

BRITTLE THATCH PALM

Leucothrinax morrisii (H. Wendl.) C. Lewis & Zona

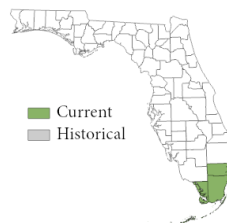
Synonyms: *Thrinax morrisii* H. Wendl.

Family: Arecaceae (palm)

FNAI Ranks: G4G5/S3

Legal Status: US-none FL-Threatened

Wetland Status: US-FAC+ FL-UPL



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Field Description: A small palm up to 20 feet tall, often with an enlarged root mass at its base. Its leaves are a green above with whitish/silverish undersides and petioles that split at the base. The white fruit is small with almost no stalk (may appear sessile). The flowers are creamy white on long, arching inflorescences.

Similar Species: Very similar to *T. radiata*, but with whiter leaf undersides and petioles split at the base. In the Lower Keys, *T. morrisii* is often found growing in association with *T. radiata*. As with *T. radiata*, it is difficult to transplant as it ties its roots into the caprock.

Related Rare Species: None.

Habitat: On calcareous soils in rockland hammocks, pine rocklands, upper rock barrens and larger coastal berms. Cultivated in South Florida.

brittle thatch palm

Leucothrinax morrisii

Best Survey Season: Spring.

Range-wide Distribution: South Florida and the West Indies.

Conservation Status: Listed state-threatened and tracked as vulnerable, this species is vouchered in three counties in South Florida.

Protection and Management: Cultivated in South Florida. Protect rockland hammocks and coastal berms from clearing, development and erosion. Eradicate invasive plant species.

References: Wunderlin and Hansen 2011, Little 1979.