

PINE-WOODS ASTER

Aster spinulosus Chapm.

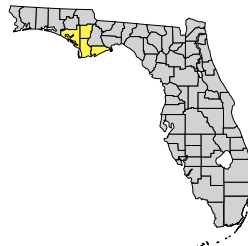
Synonym: *Eurybia spinulosa* (Chapm.) G.L.Nesom

Family Asteraceae (composite)

FNAI Ranks: G1/S1

Legal Status: US—Mgmt Concern FL—Endangered

Wetland Status: US—FACW+ FL—FACW



Loran C. Anderson

Field Description: Perennial **herb** with **stems** usually solitary, 12 - 28 inches tall. **Basal leaves** 4 - 8 inches long, tufted, grass-like; only the midveins are visible; old, fibrous leaf bases persistent. **Stem leaves** stiff, short, bract-like. **Heads** 3 - 15, alternating about 1 inch apart, in a slightly zigzag spike, each head with one short, stiff leaf below. A whorl of spiny, erect bracts (**involucre**) enclose the base of the flower head; **bracts** are loose but are not spreading or curved downwards. **Ray flowers** 8 - 15, white to pink or purple. **Disc flowers** yellow. **Pappus** of coarse, reddish bristles.

Similar Species: Thistleleaf aster (*Aster eryngiifolius*) has spiny-toothed leaves and an involucre with spiny, spreading or reflexed bracts.

Related Rare Species: Southern swamp aster (*Aster hemisphericus* or *Aster paludosus* ssp. *hemisphericus*), state-endangered, has more ray flowers per head (15 - 50) and spreading involucre bracts. There are only two known populations in Washington and Escambia counties, in dry upland woods.

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Aster spinulosus

Habitat: Mesic to wet pine flatwoods, seepage slopes, or savannas with wiregrass, gallberry, and saw palmetto.

Best Survey Season: Flowers May–October, usually mid-summer.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to FL.

Conservation Status: All populations are on private timber company lands.

Protection & Management: Burn every 2 - 5 years; avoid changes to hydrology such as draining, ditching, or firebreak construction; avoid mechanical clearing, bedding, and soil disturbance.

References: Anderson 1986, Coile 2000, Cronquist 1980, Kral 1983, Godfrey and Wooten 1980, Nesom 1994, Tobe et al. 1998, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

