

SCRUB MINT

Dicerandra frutescens Shinnery

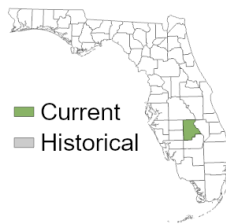
Synonyms: *Dicerandra frutescens* Shinnery
ssp. frutescens; *Dicerandra frutescens*

Shinnery var. *frutescens*

Family: Lamiaceae (mint)

FNAI Ranks: G1/S1S2

Legal Status: US-Endangered; FL-Endangered



Flowers white with 1 - 2 flowers per node; plant aroma mint-like. Photo © Keith Bradley.

Field Description: Short-lived perennial **shrub** that grows to 50 cm tall with spreading to prostrate branches. **Leaves** opposite, typically with 2 smaller leaves per node. **Flowers** typically occur in pairs (although can be singular) and are white (rarely pink) with purple-rose dots. The **corolla** is 1.5 - 1.6 cm long with **fruits** typically having 4 nutlets.

Similar Species: Florida balm (*Dicerandra densiflora*) and coastalplain balm (*Dicerandra linearifolia* var. *robustior*), both occur in longleaf pine sandhills in central Florida and are herbaceous annuals, rather than woody perennials.

Related Rare Species: This species occurs only in Highlands County, Florida while another similar looking species, blushing scrub balm (*Dicerandra modesta*), occurs only in Polk County, Florida. The two species can be differentiated by the number of flowers in a cyme and the corolla color; scrub mint has 1 - 2 white flowers, while blushing scrub balm has 2 - 3+ pinkish-white flowers. Lake Wales balm (*Dicerandra christmanii*) may also be found in the same habitat as scrub mint, but Lake Wales balm has bright yellow anthers

scrub mint

Dicerandra frutescens

that lack glands, while scrub mint has lavender or white anthers with evident glands.

Habitat: Scrub and sandhills; on paths and openings.

Best Survey Season: Summer-fall.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to Highlands County, Florida.

Conservation Status: This species occupies a very limited range (endemic to sandhill and scrub natural communities in a single Central Florida county) and is threatened by ongoing commercial, residential, and agricultural development and fire exclusion. Four occurrences are protected on Conservation Lands as of 2025.

Protection and Management: Reduce sand pine (*Pinus clausa*) overstory and reintroduce fire in fire-excluded sites. Continue to implement prescribed fire at the appropriate intervals for maintenance of sandhill and scrub habitats.

References: Huck 1984, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2024, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.



Anthers white; upper petal lip oblong. Photo © Keith Bradley.