

## PINEWOODS ASTER

*Eurybia spinulosa* (Chapman) Nesom

**Synonyms:** *Aster spinulosus* Chapman; *Aster spinulosa*

**Family:** Asteraceae (composite)

**FNAI Ranks:** G1?/S1?

**Legal Status:** US-none; FL-Endangered



Jenna Annis



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**Field Description:** Perennial **herb** with **stems** usually solitary, 30 - 70 cm tall. **Basal leaves** longer than the reduced stem leaves and grass-like, about 10 - 20 cm long; only the midveins are visible. Persistent old, fibrous leaf bases are often present. **Stem leaves** short, stiff, and ascending. Flowers born in radiate **heads** with 3 - 15 per stem in a slightly zigzag raceme, each head about 2.5 cm apart and with one short, stiff leaf below. A whorl of spiny, erect bracts (**involucre**) encloses the base of each head which has white to pink or purple ray flowers and yellow disk flowers. **Pappus** of coarse, reddish bristles.

**Similar Species:** The related thistleleaf aster (*Eurybia eryngiifolia*) is similar but its leaves have spiny teeth along the margins and involucre bracts that are downward pointing.

**Related Rare Species:** Southern pine aster (*Eurybia hemispherica*), state-endangered, has more ray flowers per head (15 - 50) and spreading involucre bracts. There are only two known populations in Washington and Escambia counties, in dry upland woods.

**pinewoods aster**

*Eurybia spinulosa*

**Habitat:** Usually in mesic to wet pine flatwoods, occasionally may be found in wet prairie or savannas with wiregrass, gallberry, and saw palmetto.

**Best Survey Season:** Summer-fall; May - October, usually mid-summer, but plants may be recognizable into early fall.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Endemic to the central Florida Panhandle.

**Conservation Status:** Populations are known from private timber company lands and managed lands including Apalachicola National Forest, Tyndall Air Force Base, St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve, and Box-R Wildlife Management Area. This species is highly threatened by pine plantation conversion and associated drainage, ditching, mechanical clearing, etc. which has already severely degraded habitat in some areas.

**Protection and Management:** Burn flatwoods and good quality pine plantations every 2-4 years. Avoid soil disturbance from mechanical clearing or bedding. Avoid changes to hydrology such as draining, ditching, or firebreak construction.

**References:** Anderson 1986, Coile 2000, Cronquist 1980, Kral 1983, Godfrey and Wooten 1980, Nesom 1994, Tobe et al. 1998, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

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