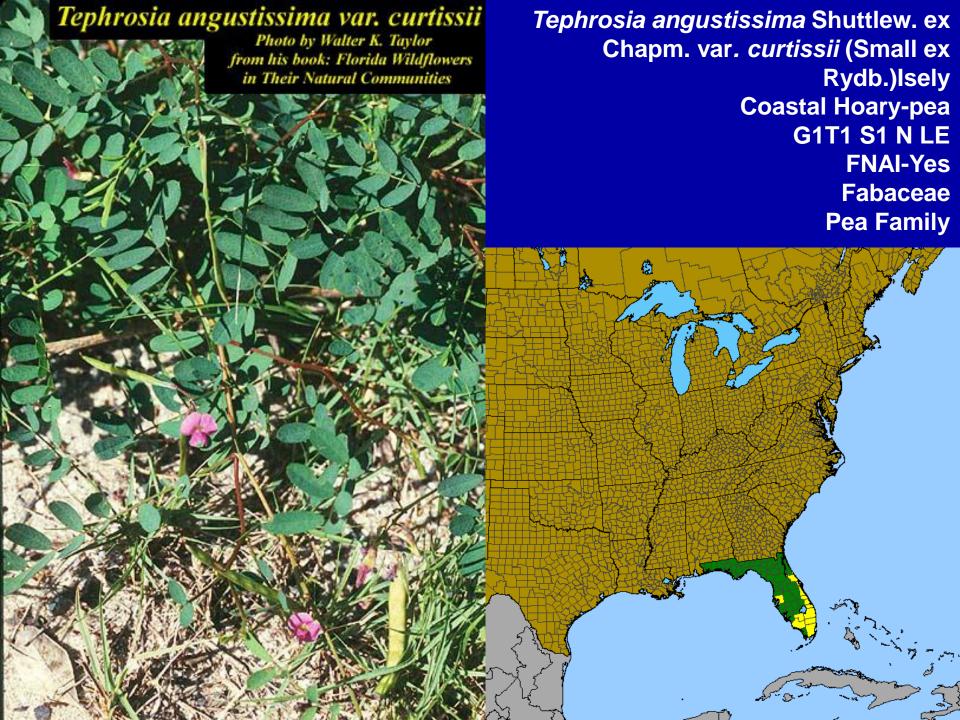
Baptisia calycosa var. calycosa **Canby** Florida Wild indigo **G3T1 S1 N N** var. calycosa is Florida endemic **FNAI-Yes** Fabaceae . Pea Family Has trifoliate leaves, stem glabrous, near sessile leaves, well spaced flowers on raceme, and calyx lobes much longer than tube

