

PRINCEWOOD

Exostema caribaeum (Jacq.) J.A. Schultes

Synonyms: *Cinchona caribaea* Jacq.

Family: Rubiaceae (coffee)

FNAI Ranks: G5/S2

Legal Status: US-none FL-Endangered

Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-UPL



Gil Nelson



Field Description: Evergreen **shrub or small tree** to about 18 feet tall. **Twigs** conspicuously jointed. **Leaves** 1.2 - 3.2 inches long, opposite, simple, smooth, leathery, lance-shaped to oval, with wavy margins. **Flowers** solitary in leaf axils; white, pink, or orange; the long tube flares into 5 straplike petals with 5 stamens extending beyond flower. **Fruit** a dark brown, woody capsule splitting into 2 segments.

Similar Species: Black torch (*Erithalis fruticosa*) has somewhat jointed twigs but tiny white flowers. Firebush (*Hamelia patens*) is a shrub with orange-red tubular flowers and somewhat jointed twigs, but its leaves are oval, red-veined, and in whorls.

Related Rare Species: Other rare species in the coffee family described in this guide: Coker's beach creeper (*Ernodea cokeri*), small-flowered lily thorn (*Catesbaea*

princewood

Exostema caribaeum

parviflora), pride-of-Big-Pine (*Strumpfia maritima*), and Bahama wild coffee (*Psychotria ligustrifolia*).

Habitat: Rockland hammocks and edges.

Best Survey Season: Flowers all year except March - May; twigs, leaves, and fruit are distinctive all year.

Range-wide Distribution: Dade County Keys, Monroe County Keys, FL; Mexico, Central America, West Indies.

Conservation Status: This species occurs in 9 conservation areas.

Protection and Management: Purchase and preserve remaining fragments of rocklands. Eradicate exotic pest plants. Avoid clearing and other disturbances in hammock edges.

References: Coile 2000, IRC 1999, Nelson 1996, Small 1933, Tomlinson 1980, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.