Florida Native Plant Society

Native Plant Owners Manual

Silphium asteriscus– Starry Rosinweed

Mark Hutchinson

Putting things in perspective

All seasonal references are applicable to the eastern panhandle of Hernando County where the plants portrayed in this presentation grow. This area happens to be a cold spot in central Florida due to the Brooksville Ridge and approximates a Hardiness Zone of 8a or 8b, average annual low temperatures ranging between 10 and 20 °F.

Any reference to medicinal or culinary use of plants or plant parts should in no way be considered an endorsement by the Florida Native Plant Society of any sort of experimentation or consumptive use.

Please do not attempt to rescue any native plants without first reviewing the FNPS Policy on Transplanting Native Plants

Special thanks to Lucille Lane, Shirley Denton, Kari Ruder and Brooke Martin

Starry Rosinweed

Aster family


Silphium asteriscus

Navigation Links

(for use in open discussion)

'View/Full Screen Mode' recommended

Throughout this presentation, clicking this symbol will return you to this page.

Starry Rosinweed, rosinweed

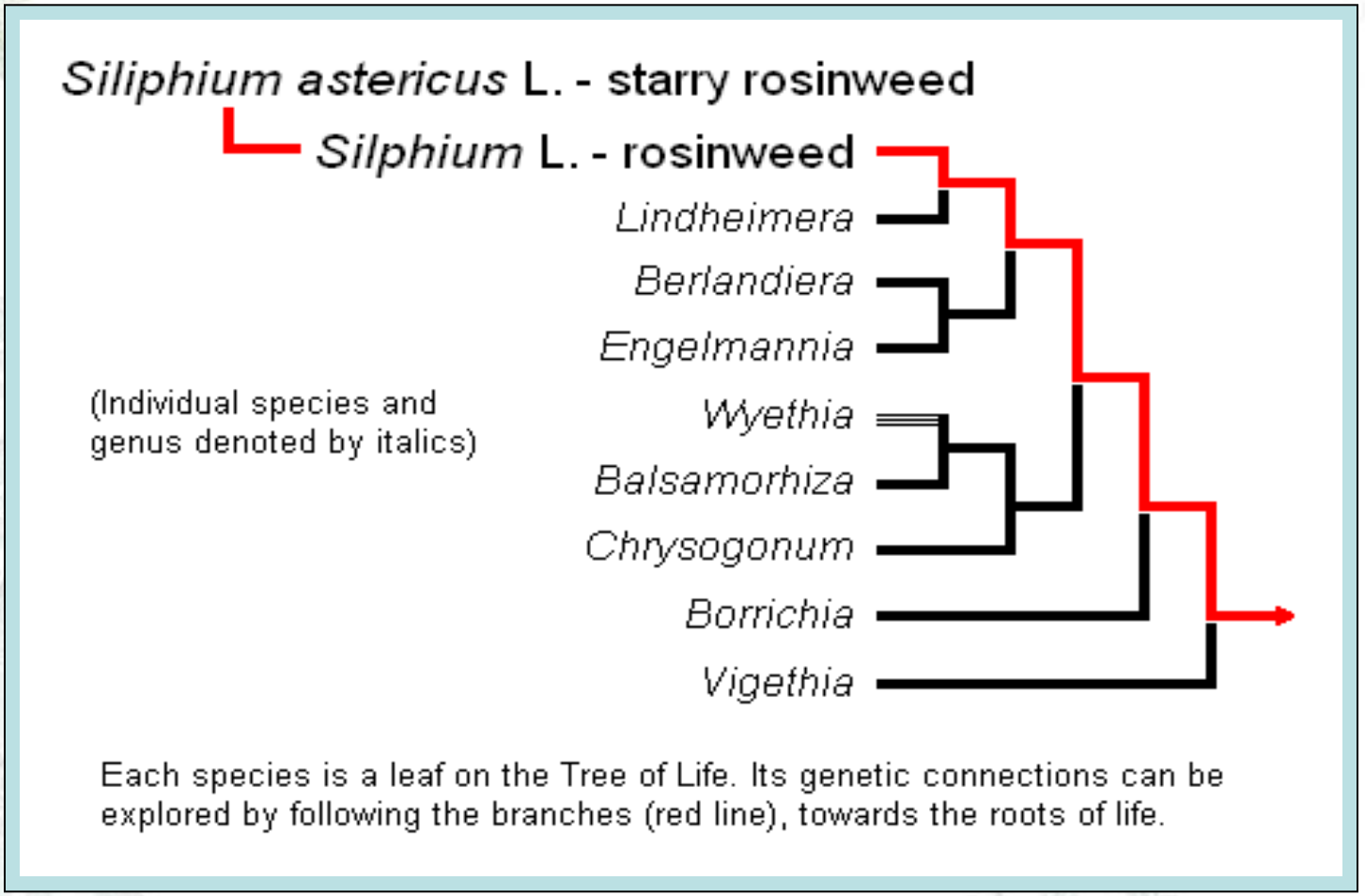
Silphium (SIL - phee - um)

