

BAHAMA WILD COFFEE

Psychotria ligustrifolia (Northrop) Millsp.

Synonyms: *Psychotria bahamensis* Millsp.;

Myrstiphyllum ligustrifolium Northrop

Family: Rubiaceae (coffee)

FNAI Ranks: G4/S1

Legal Status: US-none FL-Endangered

Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-FAC



Gil Nelson

Field Description: **Shrub** to 6 feet tall. **Leaves** to 5 inches long and 1.5 inches wide, opposite, narrowed to the tip and tapering to a leafstalk; hairless except for hairs on the midrib on the underside; veins depressed, with tiny pits only in the angles of secondary veins on underside of leaves (visible with magnification). **Flowers** white, 5-lobed, on long, branching stalks arising in the angles of upper leaves and stem; **calyx** with stiff hairs. **Fruit** small, oval, red, fleshy.

Similar Species: Three other species of wild coffee occur in FL: *Psychotria sulzneri* has greenish flowers, hairy leaves, and no flower stalks; *Psychotria nervosa* has glossy leaves with impressed veins and shorter flower stalks; *Psychotria punctata* has many conspicuous pits on the undersides of leaves.

Related Rare Species: Small-flowered lilythorn (*Catesbaea parviflora*), Coker's

Bahama wild coffee*Psychotria ligustrifolia*

beach creeper (*Ernodea cokeri*), princewood (*Exostema caribaeum*), and pride-of-Big-Pine (*Strumpfia maritima*).

Habitat: Rockland hammocks and pinelands.

Best Survey Season: Spring-summer, but leaves and growth habit are fairly distinctive all year.

Range-wide Distribution: Florida Keys, Miami-Dade County and the West Indies.

Conservation Status: Known from 4 conservation areas in Miami-Dade County and Monroe County Keys.

Protection and Management: Eradicate exotic pest plants in hammocks. Purchase and protect remaining fragments of rockland.

References: Coile 2000, Correll and Correll 1982, IRC 1999, Nelson 1996, Tomlinson 1980, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.