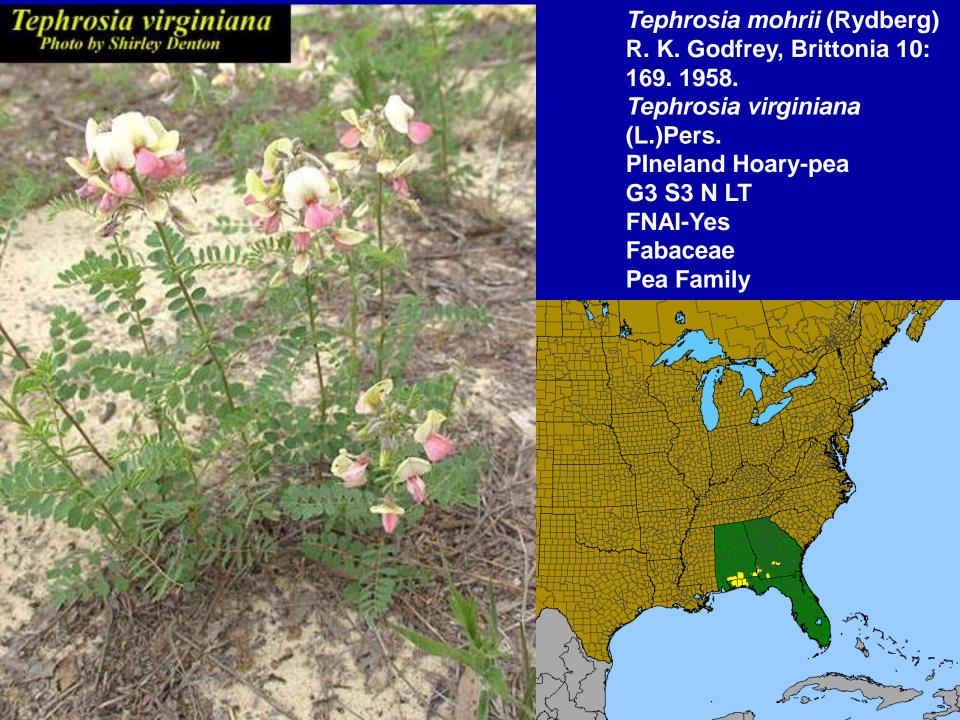








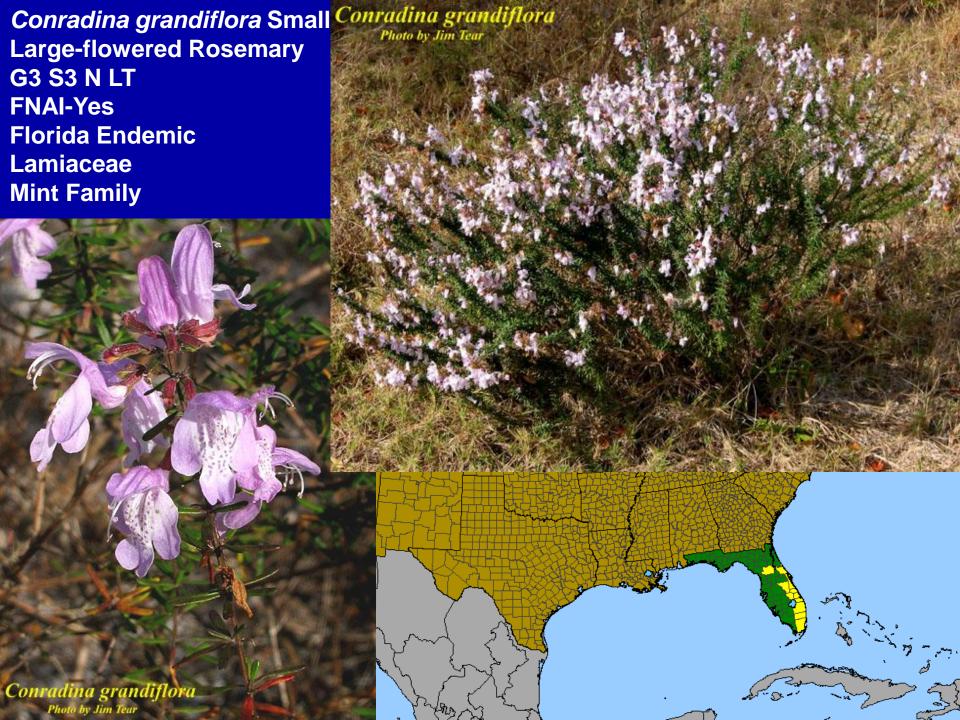




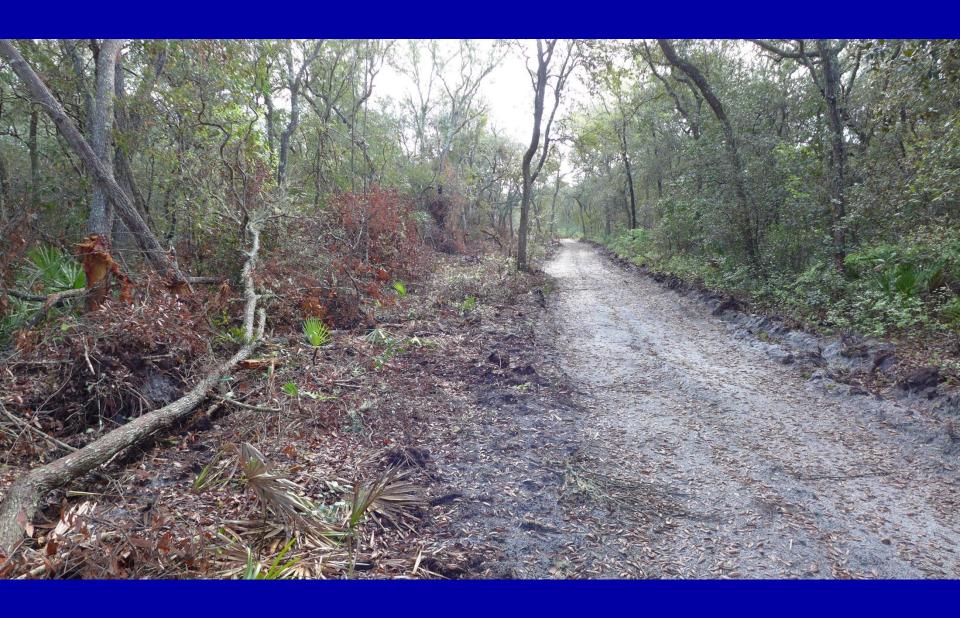