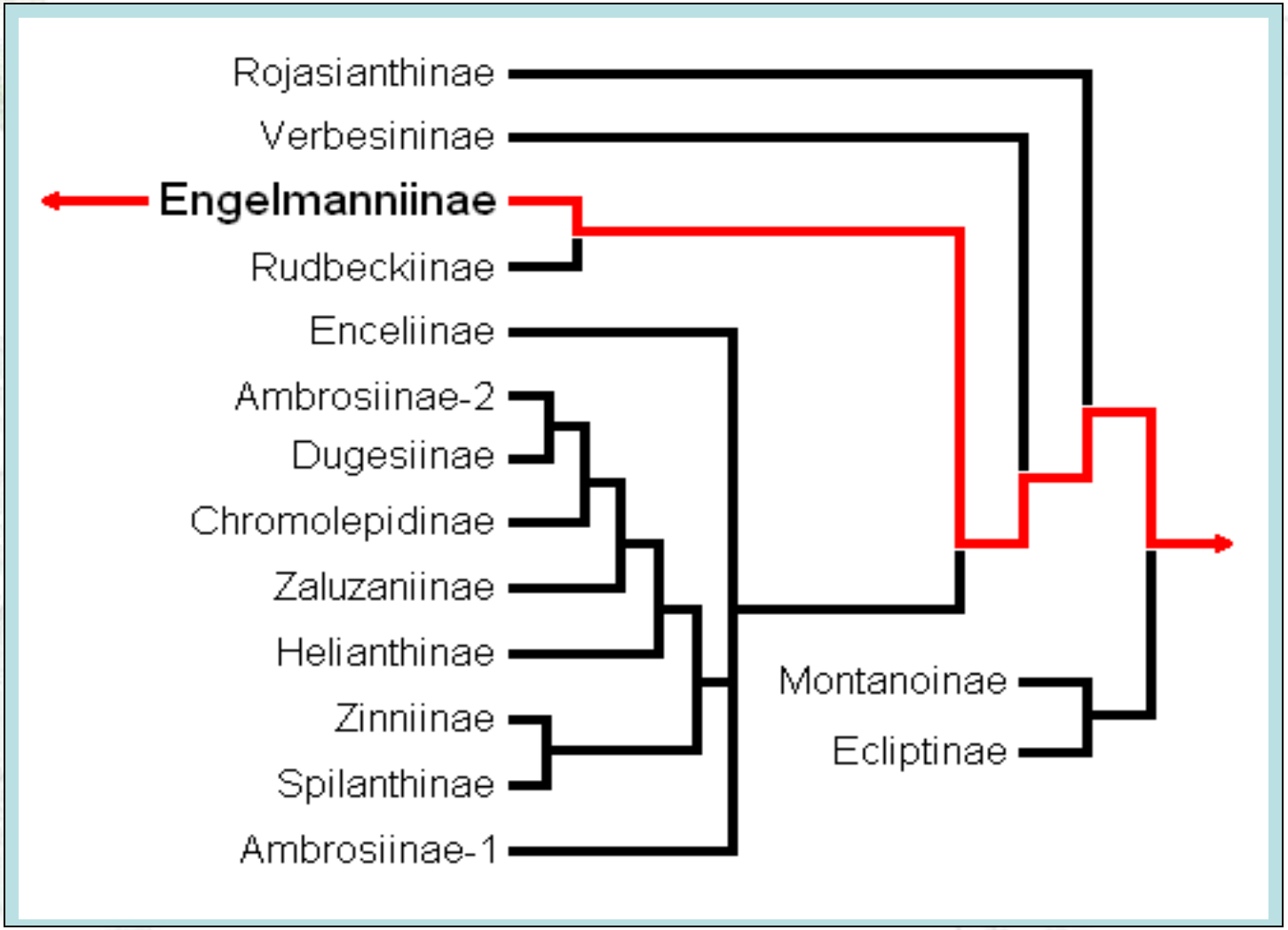
Ancient Greek name of another resin-producing plant that is probably extinct

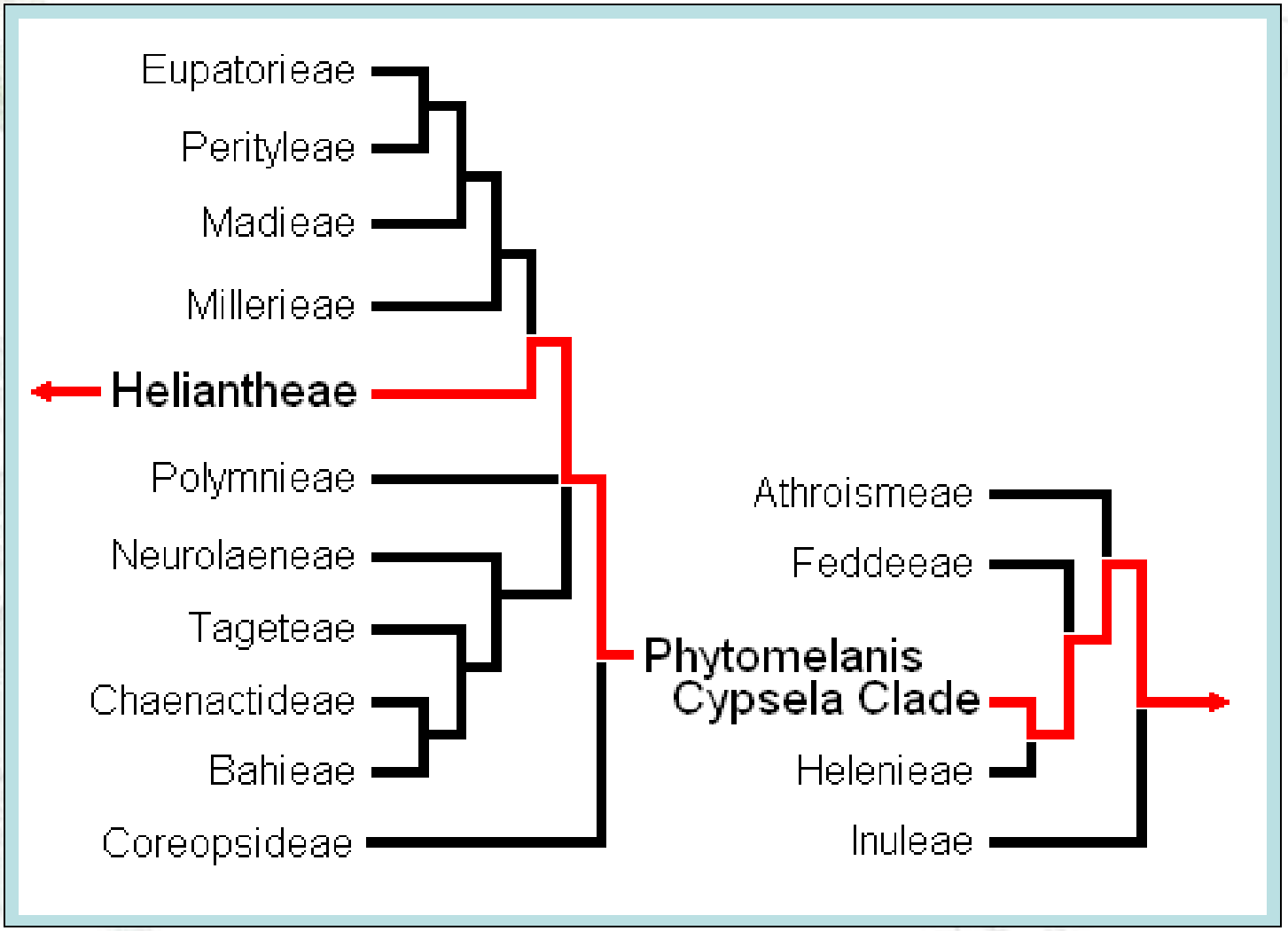
asteriscus (ass - ter - IS - kus)

