

## MYRTLE-OF-THE-RIVER

*Calypttranthes zuzygium* (L.) Sw.

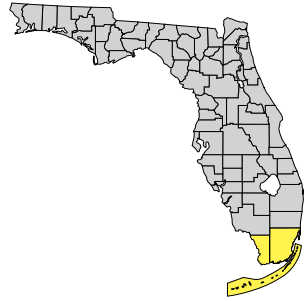
**Synonyms:** *Myrtus zuzygium* L.

**Family:** Myrtaceae (myrtle)

**FNAI Ranks:** G4/S2

**Legal Status:** US—none FL—Endangered

**Wetland Status:** US—UPL FL—UPL



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**Field Description:** Shrub or small tree with distinctive forked **branching** pattern. **Leaves** 1.5 - 2.5 inches long, evergreen, smooth, opposite, simple, entire, oval with short tapering tips, midvein conspicuously raised, tiny glandular dots on both surfaces; leaves have a strong odor when crushed. **Flowers** in small clusters on long stalks arising in the angle of leaf and stem; there are no petals, but many white, showy stamens; **flower buds** open by way of a hinged “lid” in the calyx. **Fruit** a round, waxy black berry with rim.

**Similar Species:** Lidflower (*Calypttranthes pallens*) has the same distinctive flower buds but its leaves are hairy and lack the raised midvein. Stoppers (*Eugenia* spp.) have similar leaves and forked branches but their flowers have petals.

**Related Rare Species:** See redberry stopper (*Eugenia confusa*) and smooth devil’s claw (*Pisonia rotundata*) in this guide.

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# *Calyptranthes zuzygium*

**Habitat:** Rockland hammocks, coastal berm.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowers in early summer and fall, but leaves and branching pattern are distinctive all year.

**Range-wide Distribution:** FL, Bahamas, Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico.

**Conservation Status:** Found in 5 parks and preserves, where it is sometimes locally abundant.

**Protection & Management:** Preserve remaining rockland hammocks by purchase or conservation easement. Eradicate exotic pest plants.

**References:** Coile 2000, Correll and Correll 1982, IRC 1999, Nelson 1994, Nelson 1996, Tomlinson 1980, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