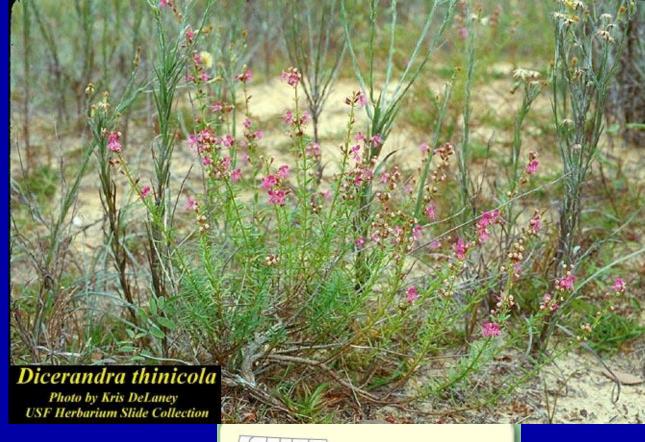




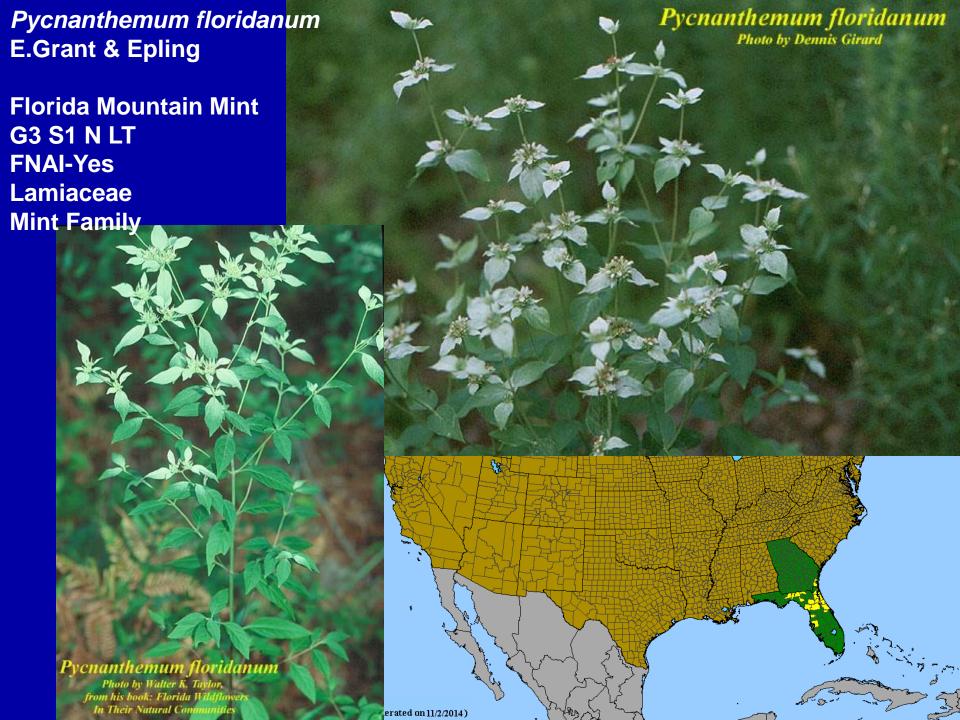


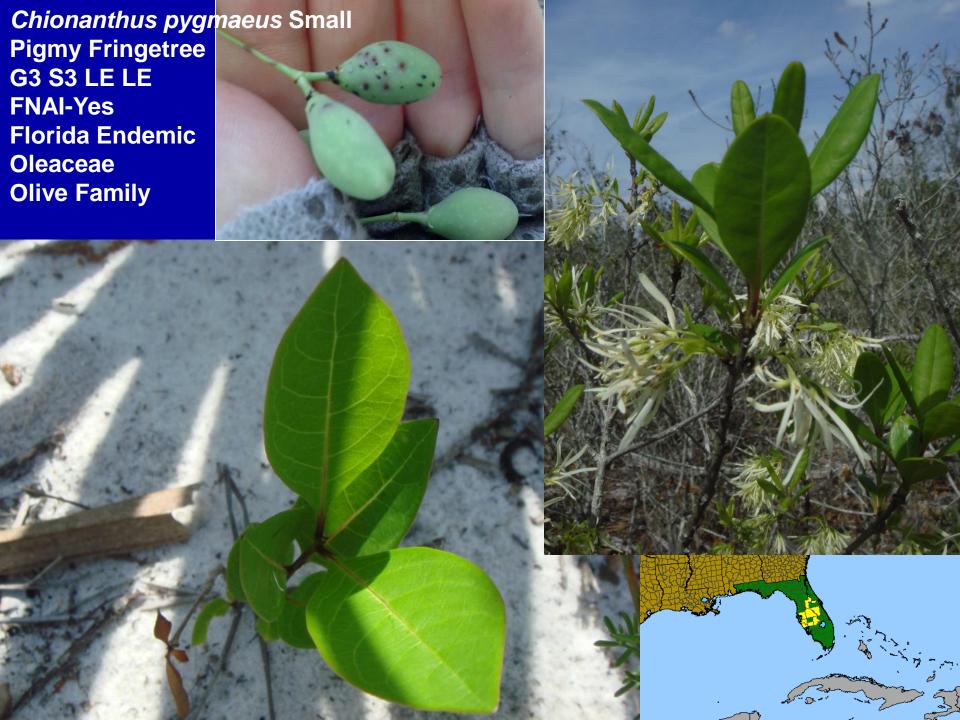


Dicerandra thinicola H.A.Mill. Titusville Balm G1Q S1 N LE **FNAI-Yes** Florida Endemic Lamiaceae **Mint Family** Dicerandra thinicola Photo by Shirley Denton





