

HIGHLANDS SCRUB HYPERICUM

Hypericum cumulicola (Small) P. Adams

Synonyms: *Sanidophyllum cumulicola* Small

Family: Hypericaceae (St. John's-wort)

FNAI Ranks: G2/S2

Legal Status: US-Endangered FL-Endangered

Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-UPL



Field Description: Perennial **herb**, 8 - 28 inches tall, with 3 - 17 wiry, round **stems** rising from a taproot, stems dying back in winter to a cluster of short, non-flowering basal branches. **Leaves** tiny (less than 1/4 inch long), needle- or scale-like, opposite, simple, entire, gland-dotted. **Flowers** in upper forks and tips of stems, small with 5 yellow petals in a pinwheel and many stamens. **Fruit** pointed, opening into 3 curved, beaked segments, surrounded by 5 persistent, erect **sepals**.

Similar Species: Pinweed (*Hypericum gentianoides*) has similar leaves and flowers, but has a single, wing-angled main stem and lacks the cluster of basal branches.

Related Rare Species: See Edison's ascyrum (*Hypericum edisonianum*) and smooth-barked St. John's-wort (*Hypericum lissophloeus*) in this guide.

Highlands Scrub hypericum

Hypericum cumulicola

Habitat: Open patches in white sand scrubs and rosemary balds; occasionally in openings in scrubby flatwoods and oak scrubs over yellow sands; abundant after fires.

Best Survey Season: All year.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to Lake Wales Ridge in Polk and Highlands counties, FL.

Conservation Status: Approximately 90% of scrub habitat has been lost to development and agriculture. Fewer than 50 populations are protected on 8 conservation areas. Another 20 populations are known from private lands.

Protection and Management: Purchase and manage private sites for conservation. Manage sites with prescribed fire to reduce shrub and lichen cover, and to maintain habitat patchiness. Monitor effects of fire.

References: Coile 2000, Dolan et al. 1999, Quintana-Ascencio and Menges 1996, 2000; Quintana-Ascencio and Morales-Hernández 1997, Quintana-Ascencio et al. 1998, USFWS 1998, Ward 1979, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.