

GULF COAST SOLITARY BEE

Hesperapis oraria

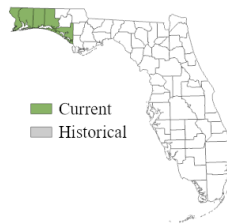
Order: Hymenoptera

Family: Melittidae

FNAI Ranks: G1G2/S1S2

U.S. Status: none

FL Status: none



Description: This is a very hairy, medium sized (ca. 1cm) bee with clear but slightly brown wings and a black and white banded abdomen.

Similar Species: Many other bees would appear similar to those without expertise.

Habitat: Known only from dunes on coastal barrier islands or within 1-2 km of the mainland shore in the northern Gulf of Mexico where its host flower occurs.

Seasonal Occurrence: This bee is active in late September to early October.

Florida Distribution: This species is known from barrier islands and coast from near Panama City west through the Panhandle.

Range-wide Distribution: Barrier islands and coastal dunes from eastern Mississippi to near Panama City, Florida.

Conservation Status: This species only occurs in dunes in certain coastal areas and on islands in the western Florida Panhandle, USA. It has a relatively small range, with its linear range is approximately 200 kilometers of coast, and it is dependent upon the flowers of a single plant: *Balduina angustifolia*.

Protection and Management: Dunes should be protected from any form of development or degradation, including erosion and recreation. Pesticides should not be used in these areas, although that does not appear to be a problem at present. Its host flower should be encouraged and possibly even cultivated.

References: Cane 1996, Hunsberger 2013



Female on *Balduina angustifolia*. © Robert Gundy



Female. Note green eyes. © Robert Gundy