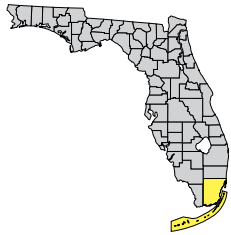
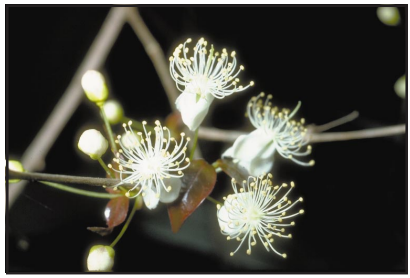
RED STOPPER

Eugenia rhombea Krug & Urban ex Urban
Synonyms: none
Family: Myrtaceae (myrtle)
FNAI Ranks: G5/S1
Legal Status: US–none FL–Endangered
Wetland Status: US–UPL FL–UPL



Eugenia rhombea Gil Nelson

Eugenia confusa Gil Nelson



Eugenia confusa Billy B. Boothe

Field Description (photo, left, and drawing, left): Shrub or small tree to 9 feet tall with smooth, light gray bark. **Leaves** 1.2 - 2.4 inches long, opposite, simple, dull green, leathery, aromatic when crushed; tips elongated, but blunt at the end; margins faintly outlined in yellow, not thickened; lower surface with many small dots. **Flowers** less than 0.5 inch wide, with 4 white, fragrant petals, in clusters on 0.5 inch stalks; petals about the same length as sepals; stamens numerous. **Fruit** a round, red berry, black when ripe.

Similar Species: White stopper (*Eugenia axillaris*) leaves have short, reddish stalks and a musty odor; flower and fruit stalks are hairy, stout, short (less than 0.25 inch).

Related Rare Species (photo, right, and drawing, right): Red-berry stopper (*Eugenia confusa*), state-endangered, resembles red stopper but leaves are shiny, leaf margins are thickened, and leaf tips are abruptly narrowed to a long point; ripe fruits are red. Also see long-stalked stopper (*Psidium longipes*) and myrtle-of-the-river (*Calyptranthes zuzygium*) in this guide.

Red stopper *Eugenia rhombea*

Habitat: Both red stopper and red-berry stopper occur in rockland hammock.

Best Survey Season: Flowers and fruits all year.

Range-wide Distribution: Red stopper: Dade County and Monroe County Keys, FL; West Indies, Mexico, Central and South America. Red-berry stopper: Dade and Martin counties, Monroe County Keys, FL; West Indies.

Conservation Status: About 12 populations of red stopper are known, 8 on conservation areas. Red-berry stopper occurs on about 10 managed areas.

Protection & Management: Purchase and protect remaining fragments of rockland hammock. Eradicate exotic pest plants.

References: Coile 2000, Correll and Correll 1982, IRC 1999, Nelson 1996, Tomlinson 1980, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.