

SPREADING PINWEED

Lechea divaricata Shuttlew. ex Britt.

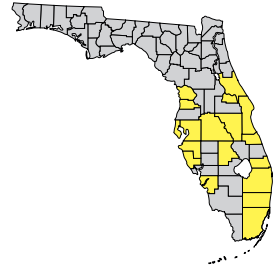
Synonym: *Lechea major* L. var. *divaricata*
(Shuttlew. ex Britt.) A. Gray

Family: Cistaceae (rockrose)

FNAI Ranks: G2/S2

Legal Status: US—none FL—Endangered

Wetland Status: US—UPL FL—UPL



Billy B. Boothe

Field Description: Perennial **herb** with slender, erect flowering **stems** rising from a dense mat of spreading, older stems. **Leaves** less than 0.4 inch long, alternate, narrowly oval with pointed tips, disappearing by flowering time. **Flowers** in tight clusters at ends of short branches, with 3 tiny, purple or green **petals**, dropping quickly after opening, and 5 **sepals**, outer sepals shorter than inner. **Fruit** a tiny, hard capsule, longer than the sepals, does not split into segments when mature. Entire plant covered with spreading, gray hairs.

Similar Species: Hairy pinweed (*Lechea mucronata*) leaves are longer than 0.6 inch; the capsule is about the same height as the calyx and splits into 3's at maturity. Deckert's pinweed (*Lechea deckertii*) has wiry, woody branches and its leaves are smooth on the upper surfaces.

Related Rare Species: Lakela's pinweed (*Lechea lakelae*), state-endangered, has smooth stems, leaves, and sepals; it was known from coastal strand in Collier County but is probably extinct. Nodding pinweed (*Lechea cernua*), state-threatened, is found in scrub.

Spreading pinweed

Lechea divaricata

Habitat: Scrub and scrubby flatwoods.

Best Survey Season: Flowers May–October.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to peninsular FL.

Conservation Status: Spreading pinweed occurs on 16 conservation areas.

Protection & Management: Apply prescribed fire in scrub to maintain a mosaic of habitats and sandy openings. Purchase and protect scrub sites on Lake Wales and Atlantic Coastal Ridge.

References: Coile 2000, IRC 1999, Small 1933, Wilbur and Daoud 1961, Wilbur 1974, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

