

HARPER'S FLAX

Linum harperi Small

Synonyms: *Linum sulcatum* Riddell var. *harperi* (Small) Rogers

Family: Linaceae (flax)

FNAI Ranks: G5T2/SU

Legal Status: US-none FL-none



No Image
Available

Field Description: Herbs, annual, 25–85 cm, glabrous. Stems erect to ascending, unbranched proximally, few to many branches above middle, conspicuously sulcate. Leaves: proximal 0–13 pairs opposite (often fallen at anthesis), distal alternate, appressed-ascending; stipular glands usually present, very rarely absent; blade linear to narrowly lanceolate, 7–30 × 1–3 mm, margins entire, distal leaves not ciliate, apex acute to subulate; midrib prominent, marginal nerves less conspicuous. Inflorescences open panicles; bracts glandular-toothed, not ciliate; consisting of 1 or more elongate and racemiform branches. Pedicels 1.3–4.7 mm. Flowers: sepals persistent, lanceolate, 2.3–3.5 mm long, inner sepals more delicate than outer, shorter, margins not scarious, all very conspicuously glandular-toothed, apex acuminate, central and marginal veins conspicuous; petals pale yellow, obovate, 5–10 mm; stamens 3.3–5.7 mm; anthers 0.3–0.7 mm; staminodia absent; styles connate 0.2–1.8 mm at base, 2–4.5 mm; stigmas capitate. Capsules globose, 2.5–3.3 × 2.1–3 mm, apex rounded to acute, dehiscing freely into 10, sharp-pointed, 1-seeded segments; segments persistent on plant, false septa incomplete, margins prominently ciliate. Seeds 1.6–2.1 × 0.8–1.1 mm. 2n = 30. (FNA 2024, Weakly 2023)

Similar Species: There are many species of flax (*Linum* sp.) in and around Florida, many of which are very similar to Harper's flax (*Linum harperi*) the most similar species is grooved yellow flax (*Linum sulcatum*) which does not occur in Florida, but does occur in the surrounding states. The sepals of Harper's flax are smaller 2.3-3.5mm and acute, while grooved yellow flax are generally 3.6-5mm long and acuminate. Both species have capsules which dehisce in 10 1-seeded segments, which differentiates them from other flax species in the area. (Weakly 2023).

Related Rare Species: There are many species of flax (*Linum* sp.) in and around Florida, many of which are very similar to Harper's flax (*Linum harperi*) the most similar species is grooved yellow flax (*Linum sulcatum*) which does not occur in Florida, but does occur in the surrounding states. The sepals of Harper's flax are smaller 2.3-3.5mm and acute, while grooved yellow flax are generally 3.6-5mm long and acuminate. Both species have capsules which dehisce in 10 1-seeded segments, which differentiates them from other flax species in the area. (Weakly 2023).

Habitat: Found in site-prepped areas.

Best Survey Season: Flowering and fruiting July - August.

Range-wide Distribution: Harper's flax (*Linum harperi*) is known from the Florida panhandle, as well as, south Georgia and south Alabama.

Conservation Status: Very few known occurrences makes the species quite rare.

Protection and Management: Little is known about the current status of this species in managed areas in Florida.

References: Weakly 2023.