

FLORIDA PONDWEED

Potamogeton floridanus Small

Synonyms: none

Family: Potamogetonaceae (pondweed)

FNAI Ranks: G1/S1

Legal Status: US-none FL-Endangered

Wetland Status: US-OBL+ FL-OBL



J. Burkhalter

Field Description: Aquatic herb rooted in streambeds, with long, flexible stems and both floating and submerged leaves. **Floating leaves** with slender leaf stalks to 3 inches long; blades 2 - 3.5 inches long, alternate, elongated and tapered at both ends, with 7 - 11 conspicuous veins. **Submerged leaves** 6 - 8 inches long, narrow but not threadlike, alternate, margins entire, without leaf stalks. **Stipules** (small, thin bracts at base of leaves) present on both floating and submerged leaves, sheath-like but not fused to the base of leaves or leaf stalks. **Flower spikes** held above the water surface. **Flowers** tiny, with 4 petal-like structures. **Fruits** of this species not seen (fruit spike typical of pondweeds is shown in drawing.)

Similar Species: Florida pondweed is distinguished from other pondweeds with which it grows, such as waterthread (*Potamogeton diversifolius*), by its long-stalked floating leaves with blades tapered at both ends, and by the stipules (called stipular sheaths in some guides) which are free of the leaf bases. Waterthread has smaller,

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oval floating leaves.

Related Rare Species: None in Florida.

Habitat: Slow-moving blackwater streams and rivers.

Best Survey Season: Spring-summer, but leaves are distinctive all year.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to Santa Rosa County, FL. Appears to be restricted to Blackwater River and its tributaries.

Conservation Status: None of the known populations are protected.

Protection and Management: Avoid alterations to stream hydrology; protect water quality.

References: Burkhalter 2000, Burks 2000, Coile 2000, FNA 2000, Ogden 1943, Small 1933, Wilhelm and Mohlenbrock 1986, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.