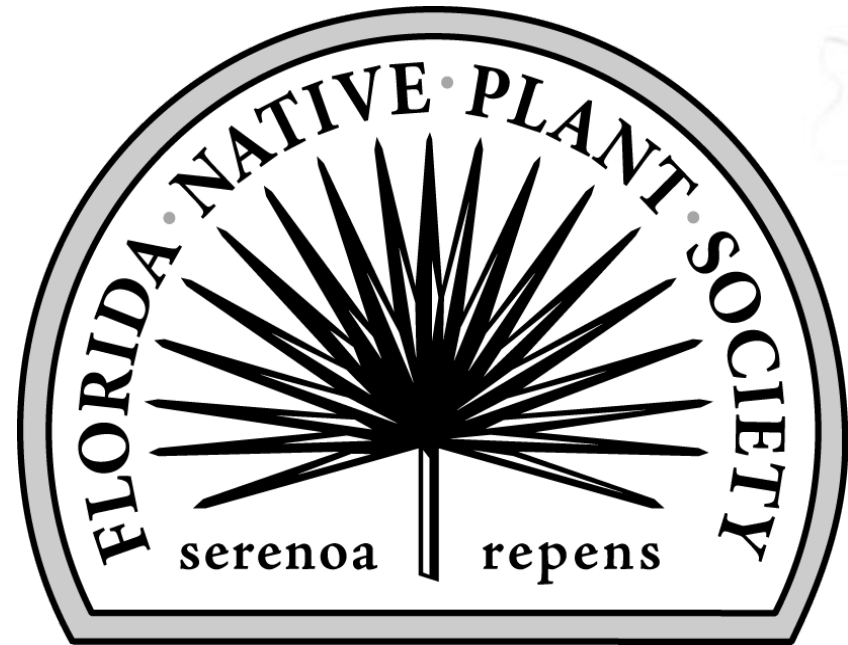


# Florida Native Plant Society



Native Plant Owners Manual

*Solidago odora* – Chapman's Goldenrod

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 and Shirley Denton.

# Chapman's Goldenrod

Aster family



A close-up photograph of a plant with numerous lanceolate, green leaves. The leaves are arranged in whorls and have a slightly serrated or pointed tip. The plant is growing in a natural setting with some dry leaves visible in the background.

*Solidago odora var. chapmanii*



# Navigation Links

(for use in open discussion)

[What's in a Name?](#)

[Biological Classification – Tree of Life](#)

[Where does this plant grow?](#)

- [In North America](#)
- [In Florida](#)

[What this plant needs to -](#)

- [Thrive](#)
- [Propagate](#)

[Life Cycle](#)

[References](#)

‘View/Full Screen Mode’  
recommended

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



**Chapman's Goldenrod**, anisescented  
goldenrod, sweet goldenrod, true goldenrod

*Solidago* (so - li - DAY - go)

From the Latin '*solidus*,' meaning undivided  
or make whole, herb reputed to heal

*odora* (oh - DOR - uh)

