

FLORIDA PRAIRIE CLOVER

Dalea floridana (Rydberg) J.T. Diggs & Weakley

Synonyms: *Parosela floridana* Rydberg; *Dalea carthagenensis* (Jacq.) J.F. Macbr. var. *floridana* (Rydb.) Barneby

Family: Fabaceae (pea)

FNAI Ranks: G5T1/S1

Legal Status: US-Endangered; FL-Endangered



Gary Knight



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Field Description: **Shrub** with woody base and red, contorted, velvety, non-woody branches to 1.8 m tall. **Leaves** with 11 - 23 oval, gland-tipped leaflets, gland-dotted on underside. **Flowers** in small, loose heads at ends of hairy, glandular stalks. **Flower** less than 10 mm long; whitish turning maroon; wing, keel, and banner petals are different lengths and shapes; stamens 9 or 10. **Fruit** a tiny, 1-seeded pod, mostly enclosed by the hairy, gland-dotted calyx.

Similar Species: Other prairie-clovers in south FL (*Dalea feayi*, *Dalea carnea*) have hairless stems and leaves and 3 - 9 leaflets per leaf. Their flowers are in dense spikes or heads, and have 5 stamens and 5 similarly shaped petals.

Related Rare Species: Several members of the pea family are rare in south FL. See meadow jointvetch (*Aeschynomene pratensis*), few-flower caesalpinia (*Caesalpinia pauciflora*), Small's milkpea (*Galactia smallii*), and crenulate lead-plant (*Amorpha herbacea* var. *crenulata*) in this guide.

Habitat: Pine rocklands, edges of rockland hammocks, coastal uplands, and marl prairies.

Florida prairie clover

Dalea floridana

Best Survey Season: All year.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to FL; historic populations in Palm Beach County have been destroyed.

Conservation Status: Only 5 populations are known, with a total of fewer than 1000 plants; all are in conservation areas.

Protection and Management: Establish a natural fire regime in pine rocklands, flatwoods, and prairies. Control and limit off-road-vehicles and mountain bikes in conservation areas. Eradicate exotic pest plants. Re-introduce species to historic sites.

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

