SPREADING PINWEED
*Lechea divaricata* Shuttlew. ex Britt.

**Synonym:** *Lechea major* L. var. *divaricata* (Shuttlew. ex Britt.) A. Gray

**Family:** Cistaceae (rockrose)

**FNAI Ranks:** G2/S2

**Legal Status:** US–none  FL–Endangered

**Wetland Status:** US–UPL  FL–UPL

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**Field Description:** Perennial herb with slender, erect flowering stems rising from a dense mat of spreading, older stems. Leaves less than 0.4 inch long, alternate, narrowly oval with pointed tips, disappearing by flowering time. Flowers in tight clusters at ends of short branches, with 3 tiny, purple or green petals, dropping quickly after opening, and 5 sepals, outer sepals shorter than inner. Fruit a tiny, hard capsule, longer than the sepals, does not split into segments when mature. Entire plant covered with spreading, gray hairs.

**Similar Species:** Hairy pinweed (*Lechea mucronata*) leaves are longer than 0.6 inch; the capsule is about the same height as the calyx and splits into 3’s at maturity. Deckert’s pinweed (*Lechea deckertii*) has wiry, woody branches and its leaves are smooth on the upper surfaces.

**Related Rare Species:** Lakela’s pinweed (*Lechea lakelae*), state-endangered, has smooth stems, leaves, and sepals; it was known from coastal strand in Collier County but is probably extinct. Nodding pinweed (*Lechea cernua*), state-threatened, is found in scrub.
Spreading pinweed  

*Lechea divaricata*

**Habitat:** Scrub and scrubby flatwoods.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowers May–October.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Endemic to peninsular FL.

**Conservation Status:** Spreading pinweed occurs on 16 conservation areas.

**Protection & Management:** Apply prescribed fire in scrub to maintain a mosaic of habitats and sandy openings. Purchase and protect scrub sites on Lake Wales and Atlantic Coastal Ridge.