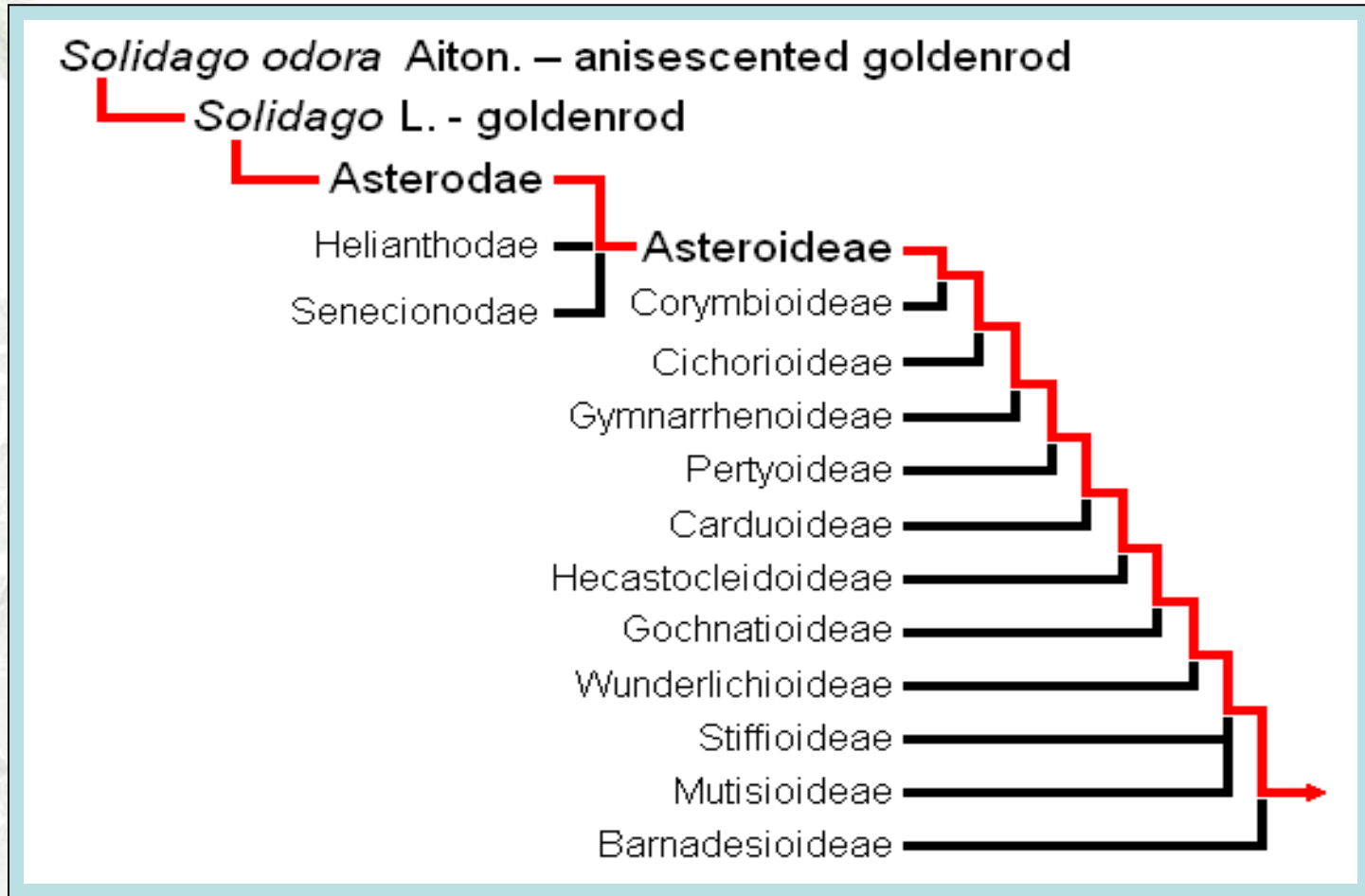
From the Latin '*odoratus*,' meaning 'that has  
a smell'