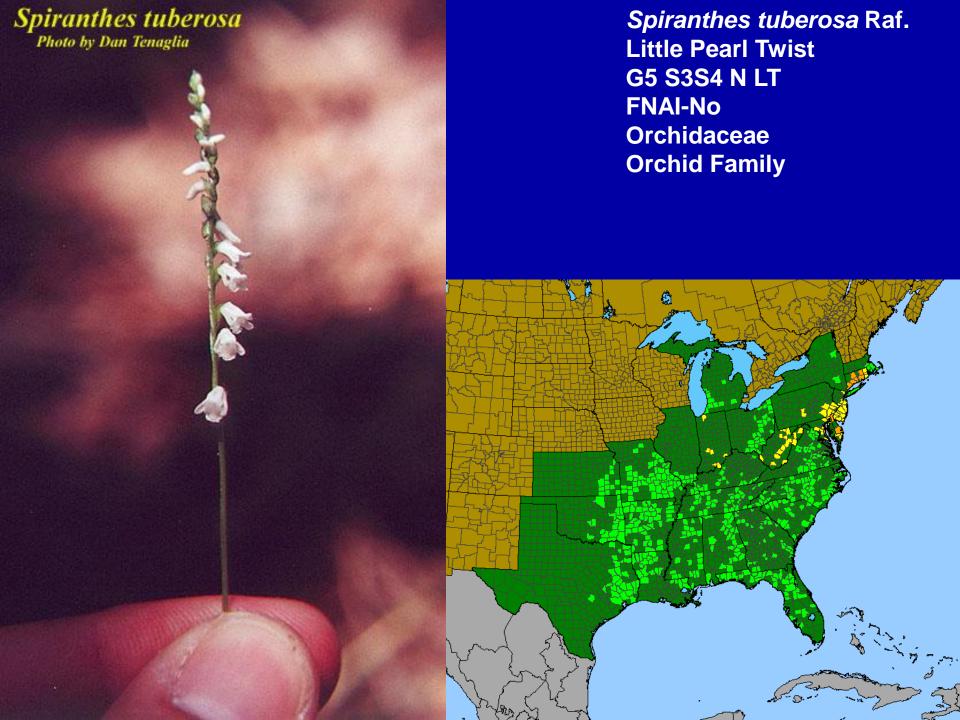


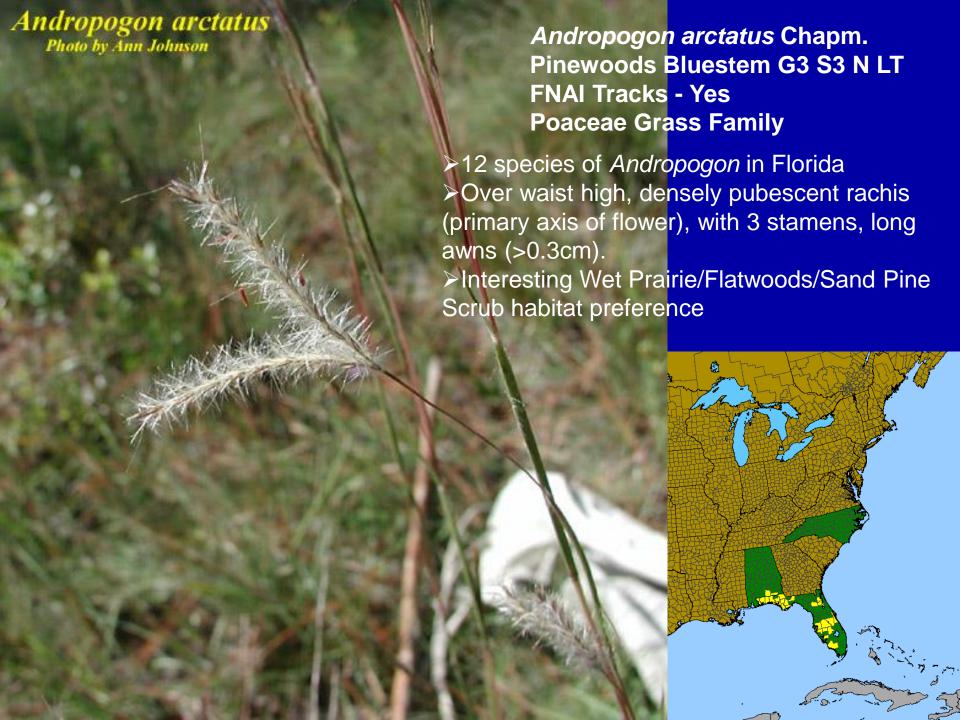


Pteroglossaspis ecristata (Fernald)Rolfe Giant Orchid G2G3 S2 N LT FNAI-Yes Orcidaceae Orchid Family

