

PINEWOODS BLUESTEM

Andropogon arctatus Chapman

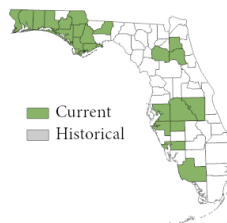
Synonyms: none

Family: Poaceae (grass)

FNAI Ranks: G3/S3

Legal Status: US-none FL-Threatened

Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-FAC



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Field Description: A bunch grass that can form large clumps. Flowering stems are slender and up to 1.5 m tall. Each bract of the inflorescence subtends a pair of racemes that are well-exserted from the bracts and covered with relatively short, tawny or grayish hairs. The flowers have conspicuous large, red, single stamens, in contrast to other *Andropogons* whose stamens are small, tan, and borne in pairs.

Similar Species: The large red stamens are diagnostic for this species. Vegetative plants can be distinguished from other *Andropogons* by the narrow, bicolored leaves (green on one side and blue-green on the other) combined with the silky white hairs at the base of the leaf.

Related Rare Species: None

Habitat: Dry to wet flatwoods and sand pine scrub.

pinewoods bluestem

Andropogon arctatus

Best Survey Season: Fall; October-November but only after a fire in the current year.

Range-wide Distribution: Panhandle and south-central Florida, extending south along the west coast to Collier. Also known from Alabama and South Carolina.

Conservation Status: Populations mostly known from managed areas with less silviculture disturbance and regular prescribed burning.

Protection and Management: Prefers open, wiregrass-dominated areas with widely spaced pines, often in the ecotone between flatwoods and wet prairies where it can become a dominant grass. Does not tolerate heavily shaded pine plantations, but can persist in lightly shaded ones in moist conditions where wiregrass is also often present. Requires fire to reproduce. Burn grassy flatwoods and prairies on a 2-3 year rotation to maintain the open ecotones between saw palmetto flatwoods and wet prairies.

References: Wunderlin and Hansen 2011, Hitchcock 1951