

BIG PINE PARTRIDGE PEA

Chamaecrista keyensis Pennell

Synonyms: *Cassia keyensis* (Pennell) J. F.

Macbr.; *Chamaecrista lineata* (Sw.) Greene var.

keyensis (Pennell) Irwin & Barneby

Family: Fabaceae (pea)

FNAI Ranks: G5T2/S2

Legal Status: US-Endangered; FL-none



Camille Eckel

Field Description: Shrub with woody base and several spreading, hairy, non-woody **branches**, 0.3 - 0.8 m tall. **Leaves** 1.5 - 4.1 cm long, alternate, compound with 4 - 7 pairs of oblong, densely hairy **leaflets**; **leaf stalk** with a conspicuous gland below the first set of leaflets. **Flowers** on long stalks in the angle of leaf and stem, about 2 cm across with 5 nearly identical, yellow petals and 10 unequal stamens with red anthers. **Fruit** a pod, 2.5 - 4.1 cm long, flat, oblong, hairy.

Similar Species: Other species of partridge pea in the lower Keys usually are erect and either have more pairs of leaflets, yellow anthers, or flowers less than 1.5 cm across.

Big Pine partridge pea

Chamaecrista keyensis

Related Rare Species: Many pea family species in S FL are rare; see in this guide: pineland pencil-flower (*Stylosanthes calcicola*), Florida prairie clover (*Dalea carthagenensis* var. *floridana*), crenulate lead-plant (*Amorpha herbacea* var. *crenulata*), meadow jointvetch (*Aeschynomene pratensis*), and Small's milkpea (*Galactia smallii*).

Habitat: Pine rocklands.

Best Survey Season: Spring-summer

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to Monroe County and Miami-Dade County, FL.

Conservation Status: Formerly known from several Monroe County keys, this species is now found only on Big Pine Key, where there are an estimated 10,000 plants, many in the National Key Deer Refuge.

Protection and Management: Use prescribed fire to create a mosaic of pine rockland habitats. Eradicate invasive exotic plants. Acquire and manage pine rocklands for conservation. Reintroduce species to former sites on other keys.

References: Bradley and Gann 1999, Coile 2000, IRC 1999, Isely 1990, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