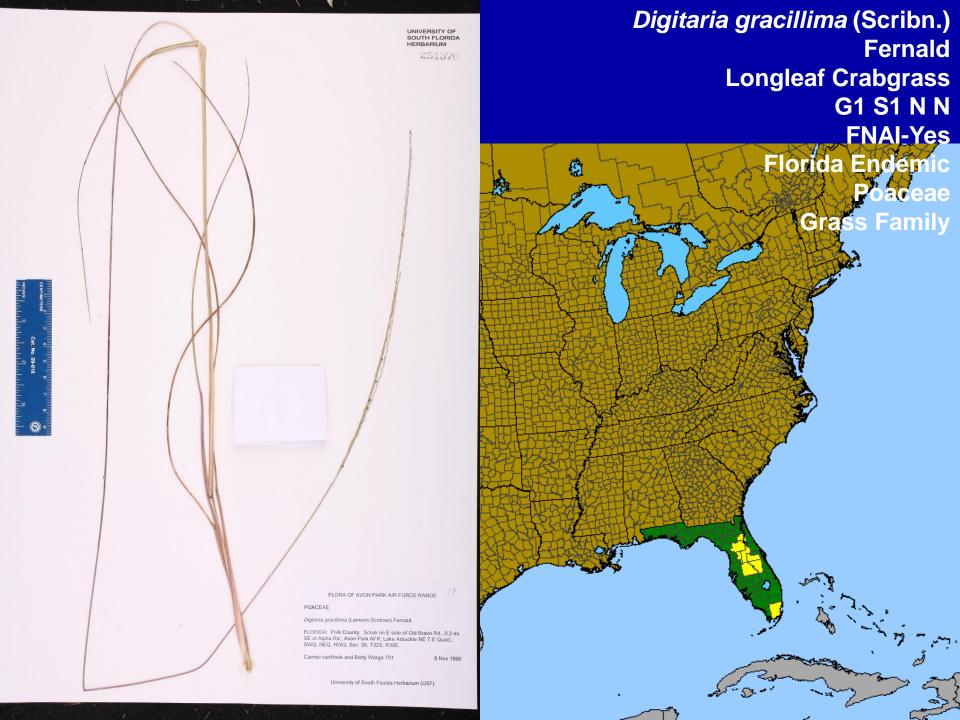


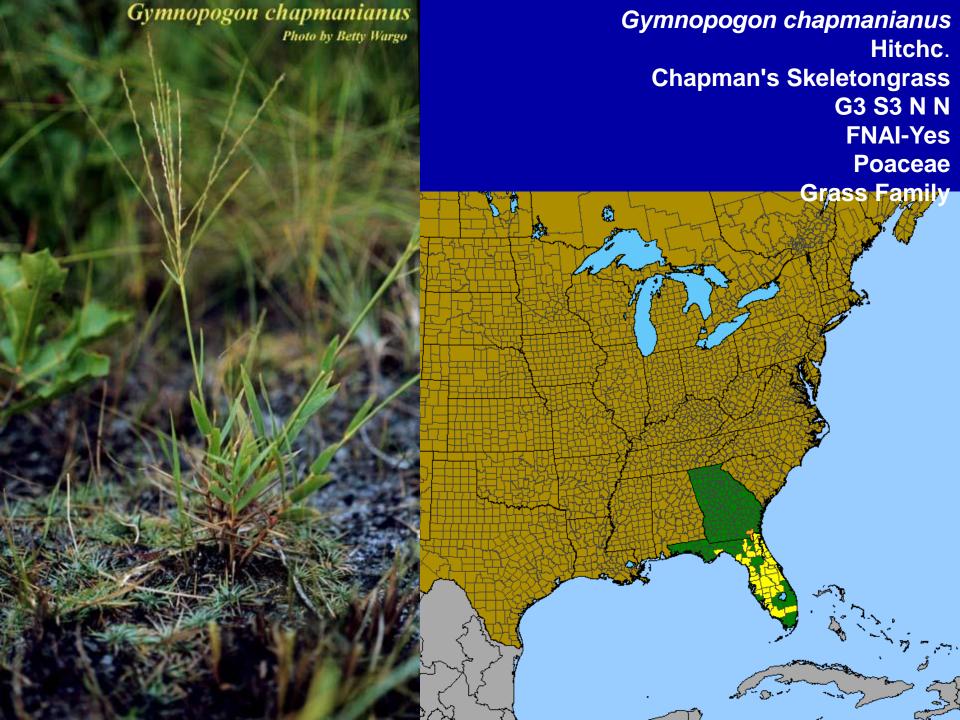


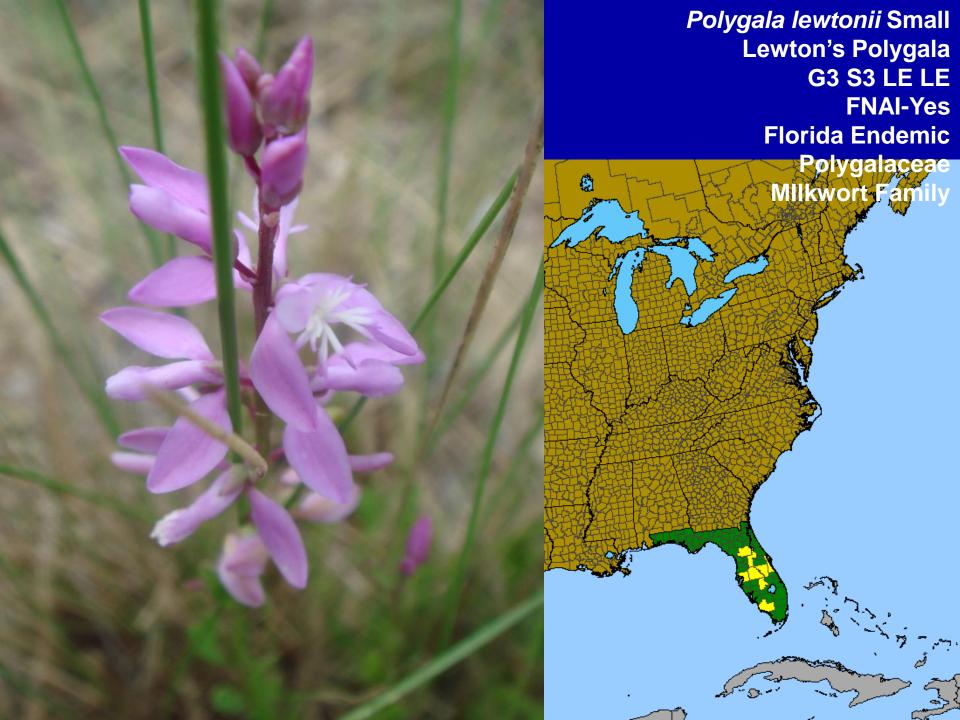






