

## FLORIDA CUPANIA

*Cupania glabra* Sw.

**Synonyms:** *Cupania multijuga* A. Rich.

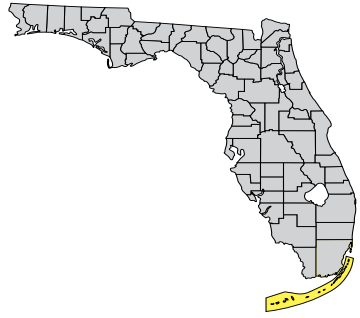
*Cupania excelsa* Kunth

**Family:** Sapindaceae (soapberry)

**FNAI Ranks:** G4/S1

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

**Wetland Status:** US—UPL FL—UPL



Gil Nelson

**Field Description:** Small **tree or shrub** to 40 feet tall, with smooth, splotchy, gray and brown bark. **Leaves** alternate, compound. **Leaflets** 2 - 6 inches long, 5 - 15 per leaf, alternate, oblong, coarsely toothed. **Flowers** white, in large, loose, much-branched clusters; **male and female flowers** usually on separate trees. **Fruit** a 3-lobed, leathery capsule.

**Similar Species:** Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), an invasive exotic shrub, has opposite toothed leaflets with a pungent smell. Carrotwood (*Cupaniopsis anacardioides*), also an invasive exotic species, has swollen leaf stalks and usually an even number of smooth-margined leaflets. Soapberry (*Sapindus saponaria*) leaflets are opposite and connected by wings along the stalk.

**Related Rare Species:** Two other species in the soapberry family are included in this guide: white ironwood (*Hypelate trifoliata*) and small-fruited varnishleaf (*Dodonaea elaeagnoides*).

## Florida cupania

## *Cupania glabra*

**Habitat:** Tropical hammocks of the lower Keys.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowers October–November, fruits the following summer; leaves and bark are distinctive all year.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Monroe County Keys, FL; Jamaica, Cuba, West Indies.

**Conservation Status:** Found only in the Monroe County Keys, on the National Key Deer Refuge and Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge.

**Protection & Management:** Protect remaining tropical hammocks in the Keys from development; control exotic species invasion.

**References:** IRC 1999, Langeland and Burks 1998, Nelson 1996, Tomlinson 1980, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