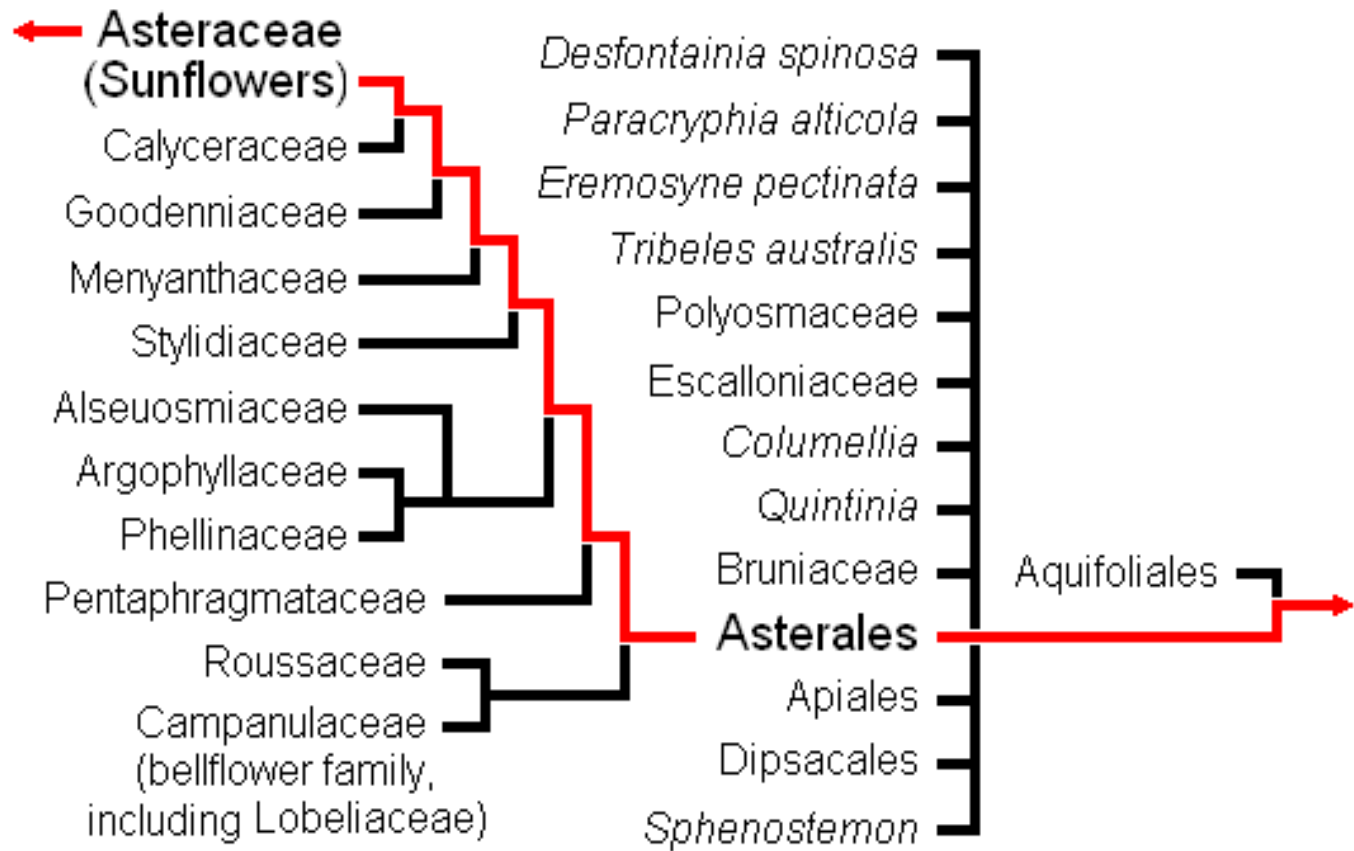
*chapmanii* (chap - MAN - ee - eye)

Named for Alvan Wentworth Chapman,  
physician and botanist. Graduated Amherst College  
and settled in Apalachicola, Florida



