

CAPE SABLE WHITEWEED

Ageratum maritimum Kunth

Synonyms: *Ageratum littorale* Gray

Family: Asteraceae (composite)

FNAI Ranks: G2G3/S2

Legal Status: US-none; FL-Endangered



Kim Alexander

Field Description: This herbaceous, slightly succulent perennial of the Asteraceae grows to about 30 cm tall in sunny, shoreline habitats and in open spaces of hammocks from Lignum Vitae Key to Key West only (and in Cuba). Its delicate, light blue 6 mm flower heads have tiny, fine petals, and occur in clusters borne on long leafless, hairless stalks. The serrated, ovate, hairless leaves are opposite, on about 19 mm petioles, and are about 19 mm long, 13 mm wide. Fruits are tiny, brown, and almost powdery.

Similar Species: Cape Sable whiteweed can be distinguished from the other two non-native whiteweed species found in Florida based on the following combination of characters: Cape Sable whiteweed has glabrous leaves and stems, while the other two species have viscid pilose to stipitate-glandular leaves and stems. The distribution of Cape Sable whiteweed in Florida is restricted to the keys.

Related Rare Species: None in FL.

Cape Sable whiteweed

Ageratum maritimum

Habitat: Coastal berms, rock barrens, and rockland hammocks.

Best Survey Season: All year.

Range-wide Distribution: Native to the Florida Keys, the Caribbean, and Central America.

Conservation Status: Three populations are known, all are protected on public lands, including the Florida Keys Wildlife and Environmental Area.

Protection and Management: Purchase and protect remaining rockland hammocks and coastal berms in south FL. Control pest plant species.

References: Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.