

MANCHINEEL

Hippomane mancinella L.

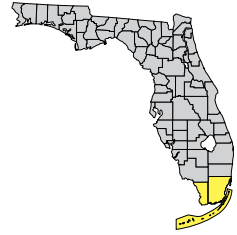
Synonyms: none

Family: Euphorbiaceae (spurge)

FNAI Ranks: G5/S2

Legal Status: US—none FL—Endangered

Wetland Status: US—UPL FL—UPL



Gil Nelson

Field Description: Small tree or shrub with rough, fissured, dark brown or gray bark and toxic milky sap. Leaves 1 - 4.5 inches long, alternate, oval to lance-shaped, slightly toothed, soft, shiny, with conspicuous bright midvein; semi-deciduous; long leaf stalks with large, round gland at point of attachment to leaf. Male and female flowers on short, fleshy stalks at the ends of branches; flowers yellowish-green, inconspicuous, surrounded by yellow glands. Fruits round, yellow-green with pink blush, sweet smelling and apple-like but highly toxic. All parts of the plant are poisonous if handled or eaten.

Similar Species: Wild banyan tree or shortleaf fig (*Ficus citrifolia*) leaves are similarly shaped and have a bright midvein but leaf margins are entire.

Related Rare Species: Other woody species in the spurge family in this guide: Blodgett's wild mercury (*Argythamnia blodgettii*), Bahama maidenbush (*Savia bahamensis*), and milkbark (*Drypetes diversifolia*).

Manchineel

Hippomane mancinella

Habitat: Coastal berms and hammocks in brackish areas just inland of the mangrove zone.

Best Survey Season: Flowers in April; fruits and leaves are present almost all year except for a brief time in mid-winter.

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

Conservation Status: About 20 populations are known in FL, most in parks and preserves.

Protection & Management: Avoid impacts to coastal berms, mangroves, and adjacent thickets.

References: Coile 2000, IRC 1999, Nelson 1996, Tomlinson 1980, Ward 1979, Webster 1967, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