# Biological and Genetic Relationships

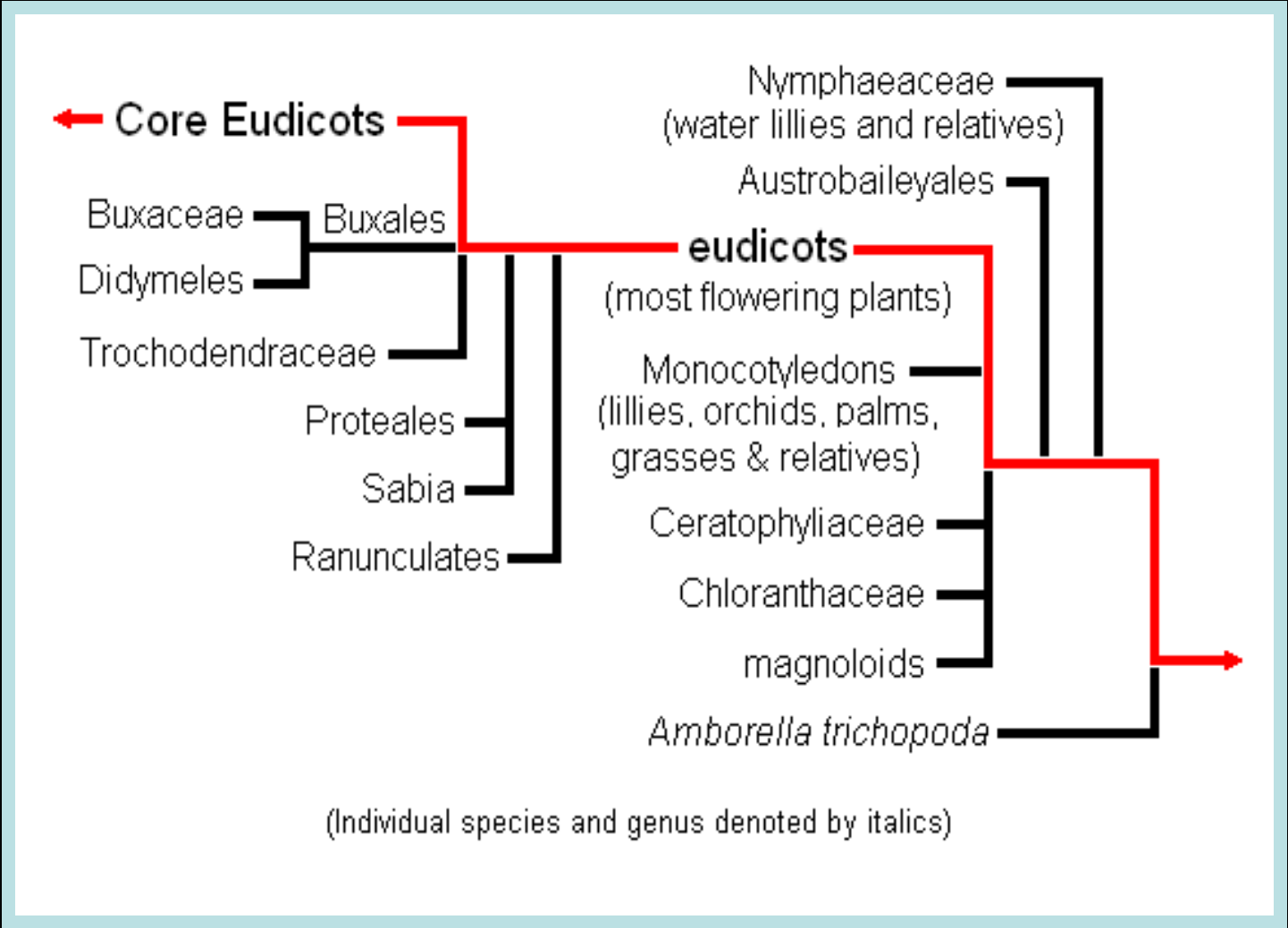


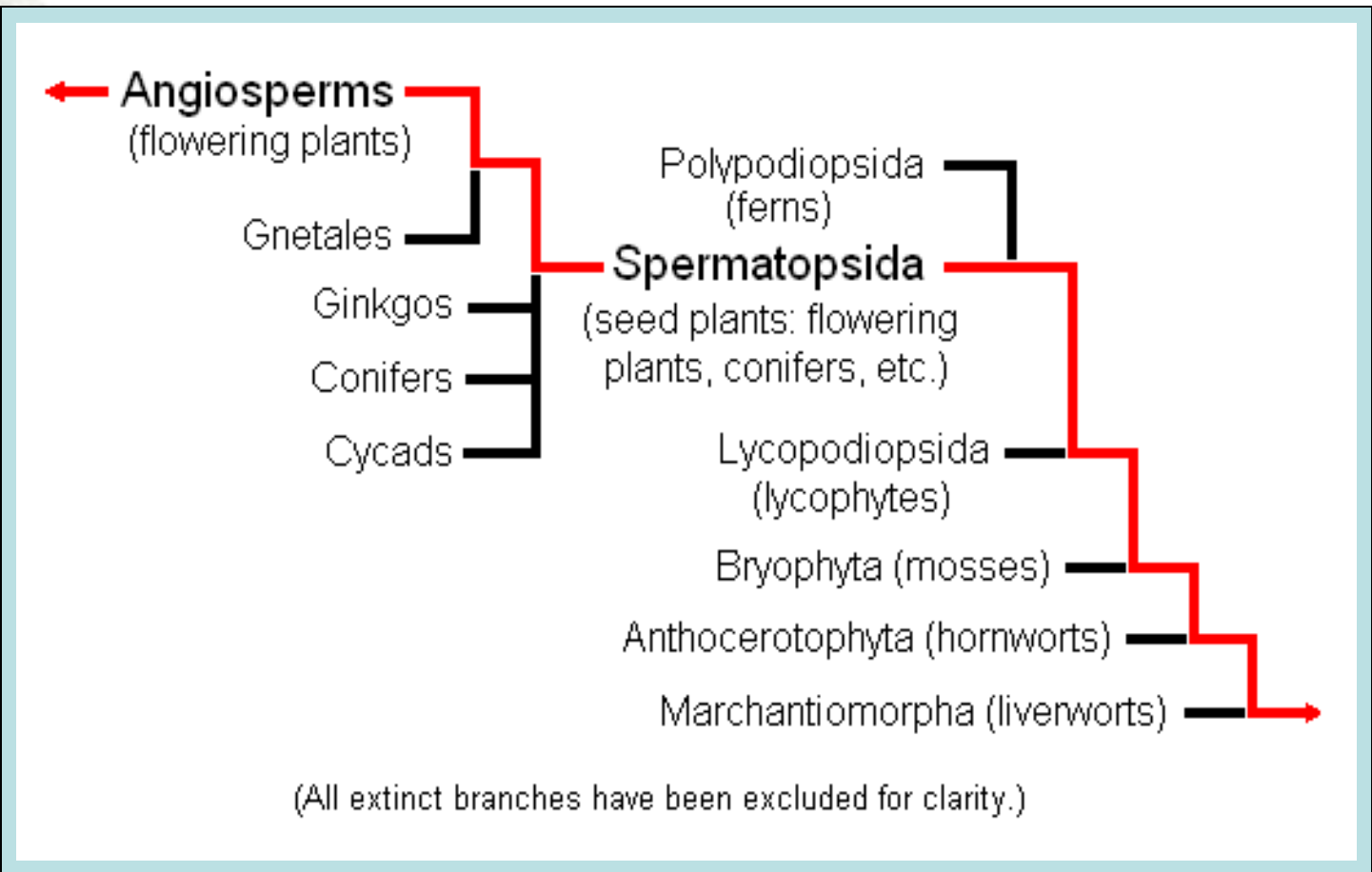


(Individual species and genus denoted by italics)









Link to the University of Arizona's [Tree of Life](#).



# Species Distribution in the United States



(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.)

Chapman's Goldenrod, native to North America, is endemic to the southeastern United States.

