

CAROLINA MILKVINE

Matelea flavidula (Chapman) Woods.

Synonyms: none

Family: Apocynaceae (dogbane)

FNAI Ranks: G3?/S1

Legal Status: US-none FL-Endangered

Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-none



Growing mid-slope on upland hardwood forest. Photo taken at Joe Budd WMA by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: A twining, herbaceous vine with milky sap, cordate leaves, and cymes with flowers averaging 9-19 per inflorescence. Flowers with greenish-yellow corollas in a horizontal plane or reflexed; coronas 10-lobed; 5 short broad lobes alternating with 5 narrower 2-toothed lobes. Corolla lobes 1.5-2.6x as long as wide.

Similar Species: Other spiny-pod species (*Matelea* sp.) have similar leaves and all have muricate, or spiny fruits. Florida spiny-pod (*M. floridana*) has a dark red corolla with coronas 5-lobed and each lobe with 4 teeth. Baldwyn's spiny-pod (*M. baldwyniana*) has white flowers with corollas erect and sometimes slightly twisted. The most similar species in flower is Alabama spiny-pod (*M. alabamensis*), which has flowers with light green corollas reticulated with dark green; the corona is disk-shaped with smooth or obscure ridges.

Carolina milkvine

Matelea flavidula

Related Rare Species: Other spiny-pod species (*Matelea* sp.) have similar leaves and all have muricate, or spiny fruits. Florida spiny-pod (*M. floridana*) has a dark red corolla with coronas 5-lobed and each lobe with 4 teeth. Baldwyn's spiny-pod (*M. baldwyniana*) has white flowers with corollas erect and sometimes slightly twisted. The most similar species in flower is Alabama spiny-pod (*M. alabamensis*), which has flowers with light green corollas reticulated with dark green; the corona is disk-shaped with smooth or obscure ridges.

Habitat: Bluff forests, upland hardwood forests, and upland glade edges.

Best Survey Season: Summer.

Range-wide Distribution: A southeastern coastal plain endemic, occurring sporadically from SC to north FL and west to AL.

Conservation Status: There are only two populations occurring on protected land, including the most recent discovery of the element on the Rocky Comfort tract of Lake Talquin State Forest.

Protection and Management: Protect upland hardwood forests, bluff forests, and upland glades from conversion to urban, suburban, and agricultural uses.

References: Weakley 2020, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011



Green to yellow finely reticulate flowers; flower lobes about 0.24-0.6" long and

Florida Natural Areas Inventory, 2000

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coronas cup-shaped. Photo taken at Joe Budd WMA by Kelly Anderson.



Leaves simple and opposite; leaf base cordate; plant has milky sap. Photo taken at Joe Budd WMA by Kelly Anderson.



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