

BARBARA'S BUTTONS

Marshallia obovata var. *obovata* (Walt.)

Beadle & F.E. Boynt.

Synonyms: *Marshallia obovata* (Walt.) Beadle

& F.E. Boynt. var. *platyphylla* (M.A. Curtis)

Beadle & F.E. Boynton; *Athanasia obovata*

Walter

Family: Asteraceae (composite)

FNAI Ranks: G4G5T3T5/S2

Legal Status: US-none; FL-Endangered



Leaves basally disposed; solitary flower head. Photo by Amy Jenkins.

Field Description: Perennial **herb** 10 - 60 cm tall. **Leaves** mostly basal (distal slightly reduced); basal petiolate; blades 3-nerved, elliptic, oblanceolate, or spatulate, 5 - 10 cm by 5 - 15 mm. **Heads** 1 - 2, 20 - 30 mm diam. **Peduncles** 20 - 40 cm. **Phyllaries** 5 - 10 by 2 - 3 mm, apices obtuse. **Paleae** linear-spatulate, apices obtuse. **Corollas** white, lobes 2.5 - 6.0 by 0.5 - 1.0 mm. **Pappi:** scale margins entire or denticulate. **2n** = 18

Similar Species: Gulf Coast Barbara's buttons (*Marshallia angustifolia*), a relatively common plant in Northern Florida, can be differentiated from Barbara's buttons by the phyllaries with acuminate-subulate tips, typically the plants have 3 or more heads.

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Related Rare Species: Barbara's buttons and Southern Barbara's buttons (*Marshallia ramosa*), state-endangered and federal management concern are both found in the Florida panhandle. Barbara's buttons can be differentiated from Southern Barbara's buttons by the number of flowering heads. Barbara's buttons are solitary, while Southern Barbara's buttons will generally have 2 - 10 heads.

Habitat: Open hammocks, upland pine, and dry sandhills.

Best Survey Season: Spring; April.

Range-wide Distribution: Barbara's buttons: VA, NC, SC, GA, AL, FL.

Conservation Status: The species occurs in a relatively small range, but about half are on Conservation Lands. Many of the populations occur along roadsides and may be subjects to road maintenance activities like herbicide use and mowing. This species has a limited and fragmented population in Florida making it vulnerable.

Protection and Management: Burn sandhill and upland pine every 2 - 3 years.

References: Channell 1957, Coile 2000, Cronquist 1980, Guala and Gordon 1992, Kral 1983, Patrick et al. 1995, Ward 1979, Watson and Estes 1990, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2024.



Outer phyllaries oblong and rounded at tip. Photo by Amy Jenkins.