

## FRINGED CAMPION

*Silene polypetala* (Walter) Fernald & B.G. Schub.

**Synonym:** *Silene baldwinii* Nuttall

**Family:** Caryophyllaceae (pink)

**FNAI Ranks:** G2/S1

**Legal Status:** US—Endangered FL—Endangered

**Wetland Status:** US—none FL—UPL



Gary Knight

**Field Description:** Perennial **herb**, spreading by runners, rooting at nodes in the leaf litter, and forming mats. **Leaves** 1 - 4 inches long, widest above the middle, opposite, with hairy, narrowly winged **leaf stalks**. **Flowering stems** erect, to 10 inches tall, rising from rosettes that form at the tips of runners. **Flowers** up to 3 inches across, pale pink, with 5 deeply fringed petals.

**Similar Species:** Many wildflower species have rosettes of leaves connected by hairy, creeping stems; when not in flower, fringed campion is distinguished by the narrowly winged, hairy leafstalks. When in flower, fringed campion is unmistakable.

**Related Rare Species:** Fire pink (*Silene virginica*), state-endangered, with only one known location in a hardwood forest in Bay County, has bright red, notched petals and weak, sticky-hairy stems. Royal catchfly (*Silene regia*), with red notchless petals, was known from one location in Jackson County. Carolina catchfly (*Silene caroliniana*), with white or pink flowers, is known from one location, a dry hammock in Okaloosa County.

## Fringed campion

*Silene polypetala*

**Habitat:** Hardwood forests on slopes and stream terraces, usually mid- to lower slopes, over low-acid soils.

**Best Survey Season:** Mid-March to early May; plant is difficult to identify without flowers and goes dormant quickly after flowering.

**Range-wide Distribution:** FL

Panhandle near the Apalachicola River; along the Flint and Chattahoochee rivers in GA.

**Conservation Status:** There are 7 populations of fringed campion in FL, only 1 on conservation lands. Its habitat has been destroyed throughout its range by clearcutting; it is also threatened by exotic species, such as nandina and Japanese honeysuckle.

**Protection & Management:**

Maintain intact forest canopy; remove invasive plants by hand-clearing; avoid fire, raking, and other disturbance to soil and leaf litter.

**References:** Allison 1991c, Anderson 1991a Anderson 1995b, Coile 1992, Coile 2000, Kral 1983, Patrick et al. 1995, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

