

FERNALD'S POGONIA

Cleistes bifaria (Fern.) Catling & Gregg

Synonyms: *Cleisteslopsis bifaria* (Fernald) Pansarin
& F. Barros *Pogonia bifaria* (Fernald) P.M. Br. & Wunderlin

Family: Orchidaceae (orchid)

FNAI Ranks: G4?/S3

Legal Status: US-none FL-Endangered

Wetland Status: US-none FL-none



Field Description: Terrestrial orchid with **stems** to about .5 meters tall. Each stem bears a single, broadly lanceolate, glaucous **leaf** around 3 cm wide. A leaf-like bract also subtends the single flower that terminates the stem. **Flowers** large and distinctive with three erect, bronze-colored sepals. The two pale pink petals are downward pointing and cover a long, showy pink lip with a yellow crest.

Similar Species: This species is unmistakable in the central Panhandle.

Related Rare Species: Rosebud orchid (*Cleistes divaricata*) is restricted to the northeastern counties in Florida.

Habitat: Pine flatwoods and wet prairies.

Best Survey Season: Flowers April to May

Fernald's pogonia

Cleistes bifaria

Range-wide Distribution: Southeastern US. In Florida, occurs throughout the Panhandle and south to the north-central peninsula.

Conservation Status: This species is threatened by land-use conversion, habitat fragmentation, forest management practices, and succession.

Protection and Management: Prefers open habitats and flowering is promoted by burning. Maintain hydrology and protect wet grassy areas from ORV traffic. Burn grassy flatwoods and prairies on a 2-3 year rotation with most fires performed during the growing season.

References: Luer 1972, Southern Appalachian Species Viability Project 22, Wunderlin and Hansen 211, Wunderlin et al. 218.