

## NARROW-LEAVED PHOEBANTHUS

*Phoebanthus tenuifolius* (Torr. & Gray) Blake

**Synonyms:** none

**Family:** Asteraceae (composite)

**FNAI Ranks:** G3/S3

**Legal Status:** US-none FL-Threatened

**Wetland Status:** US-none+ FL-UPL



Kim Gullede

**Field Description:** A tall **perennial herb** (ca. 1m tall) with **stems** arising from a thickened rhizome. **Leaves** are narrow (1-2 mm wide), opposite or alternate, rough to the touch, and 1-4 inches long. Leaves are gradually reduced on the upper part of the stem that produces a terminal flower. The **radiate composite flowers** have long narrow yellow ray flowers and yellow disk flowers. **Phyllaries** are spreading.

**Similar Species:** Florida false sunflower (*Phoebanthus grandiflorus*) flowers look similar, but the leaves are wider (3-5 mm) and phyllaries are appressed. Tall ironweed (*Vernonia angustifolia*) is vegetatively similar to narrow-leaved phoebanthus, also having narrow scabrous leaves. However, narrow-leaved phoebanthus has more slender stems, and is much less branched and erect. In flower, they are unmistakable due to the purple flowers of *Vernonia*.

**Related Rare Species:** Several rare species in the composite family (Asteraceae)

**narrow-leaved phoebanthus*****Phoebanthus tenuifolius***

with showy yellow ray flowers occur in Florida, but their range rarely overlaps with the limited distribution of this species. The linear, rough leaves are also quite distinctive in *Phoebanthus tenuifolius*.

**Habitat:** Wet flatwoods, mesic flatwoods, scrubby flatwoods and sandhills.

**Best Survey Season:** Spring-summer; May to July after fire.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Alabama and the central panhandle of Florida.

**Conservation Status:** About 50 occurrences are currently known. The largest populations occur in Liberty County within the Apalachicola National Forest. Primary threats to this species include fire suppression, site preparation for pine plantation, cattle grazing and herbicide use.

**Protection and Management:** These plants respond well to frequent fires. Continued frequent prescribed burning of historic flatwoods and sandhills should allow these populations to remain stable or expand.

**References:** Clewell 1980, Cronquist 1980, Small 1933, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011, Wunderlin et al. 2018.