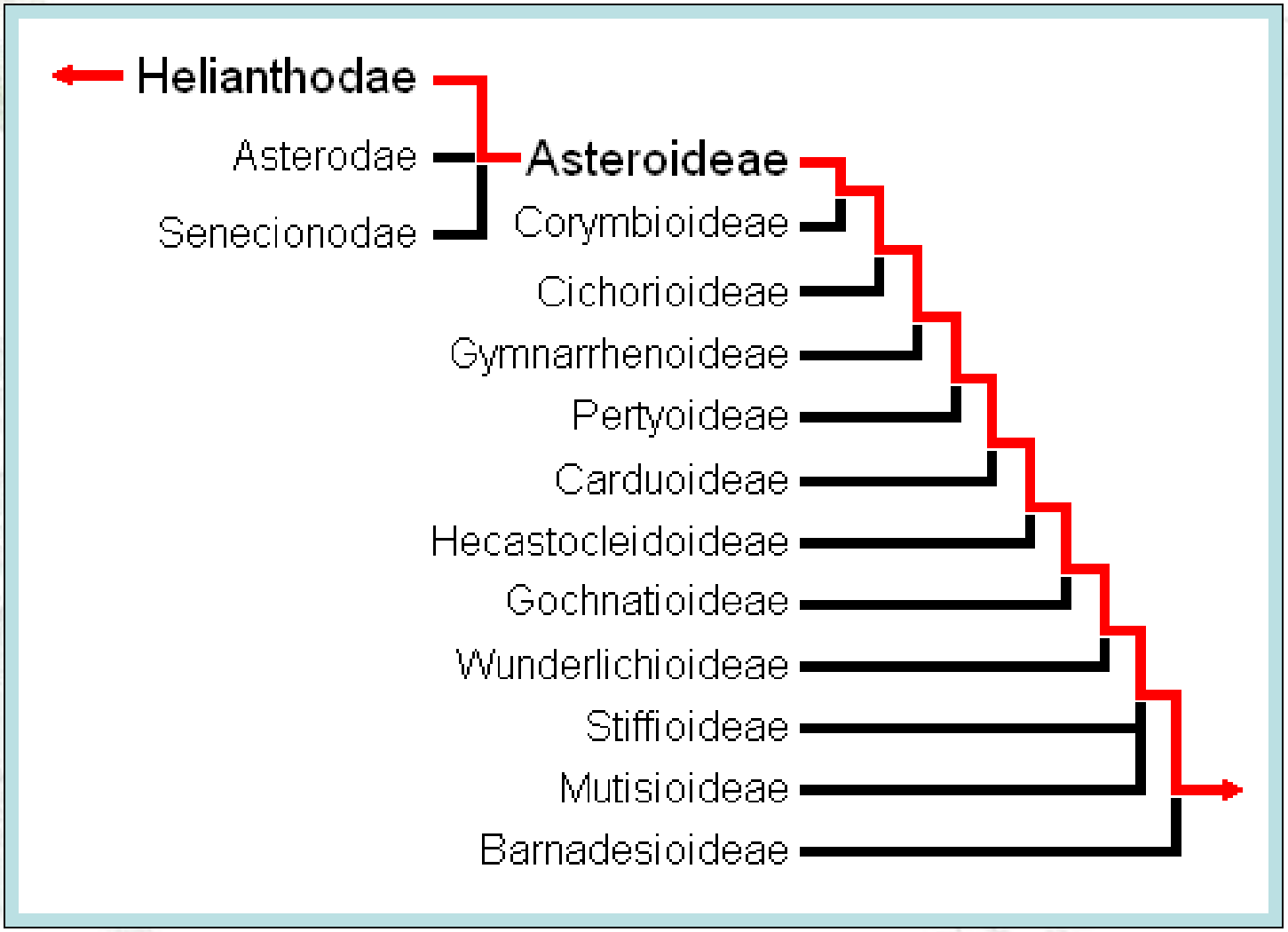
From the Greek *'asteriskos,'* diminutive of *'Aster,'* the Greek word for star

