

WOOD SPURGE

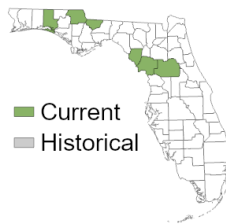
Euphorbia commutata Engelm.

Synonyms: none

Family: Euphorbiaceae (spurge)

FNAI Ranks: G5/S2

Legal Status: US-none; FL-Endangered



Growing along road in Jena Unit of Big Bend Wildlife Management Area.

Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: Biennial or occasionally annual **herbs**; **leaves** and **bracts** of dissimilar length, not uniform throughout the plant; **leaves** alternate and entire with petioles of lower stem leaves 5 - 10 mm long; **leaf blades** usually oblanceolate to obovate, rarely ovate, 3 - 10 mm wide (at least some blades more than 5 mm wide); **dichasial bracts** opposite, not imbricate; **ovaries** glabrous; **horns** (of the glands) slender, elongate, and usually divergent; **capsules** 2.5 - 3.2 mm long; **seeds** 1 - 3 mm long; white to gray, finely pitted with numerous, evenly distributed, isodiametric pits.

Similar Species: See related rare species section.

Related Rare Species: There are numerous rare spurges (*Euphorbia* sp.) in Florida, but none exhibit the strongly erect, branching stems with oblong, alternate leaves, non-overlapping dichasial bracts or occur within calcareous upland hardwood forest in the panhandle and north Florida.

wood spurge

Euphorbia commutata

Habitat: Rich forests and rock outcrops, over calcareous or mafic rocks.

Best Survey Season: Flowering and fruiting March - July.

Range-wide Distribution: PA west to southern ON and MN, south to Northeast and Panhandle FL and Northeast TX.

Conservation Status: The species does not often occur in large numbers and requires a specialized habitat of hardwood forest on calcareous soil. Forestry operations within coastal hardwood hammocks, upland hardwood forest, and slope forest will likely be detrimental to this species persistence.

Protection and Management: Protect coastal hardwood hammocks, upland hardwood forest, and slope forest from forestry practices, such as high-grading of timber. Manage hog populations to reduce effects of digging/rooting on species populations.

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



Involucral gland appendages hornlike; capsules 2.5 - 3.2 mm long. Jena Unit of Big Bend Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

wood spurge

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Leaves usually oblanceolate to obovate. Jena Unit of Big Bend Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



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