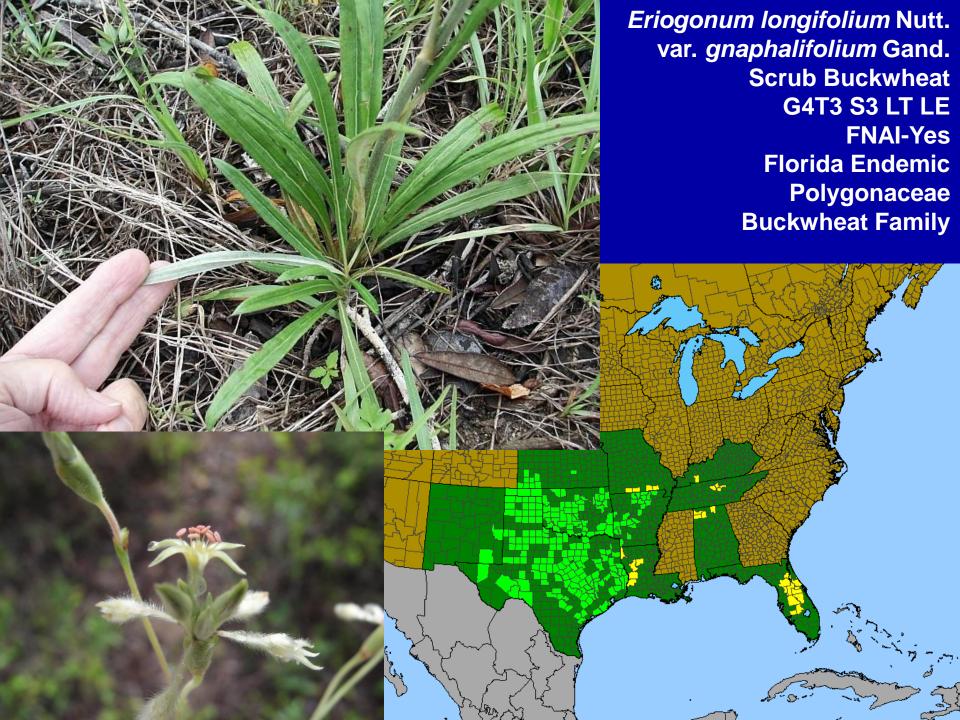




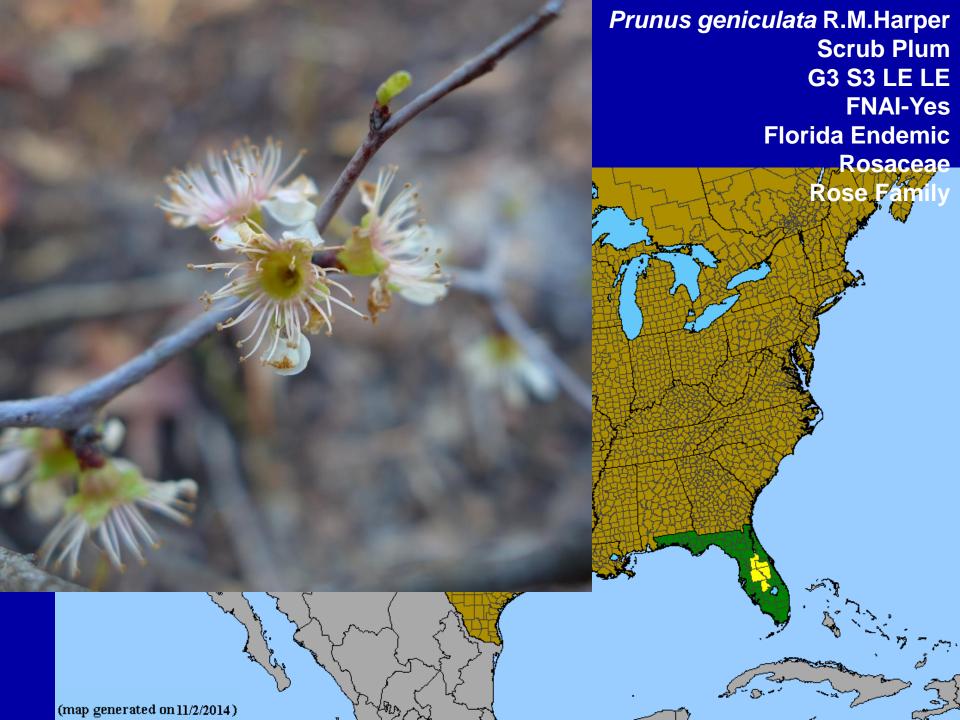


Polygala lewtonii Small Lewton's Polygala







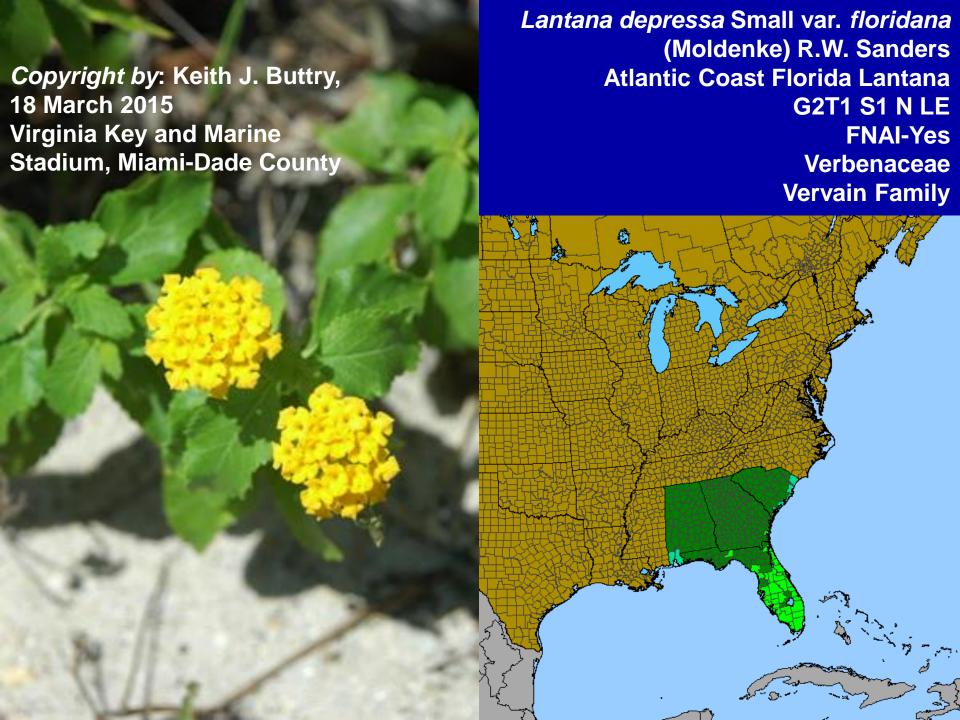












Thank you for this opportunity!

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Florida Forest Service, Tallahassee

