

## SANDHILL SPINY-POD

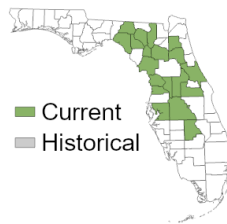
*Chthamalia pubiflora* Decaisne

**Synonyms:** *Matelea pubiflora* (Dcne.) Woods.

**Family:** Apocynaceae (dogbane)

**FNAI Ranks:** G3G4/S3S4

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



Plant a vine lying flat on the ground typically not twining. Sandhill in Spring Creek Unit of Big Bend Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

**Field Description:** A prostrate **herb**, usually not twining, with **stems** 0.2 - 0.6 (-1.1) m long at maturity; **leaf blades** 2 - 4 (-6) cm long; **cymes** sessile; **flowers** (2-) 3 - 4 (-5) per inflorescence; upper (inner) surface of the **petals** pubescent. **Fruits** are spiny follicles that open to release **seeds** with tufts of hairs.

**Similar Species:** See Related rare species section.

**Related Rare Species:** All spiny-pod (*Matelea* sp.) species are rare in Florida. Sandhill spiny-pod is easily differentiated from all other *Matelea* sp. by its prostrate stems, sessile cymes, and 3 - 4 greenish-red flowers with stiff hairy upper petal surfaces. Of these species, this is the only one that grows in xeric sandhill habitat.

## sandhill spiny-pod

*Chthamalia pubiflora*

**Habitat:** Sandhills and scrub.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowering March - early August; fruiting April - late September.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Eastern GA south to Central FL.

**Conservation Status:** Fire exclusion in sandhill and scrub habitat and sand pine plantations threaten the remaining occurrences of this species. Populations generally do not occur in large numbers but rather consist of a few scattered individuals.

**Protection and Management:** Apply prescribed fire within the species habitat at the appropriate fire return intervals (e.g. sandhill: 1 - 3 years). Avoid mechanical forestry operations during the flowering and fruiting period.

**References:** Jones and Coile 1988, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2024, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.



Stem hirsute with long hairs. Leaf base deeply cordate. Spring Creek Unit of Big Bend Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

sandhill spiny-pod

*Chthamalia pubiflora*



Fruit a follicle with sharp projections. Sandhill at Spring Creek Unit of Big Bend Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



Plant a prostrate herb. Restoration sandhill at Spring Creek Unit of Big Bend Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.