CARTER’S FLAX
Linum carteri Small

Synonyms: Cathartolinum carteri (Small) Small
Linum rigidum Pursh var. carteri (Small) C. M. Rogers

Family: Linaceae (flax)
FNAI Ranks: G2T1/S1
Legal Status: US–Candidate  FL–Endangered
Wetland Status: US–FACW  FL–FACW

Field Description: Annual herb 4 - 24 inches tall with smooth, narrowly wing-angled stems. Leaves 0.4 - 1.2 inches long, very narrow, alternate, often with a pair of small red glands at the base, upper leaves gland-toothed. Flowers about 0.5 inch wide, with 5 yellow-orange petals and 5 gland-toothed sepals; style undivided for almost entire length. Fruit a rounded capsule, opening into 5 segments; sepals shed by time of fruit maturity, not persisting at base of fruit.

Similar Species: All other species of Linum in Florida have distinctly 5-parted styles and fruits with persistent sepals (see drawing of sand flax, Linum arenicola). A south FL form of piriqueta (Piriqueta caroliniana, syn. Piriqueta glabrescens) has similar, but paler yellow flowers with hairy sepals and flower stalks; its leaves are narrow and alternate but lack the red glands.

Related Rare Species: Small’s flax (Linum carteri var. smallii) lacks the red glands at base of the leaf. Also see in this guide West’s flax (Linum westii) and sand flax (Linum arenicola).
**Carter’s flax**  

**Linum carteri var. carteri**

**Habitat:** Carter’s flax: pine rockland. Small’s flax: pine rocklands, pine flatwoods, adjacent disturbed areas.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowers and fruits Feb–May, flowers opening in morning, shedding petals by mid-day.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Carter’s flax: Endemic to Dade County. Small’s flax: southern peninsular FL.

**Conservation Status:** Carter’s flax: 9 known occurrences, 3 on conservation lands. Small’s flax: 11 known occurrences, 6 on conservation lands.

**Protection & Management:** Purchase and protect remaining fragments of pine rockland. Re-establish plants in conservation areas. Apply prescribed fire every 3 - 7 years to create a mosaic of rockland habitats. Eradicate exotic pest plants.