

## FLORIDA MILKVETCH

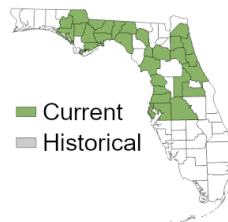
*Astragalus obcordatus* Ell.

**Synonyms:** none

**Family:** Fabaceae (pea)

**FNAI Ranks:** G3G4/S2S3

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



Pinnately compound leaves of Florida milkvetch. © Lilly Anderson-Messec.

**Field Description:** Erect perennial herb with **stems** 4-15 dm long, either glabrous or inconspicuously pubescent. **Leaves** pinnately compound with approximately 15 or more leaflets arranged oppositely to suboppositely. **Leaflets** with distinctly obcordate apices. **Flowers** are light purple, have a typical pea shape, and are arranged in spike-like inflorescences. The **corolla** is 8-11 mm long. The **fruit** is a glabrous, curved pod that turns brown as it matures.

**Similar Species:** The only other species in this genus occurring in Florida is bearded milkvetch (*Astragalus villosus*) which has yellow flowers, distinctly pubescent stems and fruit pods, both with long spreading hairs. Additionally, stems are shorter at 0.5-4 dm long. Bearded milkvetch is fairly common in north and central Florida.

**Related Rare Species:** There are no related rare species in Florida.

**Habitat:** This species grows in longleaf pine sandhill.

**Best Survey Season:** This species flowers in the spring, typically March-April.

## Florida milkvetch

## *Astragalus obcordatus*

**Range-wide Distribution:** Florida milkvetch (*Astragalus obcordatus*) also occurs in southern Alabama and Mississippi.

**Conservation Status:** This species occurs from the central panhandle, across to the northeast of the state, and into the central peninsula. Approximately half of the occurrences in the state are not protected and are vulnerable to impacts from development, road maintenance, and/or silviculture. More information is needed on the size of populations, current habitat conditions where populations are located, and any additional threats this species might be facing.

**Protection and Management:** Sandhill requires frequent prescribed fire to maintain its community structure and species composition, generally every 1-3 years.

**References:** Isely 1998, Weakley 2023



Florida milkvetch plant in flower. © Cami Adams.



Florida milkvetch flowers at Lake Talquin State Forest. Photo by Amy Jenkins.