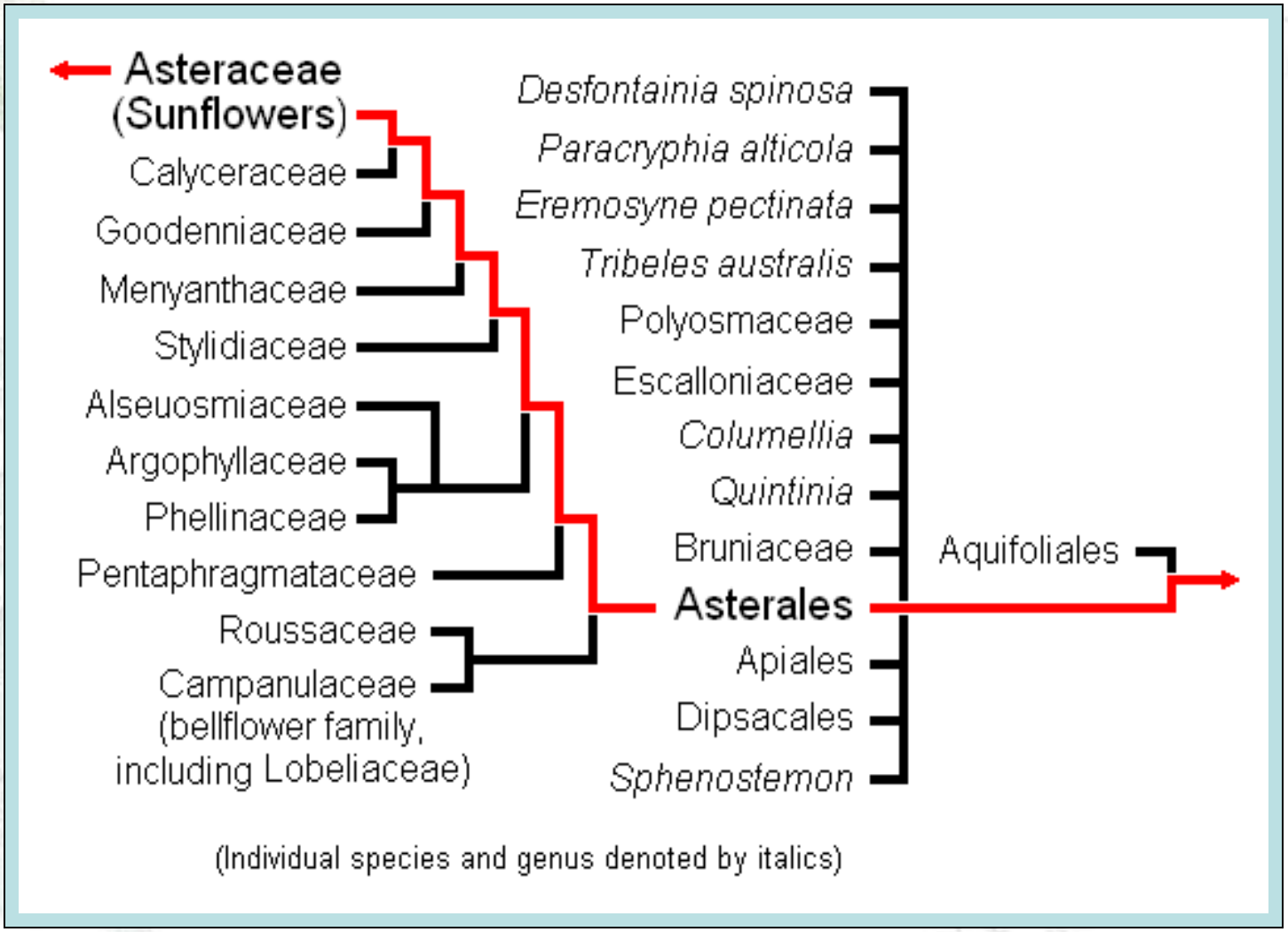
Biological and Genetic Relationships

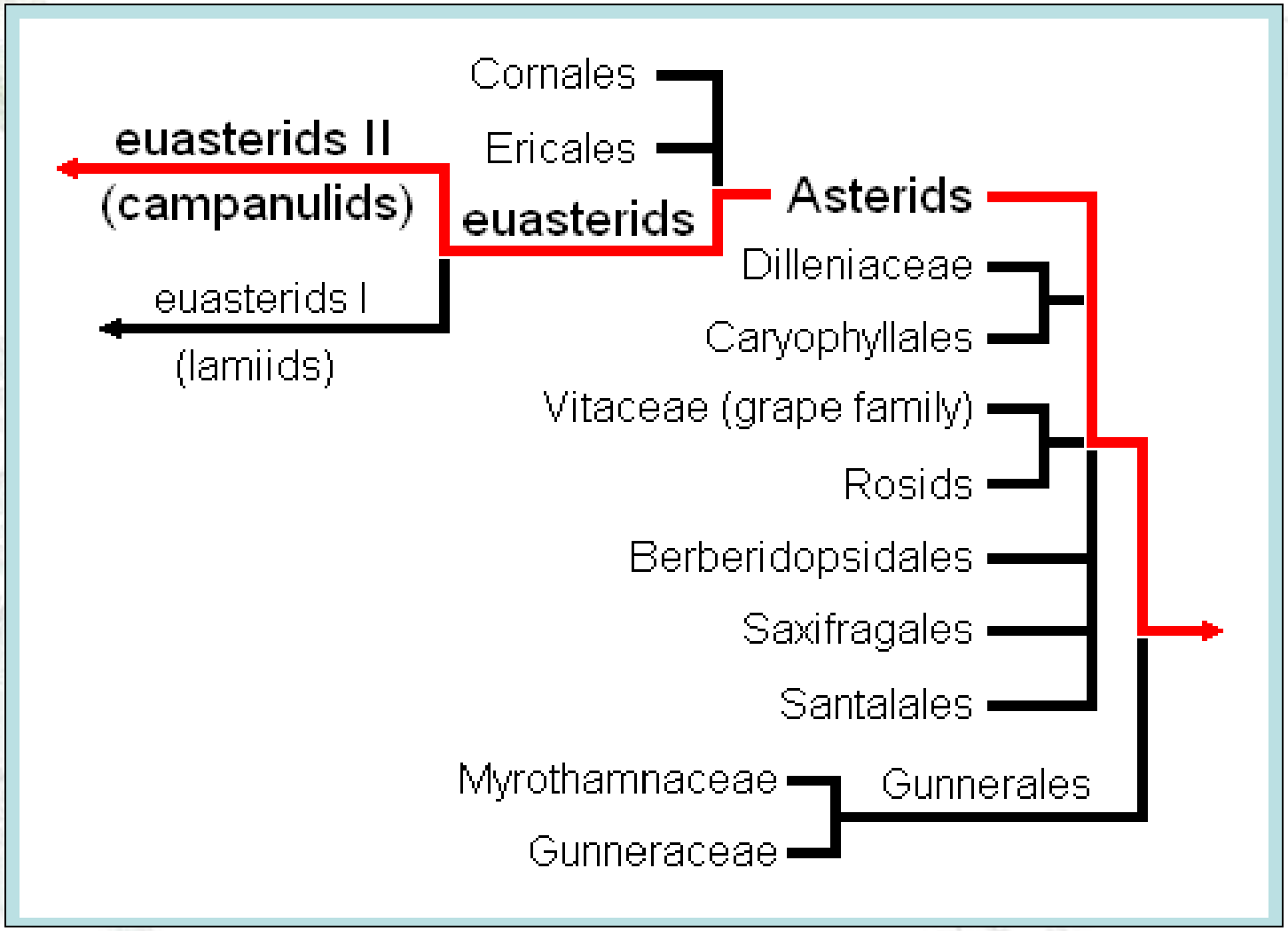


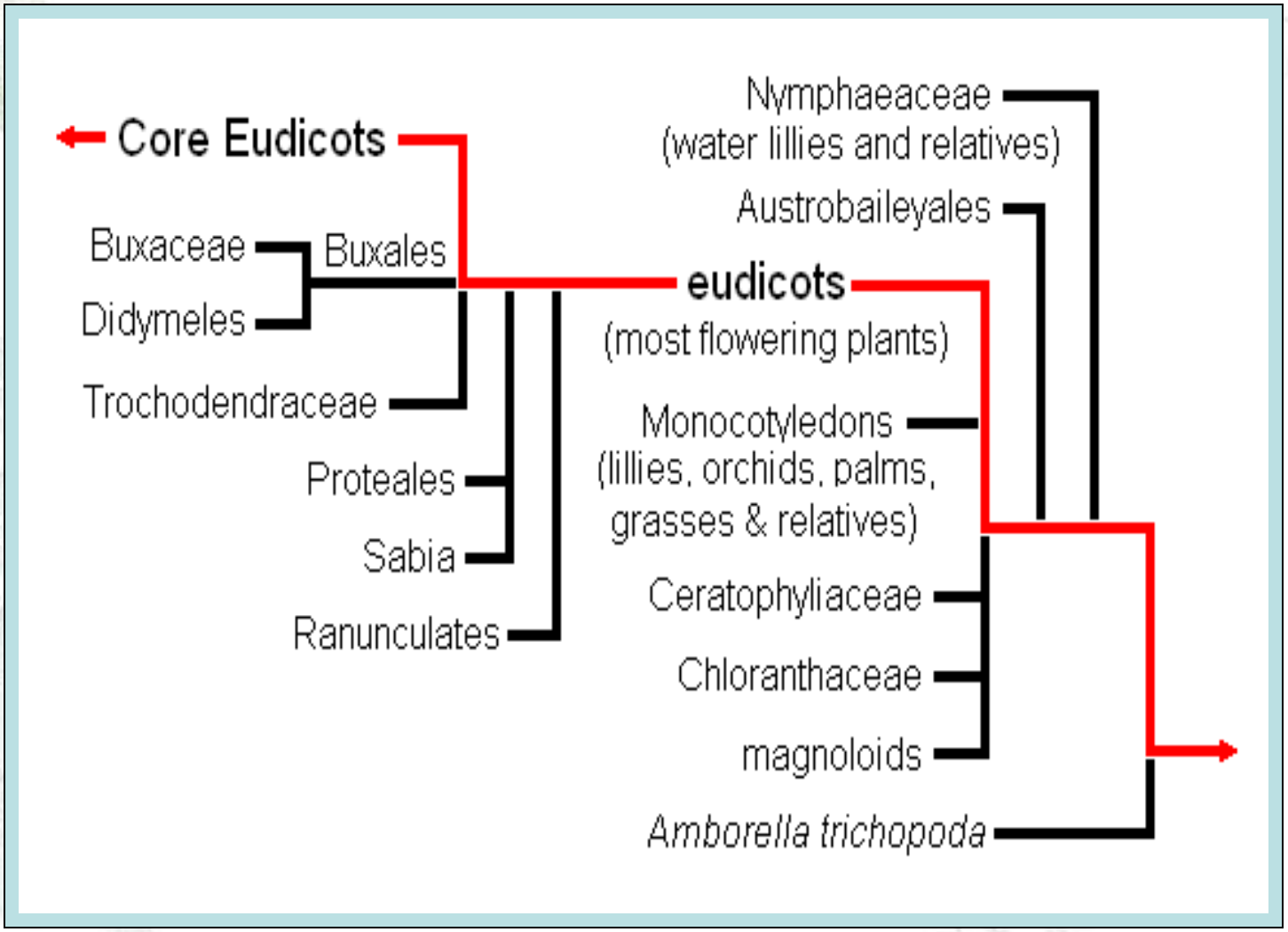

Rojasianthinae
Verbesininae
Engelmanniinae
Rudbeckiinae
Enceliinae
Ambrosiinae-2
Dugesiinae
Chromolepidinae
Zaluzaniinae
Helianthinae
Zinniinae
Spilanthinae
Ambrosiinae-1
Montanoinae
Ecliptinae

