

## FOUR-PETAL PAWPAW

*Asimina tetramera* Small

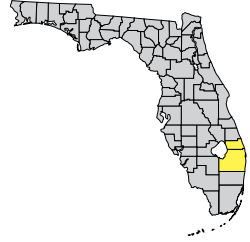
**Synonym:** *Ptyothamnus tetramerus* (Small) Small

**Family:** Annonaceae (custard apple)

**FNAI ranks:** G1/S1

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

**Wetland Status:** US—UPL FL—UPL



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**Field Description:** Deciduous **shrub** 3 - 15 feet tall, with one to several arching stems. **Leaves** 2 - 5 inches long, yellow-green, leathery, alternate, wider above the middle, with pointed tips, aromatic; network of veins visible on both upper and lower leaf surfaces; **leaves** all in the same plane, producing a frond-like branch. **Flowers** 0.5 - 1 inch across, nodding on long stalks in the angle between new leaves and the stem, foul-smelling; most flowers have 4 **sepals** and 4 or 6 maroon **petals**; if six petals, then the 3 outer **petals** are longer and paler than the inner. **Fruits** 2 - 5 inches long, lumpy and bean-shaped, with shiny, brown seeds 0.5 inch long.

**Similar Species:** Large-flowered pawpaw (*Asimina obovata*) has larger flowers and its leaves have rounded tips. Dwarf pawpaw (*Asimina pygmaea*) is less than 1.5 feet tall and grows in moister conditions. Netted pawpaw (*Asimina reticulata*) produces flowers on last year's shoots before new leaves emerge and has blueish-green leaves.

**Related Rare Species:** See Rugel's pawpaw (*Deeringothamnus rugelii*) and beautiful pawpaw (*Deeringothamnus pulchellus*) in this guide.

## Four-petal pawpaw

*Asimina tetramera*

**Habitat:** Openings in sand pine scrub on south-central Atlantic Coastal Ridge.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowers April–July.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Endemic to 2 counties in SE FL.

**Conservation Status:** About half of the 20 known sites are on private land; the remainder are protected in three parks in Palm Beach County and at Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Martin County.

**Protection & Management:** Maintain open, lightly shaded scrub with controlled burns or chopping at 20 - 50 year intervals. Avoid disking or other soil disturbance. Purchase privately owned sites.

**References:** Coile 2000, Cox 1998, Kral 1960, Kral 1983, Small 1926b, USFWS 1998, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

