

SAND BUTTERFLY PEA

Centrosema arenicola (Small) F.J. Herm.

Synonyms: *Bradburya arenicola* Small

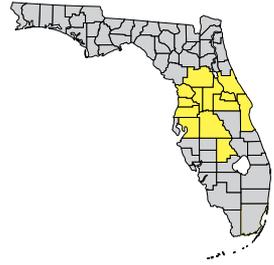
Centrosema floridanum (Britton) Lakela

Family: Fabaceae (pea)

FNAI Ranks: G2/S2

Legal Status: US—Mgmt Concern FL—Endangered

Wetland Status: US—UPL FL—UPL



FNAI

Field Description: Perennial **vine** with **stems** up to 10 feet long twining over bushes. **Leaves** with 3 oval or lance-shaped **leaflets** to 2 inches long, dark green, somewhat leathery. **Flowers** 1.5 inches wide, purplish-blue (rarely pink or white), twisted so that large, notched banner petal is lowest. **Calyx** with 4 triangular lobes, the lower lobe forked, the upper lobes much shorter than the lower. Two small **bracts** beneath the flower partially hide the calyx. **Fruit** a flattened pod, 4.8 inches long, linear, with a long curving beak.

Similar Species: Common butterfly pea (*Centrosema virginianum*) stems are less than 5 feet long; leaflets are longer (to 2.8 inches), narrow, and linear; lighter green, not leathery; calyx lobes are all narrowly pointed and about the same size.

Related Rare Species: See scrub pigeon-wing (*Clitoria fragrans*) in this guide. Pigeon-wing is an erect herb, not a vine; its flowers are similar to sand butterfly pea flowers, but the banner petal is not notched; pods lack the long beak; and bracts at the base of the flower are tiny, not covering the calyx.

Sand butterfly pea

Centrosema arenicola

Habitat: Sandhill, scrubby flatwoods, dry upland woods.

Best Survey Season: Flowers June–October. Each flower lasts one day.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to central FL.

Conservation Status: Very few plants have been seen in the last two decades; only 1 population is protected.

Protection & Management: Purchase and protect sandhill and other dry upland habitats. Burn sandhills and flatwoods every 2 - 3 years. Conduct surveys for more plants.

References: Coile 2000, Isely 1990, Small 1933, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