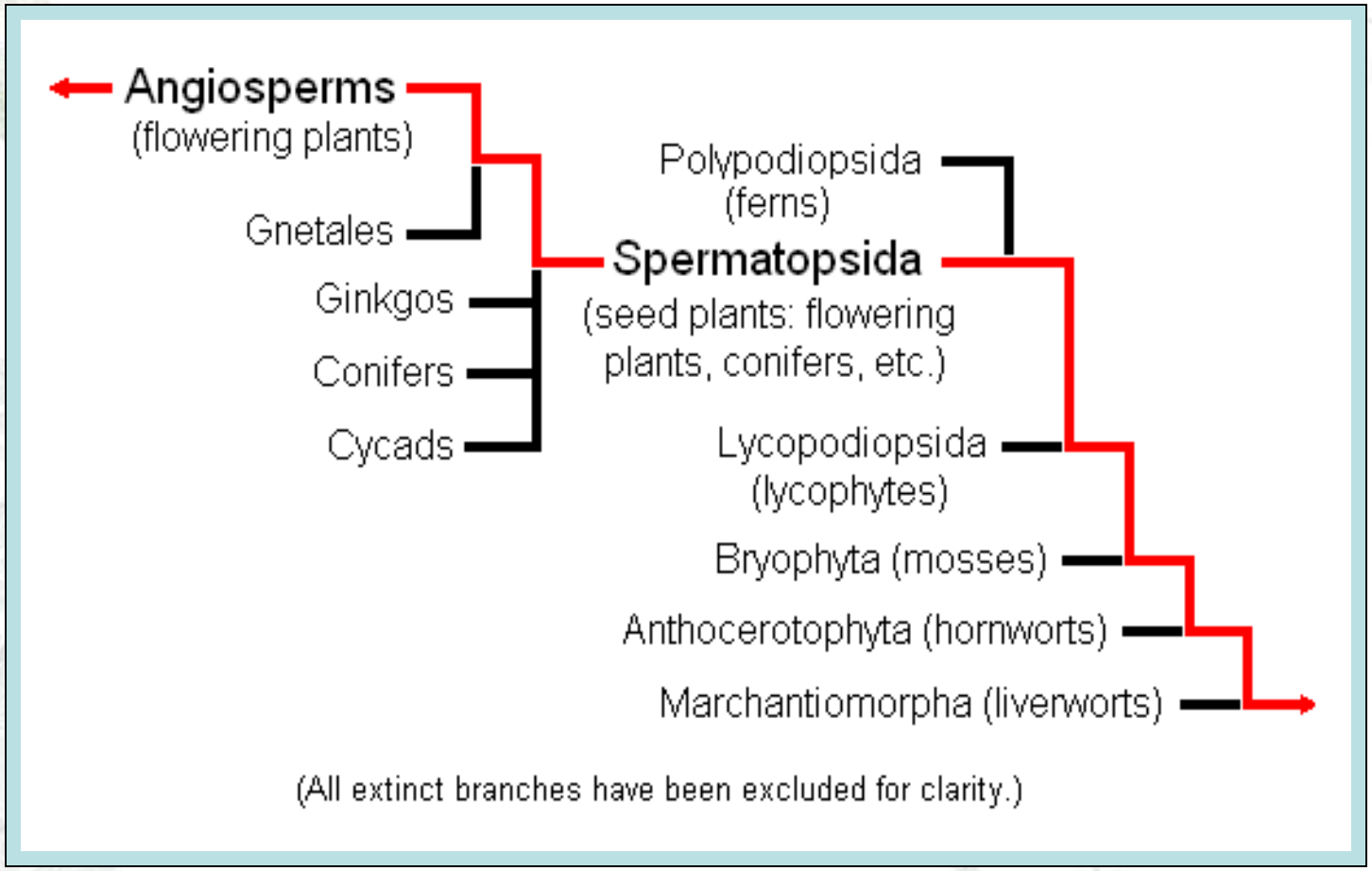

Eupatorieae
Perityleae
Madieae
Millerieae
Heliantheae
Polymnieae
Neurolaeneae
Tageteae
Chaenactideae
Bahieae
Coreopsideae
Phytomelanis
Cypsela Clade
Athroismeae
Feddeeae
Helenieae
Inuleae


Helianthodae
Asterodae
Senecionodae
Asteroideae
Corymbioideae
Cichorioideae
Gymnarrhenoideae
Pertyoideae
Carduoideae
Hecastocleidoideae
Gochnatioideae
Wunderlichioideae
Stiffioideae
Mutisioideae
Barnadesioideae


Asteraceae
(Sunflowers)
Calyceraceae
Goodeniaceae
Menyanthaceae
Stylidiaceae
Alseuosmiaceae
Argophyllaceae
Phellinaceae
Pentaphragmataceae
Roussaceae
Campanulaceae
(bellflower family,
including Lobeliaceae)
Desfontainia spinosa
Paracryphia alticola
Eremosyne pectinata
Tribeles australis
Polyosmaceae
Escalloniaceae
Columellia
Quintinia
Bruniaceae
Asterales
Apiales
Dipsacales
Sphenostemon
Aquifoliales
(Individual species and genus denoted by italics)


Cornales
Ericales
euasterids II
(campanulids)
euasterids
Asterids
Dilleniaceae
Caryophyllales
euasterids I
(lamiids)
Vitaceae (grape family)
Rosids
Berberidopsidales
Saxifragales
Santalales
Myrothamnaceae
Gunneraceae
Gunnerales