The Florida peninsula is the predominant growing range, with some extension into the Florida panhandle and southern Georgia.





- The USDA, NRCS, lists a total of 75 species of the genus *Solidago* L. throughout the U.S.

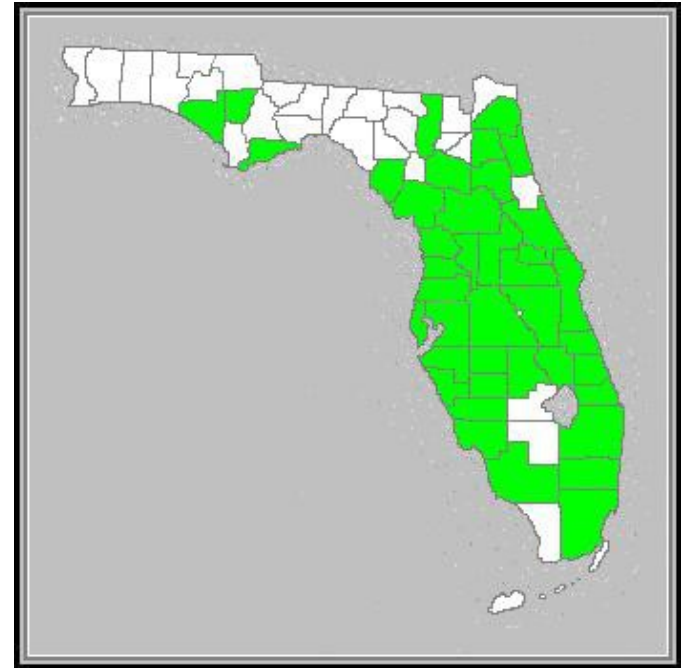
- The Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants identifies twenty-one species occurring in Florida, all of which are native.

