

## MEADOW JOINTVETCH

*Aeschynomene pratensis* var. *pratensis* Small

**Synonyms:** *Aeschynomene pratensis* Small

**Family:** Fabaceae (pea)

**FNAI Ranks:** G4T3/S3

**Legal Status:** US-none; FL-none



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**Field Description:** Perennial **herb**, with robust, erect stems to 1.8 m tall. **Leaves** compound with 20 - 26 leaflets; **leaflets** less than 13 mm long, entire, oblong, with a single conspicuous midvein; leaflets not overlapping; **leaf stalk** usually 2.5 - 7.6 cm long. **Flowers**, yellow-orange, typically pea-like with a large, notched banner petal. **Fruit** a pod, 2 - 5 cm long, with a slender stalk about 13 mm long and 2 - 8 segments, distinctly constricted between the segments.

**Similar Species:** Indian jointvetch (*Aeschynomene indica*), an introduced weedy species found in wetlands and disturbed areas, also has 1 conspicuous midvein per leaflet, but its pods are not constricted between the seeds. Shy-leaf (*Aeschynomene americana*) has 2 - 4 prominent veins on the leaflets. Distinguished from other members in the genus by having fruit capsules that are scalloped or constricted between each seed along both margins.

**Related Rare Species:** Several members of the pea family are rare in S FL. See few-flower caesalpinia (*Caesalpinia pauciflora*), Small's milkpea (*Galactia smallii*), Swartz's snoutbean (*Rhynchosia swartzii*), and crenulate lead-plant (*Amorpha herbacea* var. *crenulata*) in this guide.

**Habitat:** This species occupied marl prairie, glades marsh, cypress domes, swales and pinelands.

**Best Survey Season:** Spring-summer.

**Range-wide Distribution:** *Aeschynomene pratensis* var. *pratensis* is endemic to southern Florida. *Aeschynomene pratensis* is widely distributed in the Caribbean and South America.

**Conservation Status:** This plant is mainly associated with the Everglades Basin in Florida and is vulnerable to hydrology alterations, invasive plant species (Brazilian pepper, melaleuca), and water quality deterioration from agricultural runoff. In the future, an increase in drought frequency and severity may also impact this species.

**Protection and Management:** Avoid altering natural wetlands. Restore and maintain natural wetland hydrology (timing and amount). Eradicate invasive exotic plant species (e.g, *Melaleuca quinquenervia*)

**References:** Coile 2000, IRC 1999, Isely 1990, Rudd 1955, Small 1933, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

meadow jointvetch

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