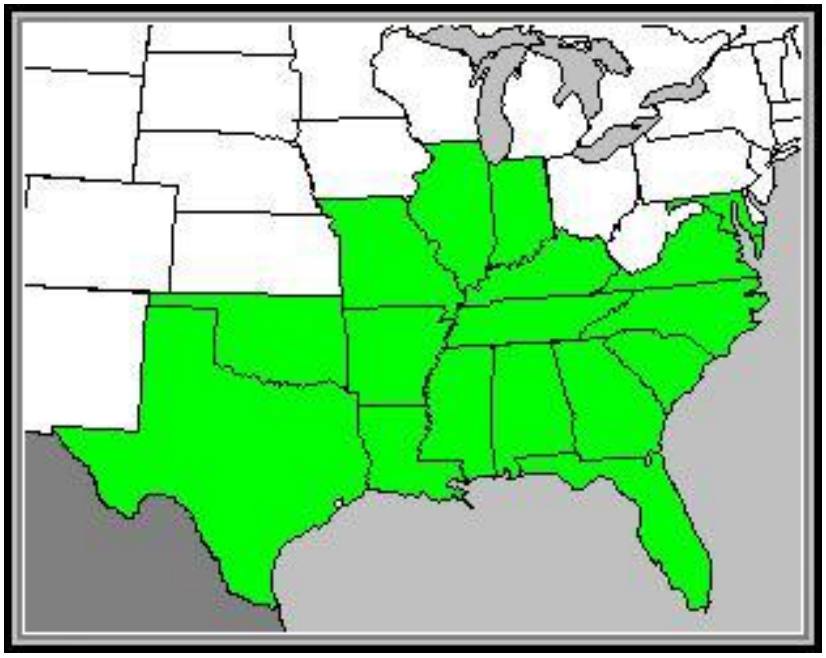

Core Eudicots
Buxaceae
Buxales
Didymeles
Trochodendraceae
Proteales
Sabia
Ranunculates
Nymphaeaceae
(water lillies and relatives)
Austrobaileyales
eudicots
(most flowering plants)
Monocotyledons
(lillies, orchids, palms,
grasses & relatives)
Ceratophyliaceae
Chloranthaceae
magnoloids
Amborella trichopoda



Link to the University of Arizona's Tree of Life.

Species Distribution in the United States

Starry Rosinweed, native to North America, is endemic to the southeastern United States. Its growing range extends from Texas through scattered areas of Missouri up in to Illinois, then east to the mid-Atlantic States, then south along the eastern seaboard to Florida.



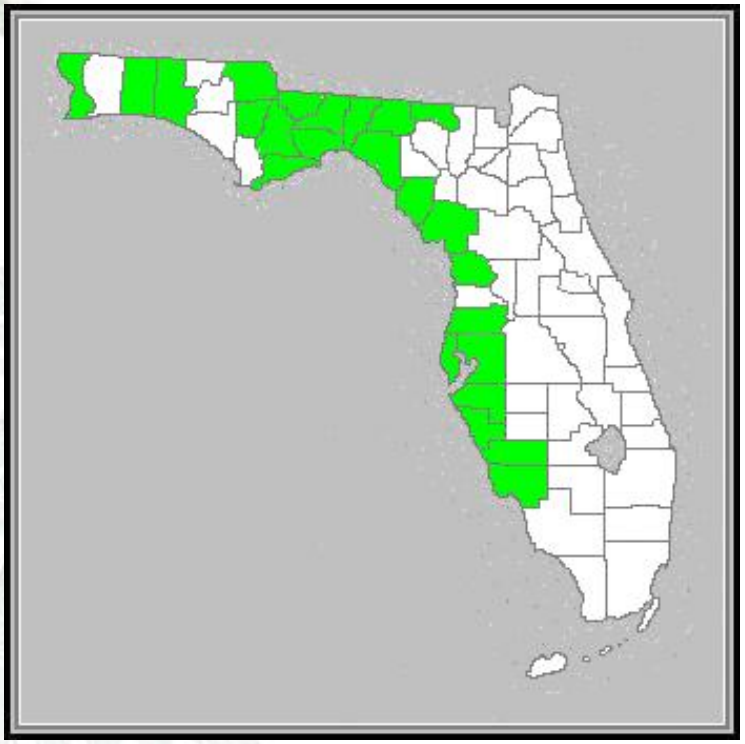
(For specific distribution within any of the shaded areas go to the USDA link provided on the reference page, and click the shaded area of interest.)

The USDA, NRCS, lists a total of nineteen species of the genus *Silphium* L. throughout the United States.

The Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants lists two species of this genus, both native in Florida.

Robert K. Godfrey (FSU) Herbarium #58542 Leon Co., 8/2/1960

Species Distribution within Florida



(*vouchered – indicates that a fully documented dried specimen has been deposited in an approved herbarium)

- Starry Rosinweed, a perennial wildflower, is *vouchered in approximately 23 counties in Florida, favoring the panhandle and Gulf coast of the peninsula.
- *Silphium asteriscus* prefers scrub and sandhill habitats and disturbed areas.