University of Florida Herbarium  
FLAS 223761 Columbia Co.,  
10/10/2001



# Species Distribution within Florida

- *Solidago odora*, a perennial wildflower, occurs in thirty-nine counties in Florida, favoring the peninsula.
- Chapman's Goldenrod occurs naturally in poor sandy soil, but will thrive in relatively fertile areas. Native to scrub and sandhill habitats, it will readily take to garden environments.



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



# Growing Conditions



to



• *Solidago odora* prefers direct sun to partial shade

- Chapman's Goldenrod favors sandy well-drained soil, but will tolerate clay-bearing soils
- Mildly acidic to mildly alkaline soil - 6.1 to 7.8 pH
- Good drought and salt tolerance
- Hardiness: USDA Zone 8b: to  $-9.4\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $15\text{ }^{\circ}\text{F}$ )  
to USDA Zone 11: above  $4.5\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $40\text{ }^{\circ}\text{F}$ )
- Flowering and seed production occur from late summer to late fall
- Height: 36 - 48 inches (90 - 120 cm.)



# Plant Structure and Life Cycle

As Chapman's Goldenrod emerges in late winter, it is not very noticeable. Prior to flowering the plant is not very eye-catching, though the foliage stays consistent throughout its life cycle. The hairy stems bear alternate, stemless, single-veined, narrow dark green leaves.





*Solidago odora* has a fibrous root system which can be beneficial in stabilizing loose soils. Due to its moderate tolerance for salt, Goldenrod is sometimes used in upland coastal areas to help secure the loose dune sand.

As the plant becomes top-heavy with flower heads, a little bit of wind will cause the plant to list to one side, yet the roots hold firm.





When crushed, the leaves smell of anise or licorice. The two varieties of the species *Solidago odora* can be differentiated by the pattern of hair on the stems. The hairs on *var. chapmanii* are fairly evenly distributed with no pattern, whereas the hairs on *var. odora* are in distinct vertical lines. Because this species is prone to hybridization this distinction is not totally reliable.







Chapman's Goldenrod, like most scrub and sandhill species, loves fire. Once an area is burned, it will come back with a vengeance.

The Cherokee tribe made extensive use of *Solidago odora* in their folk medicine. Infusions of the leaves or roots were used to reduce fever, induce sweating, and relieve toothache, just to name a few applications.

As Chapman's Goldenrod matures, flower head branches will appear. Individual blossoms are arranged in rows along the tops of these specialized branches, giving the flower head a geometric character. Contrary to popular belief, the pollen of *Solidago* is quite heavy and does not stay airborne for long. Goldenrod's association with hay fever is tenuous at best.

Following pollination, the bright yellow flowers give way to fuzzy, light gray seedheads containing tiny nutlets, where seeds reside.



# Seed Collecting and Propagation

Once fertilized, the flowers of Chapman's Goldenrod will morph from the bright yellow flowers to fuzzy, pale gray seedheads composed of tiny nutlets which bear the seeds. These can be collected by placing a mesh bag around the seedheads once they turn gray. Clean the seeds and sow into lightly raked soil in late fall. Water occasionally for the first couple of weeks.

As the plant becomes dense, clumps can be divided in the spring or fall. *S. odora* is prone to stem rot so, take care when transplanting separated or potted specimens so that the plant's depth in the ground is no deeper than it was when potted.



# Presentation References

- Biological and genetic relationships

University of Arizona [Tree of Life](#)

- United States distribution

[USDA](#) - Natural Resource Conservation Service

- Florida distribution

[Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants](#)

- Native American Ethnobotany

[University of Michigan Dearborn](#)





# Presentation References (cont.)

- Growing conditions & general information

## [Floridata](#)

- University of Florida

## [Herbarium](#)

- FNPS – Natives for Landscaping

[FNPS.org](#) This Link will take you to the profile for this plant on the FNPS website

- [Florida Plants](#) by zone and habitat, use your county name or zip-code to see native habitat classifications and appropriate plants.



- For more in-depth study:

*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

*Florida Butterfly Caterpillars and Their Host Plants.*

Marc C. Minno, Jerry F. Butler, and Donald W. Hall. 2005. Gainesville: University Press of Florida. ISBN 0813027896.

*The Right Plants for Dry Places: Native Plant Landscaping in Central Florida.* Suncoast Native Plant Society. 2005 (2nd edition). St. Petersburg: Great Outdoors Publ. Co. ISBN 0820004235.

