

## CHRISTMAS BERRY

*Crossopetalum ilicifolium* (Poir.) Kuntze

**Synonyms:** none

**Family:** Celastraceae (bittersweet)

**FNAI Ranks:** G3/S3

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

**Wetland Status:** US-FACW+ FL-UPL



Amy Jenkins

**Field Description:** Low **shrubs** with spreading, pubescent stems. **Leaves** are coarsely spiny toothed, elliptic to ovate, and 0.4-0.6 inches long, with 0.12-0.27 inch long pedicels. **Flowers** occur in short-peduncled cymes, with red, orbicular petals 0.04 inches long. **Fruit** is a red subglobose drupe, 0.12-0.16 inches long.

**Similar Species:** No

**Related Rare Species:** Rhacoma (*Crossopetalum rhacoma*), state-threatened, has leaf margins that are entire to crenulate instead of spinose.

**Habitat:** Pine rocklands, marl prairies, rockland hammocks; found on sinkhole edges.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowering and fruiting all year.

## Christmas berry

*Crossopetalum ilicifolium*

**Range-wide Distribution:** FL; West Indies (Bahamas, Cuba, Hispaniola)

**Conservation Status:** Occurs within at least 20 conservation areas, primarily in Miami-Dade county.

**Protection and Management:** Protect existing coastal hammocks, pine rocklands, and rockland hammocks from development and degradation. Appears to occur most commonly within pine rocklands along the Miami Rock Ridge on conservation lands surrounding Homestead.

**References:** Long and Lakela 1971, Weakley 2020, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011