Plant Structure and Life Cycle

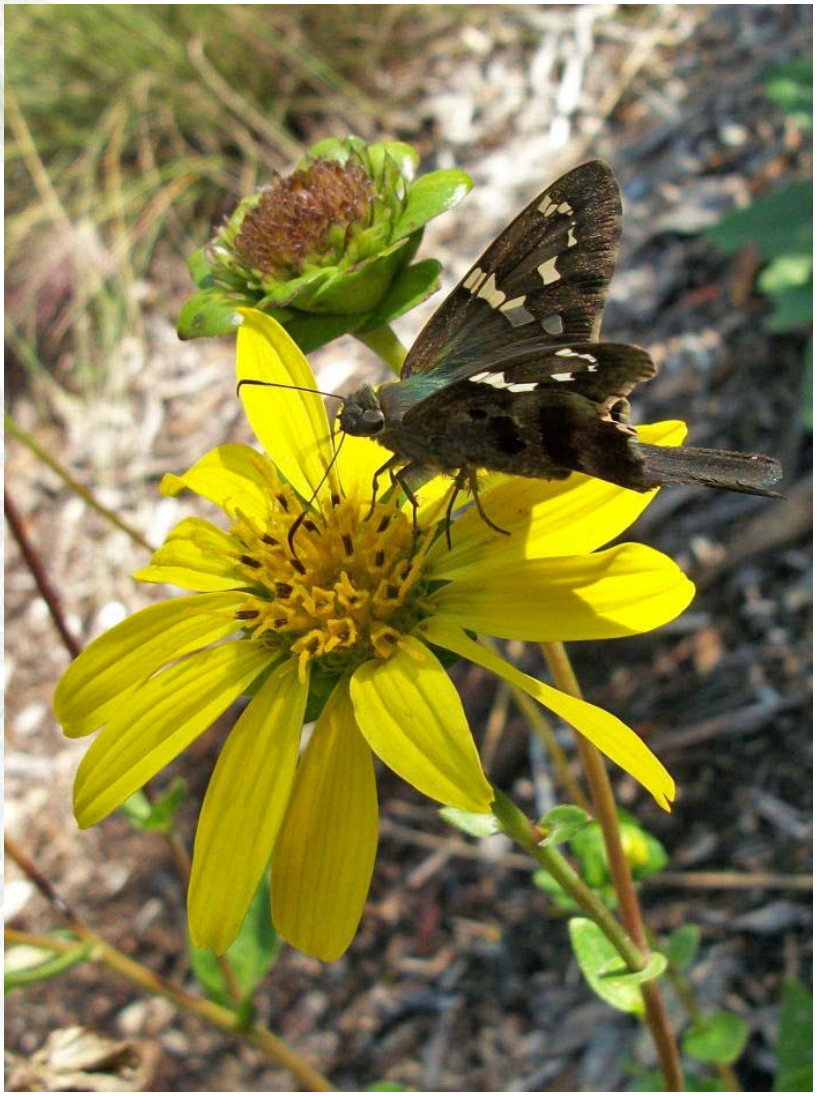
When first emerging, *Silphium asteriscus* starts out as a very compact plant. The course, bristly-haired lanceolate leaves are sessile – extending directly from the stem with no leaf stalk. Early in the plant's development the leaves maintain a rosulate pattern – a very tight ring around the stem. The plant maintains this configuration for a couple of weeks.

Thick roots and rhizomes extend from the caudex, or woody base of Rosinweed, assuring survival through drought, winter, and wildfire.

As the bristly-haired primary stem extends vertically, the structure of the plant changes dramatically. The basil rosette base gives way to opposing leaves spaced at intervals along the main and secondary stems. As Rosinweed starts to flower green buds appear then open.

Starry Rosinweed has a composite flower consisting of ray flowers – the oblong yellow petals of the corolla, and disc flowers, which have opened across the entire disc here.

The red arrow in the photo above indicates the undivided style of the disk flower’s pistil, or female reproductive organs.

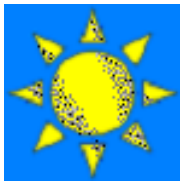


Rosinweed has many pollinators including bees, and butterflies. Following pollination, the flower loses both ray and disk flower petals.

As the flower dries out, what is left of the disk eventually falls off revealing the seeds that have formed underneath.

The plate-like seeds flake off and disperse, self-seeding and starting the cycle again.

Growing Conditions

 to 

• *Silphium asteriscus* prefers direct sun to slight shade

• Rosinweed favors sandy well-drained soil

• Acidic to slightly alkaline soil - 5.1 to 7.6 pH

• Good drought tolerance

• Hardiness: USDA Zone 7b: to -14.9 °C (5 °F)
to USDA Zone 10b: above 1.7 °C (35 °F)

• Flowering and seed production occur from spring into late fall

• Height: 36 - 56 inches (90 - 140 cm.)

Seed Collection and Propagation

Starry Rosinweed will readily self-seed if left to it's own devices. Collecting seeds is a simple matter of removing the dead head flowers once they are thoroughly dried on the plant. Stratification may be necessary, so the seeds collected should be allowed to stay in a refrigerator for four to six weeks prior to planting. Scarification, or scratching of the seeds is usually not necessary. Store the seeds at room temperature and plant in late winter or early spring.

Silphium asteriscus also propagates by rhizome, so root cuttings are a possibility.

Presentation References

- Biological and genetic relationships

  University of Arizona Tree of Life

- North American distribution

  USDA - Natural Resource Conservation Service

- Florida distribution

  Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants

- Herbarium specimen

  Robert K. Godfrey (USF) Herbarium

Presentation References (cont.)

- Growing conditions and general information
  - Wikipedia *Silphium* (genus)
  - Missouriplants.com
  - Dave's Garden
- Nectar Food Plants

  Biospherenursery.com

- FNPS – Natives for Landscaping

FNPS.org This Link will take you to the profile for this plant on the FNPS website

• For more in-depth study:

Xeric Landscaping with Florida Native Plants. Michael Jameson and Richard Moyroud, editors. 1991. San Antonio, FL: Association of Florida Native Nurseries. No ISBN.

Best Native Plants for Southern Gardens: A Handbook for Gardeners, Homeowners, and Professionals. 2010. Gil Nelson. Gainesville: University Press of Florida. ISBN 978-0-8130-3458-4

Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens. Douglas W. Tallamy. 2009. Timber Press. ISBN 978-0881929928.