

PINE PINWEED

Lechea divaricata Shuttlew. ex Britt.

Synonyms: *Lechea major* L. var. *divaricata*

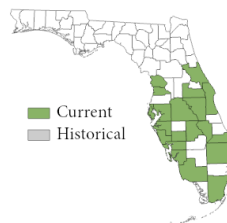
(Shuttlew. ex Britton) A. Gray

Family: Cistaceae (rockrose)

FNAI Ranks: G2/S2

Legal Status: US-none FL-Endangered

Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-UPL



Billy B. Boothe

Field Description: Perennial **herb** with slender, erect flowering **stems** rising from a dense mat of spreading, older stems. Flowering shoots have divergent hairs along the stem and are densely to sparsely covered with small, broad, alternate **leaves** ca. $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long and hairy on the undersides. **Flowers** in tight clusters at ends of short branches, with 3 tiny, purple or green **petals**, dropping quickly after opening, and 5 **sepals**, outer sepals shorter than inner. **Fruit** a tiny, hard capsule, longer than the sepals, does not split into segments when mature.

Similar Species: Distinct among pinweeds in having an indehiscent fruit as opposed to the fruit splitting open to release the seeds. Differs from the somewhat similar nodding pinweed (*L. cernua*) in having capsules that are well-exserted from the calyx and leaves that are not pubescent on the upper surface. Hairy pinweed (*Lechea mucronata*) leaves are longer than 0.6 inch; the capsule is about the same

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height as the calyx and splits into 3's at maturity.

Related Rare Species: Lakela's pinweed (*Lechea lakelae*), state-endangered, has smooth stems, leaves, and sepals; it was known from coastal strand in Collier County but is probably extinct. Nodding pinweed (*Lechea cernua*), state-threatened, is found in scrub.

Habitat: Dry sandy soils in openings, mainly in scrubby flatwoods.

Best Survey Season: Summer-fall; May - October. Plants are most identifiable in the fall when they are in fruit.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to central and southern Florida, from Citrus and Volusia counties south to Dade and Collier counties.

Conservation Status: Pine pinweed occurs on at least 16 conservation areas.

Protection and Management: Reaction to fire is unknown, but likely re-sprouts based on reactions described for similar species of *Lechea* that grow in scrubby habitats, i.e. *L. deckertii* and *L. cernua* (Menges and Kohfeldt 1995). Prefers ecotones between sandhill and flatwoods, so fire lanes should not be placed in these areas.

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. Coile 2000, IRC 1999, Small 1933, Wilbur and Daoud 1961, Wilbur 1974, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.