

RED STOPPER

Eugenia rhombea Krug & Urban ex Urban

Synonyms: none

Family: Myrtaceae (myrtle)

FNAI Ranks: G5/S1

Legal Status: US-none FL-Endangered

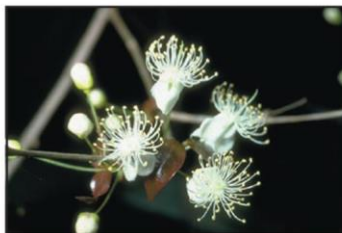
Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-UPL



Eugenia rhombea Gil Nelson



Eugenia confusa Gil Nelson



Eugenia confusa Billy B. Booth

Field Description: Shrub or small tree to 9 feet tall with smooth, light gray bark. **Leaves** 1.2 - 2.4 inches long, opposite, simple, dull green, leathery, aromatic when crushed; tips elongated, but blunt at the end; margins faintly outlined in yellow, not thickened; lower surface with many small dots. **Flowers** less than 0.5 inch wide, with 4 white, fragrant petals, in clusters on 0.5 inch stalks; petals about the same length as sepals; stamens numerous. **Fruit** a round, red berry, black when ripe. Bark is smooth or lightly flaking, light gray.

Similar Species: White stopper (*Eugenia axillaris*) leaves have short, reddish stalks and a musty odor; flower and fruit stalks are hairy, stout, short (less than 0.25 inch). It is easily misidentified as our common white stopper (*E. axillaris*), also a desirable native, but red stopper twigs appear to lay more on a single plane, it has the faint yellow leaf margins, fewer fruit and flowers, longer stalks, and its leaves also lack the strong tendency to curl. Its faint aroma is spicier in contrast to white stopper's

red stopper

Eugenia rhombea

sour aroma.

Related Rare Species: Red-berry stopper (*Eugenia confusa*), state-endangered, resembles red stopper but leaves are shiny, leaf margins are thickened, and leaf tips are abruptly narrowed to a long point; ripe fruits are red. Also see mangrove berry (*Psidium longipes*) and myrtle-of-the-river (*Calypttranthes zuzygium*) in this guide.

Habitat: Rockland hammocks and associated disturbed areas.

Best Survey Season: Flowers and fruits all year.

Range-wide Distribution: Red stopper: Dade County and Monroe County Keys, FL; West Indies, Mexico, Central and South America. Red-berry stopper: Dade and Martin counties, Monroe County Keys, FL; West Indies.

Conservation Status: About 12 populations of red stopper are known, 11 on conservation areas. About 13 populations of red-berry stopper occur, 12 of them on managed areas.

Protection and Management: Purchase and protect remaining fragments of rockland hammock. Eradicate exotic pest plants.

References: Coile 2000, Correll and Correll 1982, IRC 1999, Nelson 1996, Tomlinson 1980, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.