

SMALL-FRUITED VARNISHLEAF

Dodonaea elaeagnoides Rudolph ex Ledeb. & Alderstam

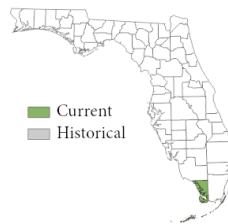
Synonyms: *Dodonaea microcarya* Small;
Dodonaea ehrenbergii Schltldl.

Family: Sapindaceae (soapberry)

FNAI Ranks: G4/S1

Legal Status: US-none FL-Endangered

Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-UPL



Gil Nelson

Field Description: Shrub or small tree to 10 feet tall. **Leaves** 1 - 2 inches long, alternate, simple, entire, evergreen, wider above the middle, with broadly rounded tips and leathery, varnished surfaces; veins inconspicuous. **Female and male flowers** usually on separate plants, with 5 yellow-green sepals and no petals, in elongated, branched clusters on leafy shoots. **Fruit** approximately 0.25 inch long, with 3 papery wings slightly joined at the top.

Similar Species: Varnishleaf (*Dodonaea viscosa*), a common coastal shrub, has winged fruits nearly 1 inch long, with wings not joined at the top; its leaf veins are prominent, and leaves are larger, up to 6 inches long. Seven-year apple (*Genipa clusiifolia*) and (*Scaveola sericea* var. *taccada*) have similar but larger leaves.

small-fruited varnishleaf

Dodonaea elaeagnoides

Related Rare Species: Other members of the soapberry family in this guide: white ironwood (*Hypelate trifoliata*) and Florida cupania (*Cupania glabra*) in this guide.

Habitat: Rockland hammocks, edges of pine rocklands.

Best Survey Season: Summer-fall; fruits spring and summer.

Range-wide Distribution: Monroe County Keys, FL; Bahamas, Cuba, Santa Domingo, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, St. Eustation.

Conservation Status: Five populations known on preserves in Monroe County Keys.

Protection and Management: Protect remaining fragments of tropical hammock in the Keys; control exotic pest plants.

References: Coile 2000, IRC 1999, Leenhouts 1983, Small 1933, Tomlinson 1980, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.