

RUGEL'S PAWPAW

Deeringothamnus rugelii (B.L. Robins.) Small

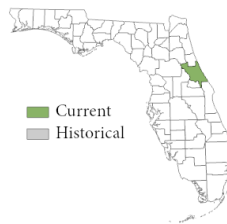
Synonyms: *Asimina rugelii* B.L. Robins.

Family: Annonaceae (custard apple)

FNAI Ranks: G1/S1

Legal Status: US-Endangered FL-Endangered

Wetland Status: US-FACW+ FL-UPL



Gil Nelson

Field Description: **Shrub** with a woody base and slender, non-woody shoots that die back to the ground in the winter, 4 - 8 inches long, arching or erect, seldom branched. **Leaves** 1.5 - 3 inches long, alternate, erect, leathery, oblong, tips blunt or notched, with raised veins on underside and rolled-under margins. **Flowers** fragrant, solitary in leaf axils, with 3 **sepals** and 6 yellow **petals**. **Fruit** yellow-green, peanut-shaped, 1 - 3 inches long.

Similar Species: Pawpaws (*Asimina* spp.) have flowers with broad floppy petals in whorls or 3 or 4. Dwarf pawpaw (*Asimina pygmaea*) has overlapping leaves with pointed tips, 2.5 - 3 inches long. Netted pawpaw (*Asimina reticulata*) has blueish-green leaves and produces flowers on last year's shoots before new leaves appear.

Related Rare Species: See beautiful pawpaw (*Deeringothamnus pulchellus*) and four-petal pawpaw (*Asimina tetramera*) in this guide.

Rugel's pawpaw

Deeringothamnus rugelii

Habitat: Open slash pine or longleaf pine flatwoods with wiregrass and saw palmetto in the understory.

Best Survey Season: Spring; late March - June; will re-sprout and flower all year following fire.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to Volusia County, FL.

Conservation Status: Rugel's pawpaw is known from 29 sites, about half of which are on public lands. Habitat has been severely reduced by development.

Protection and Management: Burn every 2 - 3 years in growing season to promote flowering and reduce competition; avoid disking or other soil disturbance.

References: Coile 2000, Helkowski and Johnson 2000, Johnson and Schultz 1999, Kral 1960, Kral 1983, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.