

NODDING PINWEED

Lechea cernua Small

Synonyms: none

Family: Cistaceae (rockrose)

FNAI Ranks: G3/S3

Legal Status: US-none FL-Threatened

Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-UPL



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Field Description: Perennial herb less than a foot tall, with densely leafy shoots from a woody base; leaves ovate to elliptic, up to ½ inch long, gray-green and densely hairy on both surfaces. Flowering branches consist of sprays of small, round, pinhead-like, non-showy flowers, borne on branching shoots that become woody and leafless by the time the small (<1/8 inch long,) round capsular fruits are ripe (Hodgdon 1938).

Similar Species: Nodding pinweed is easily distinguished from all other species of pinweed in Florida by the relatively large leaves present at flowering time that are densely hairy on both surfaces.

Related Rare Species: Pine pinweed (*Lechea divaricata*), state-endangered, is a slender, erect flowering plant that rises from a dense mat of spreading, older stems.

Habitat: Open, unshaded white sands of scrub and scrubby flatwoods. This plant

nodding pinweed

Lechea cernua

is often associated with Florida rosemary (*Ceratiola ericoides*).

Best Survey Season: Summer-fall; July-September (fruits present October-March). Basal rosettes of unbranched, leafy vegetative shoots present in winter.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to Florida from Lake County south to Broward and Collier counties.

Conservation Status: A Florida endemic and state-threatened, this species occurs in 19 central and southern counties, both along the coast and in the interior.

Protection and Management: Reacts to fire by both re-sprouting and increased seed production. Nodding pinweed prefers open, sandy spaces formed when scrub stands are burned (Menges and Kohfeldt 1995). Plants often found along sandy trails.

References: Hodgdon, A.R. 1938. A taxonomic study of *Lechea*. *Rhodora* 40:29-69, 87-131. Menges, E.S., and N. Kohfeldt. 1995. Life history strategies of Florida scrub plants in relation to fire. *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club* 122:282-297.