

PINELAND BLACKANTHERS

Melanthera parvifolia Small

Synonyms: none

Family: Asteraceae (composite)

FNAI Ranks: G2Q/S2S3

Legal Status: US-none; FL-Threatened



Leaf blades ovate to three lobed. Flower stalks 2.5 - 10 cm long. Growing in wet prairie with marl at Okaloacoochee Slough Wildlife Management Area.

Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: Fertile plants 0.2 - 1 m tall; main stems 2 - 5 (-7) mm wide at the base of plant; petiole 0 - 5 mm long; larger leaf blades 0.5 - 4 cm wide; inflorescence head 0.6 - 1.8 cm wide with 18 - 75 flowers; larger phyllaries 1.5 - 3.0 mm wide; corollas 4.5 - 6.5 mm long; leaf blades ovate to 3-lobed, rarely elliptic, 1 - 4 times as long as wide; peduncles 2.5 - 10 cm long; phyllaries 4.5 - 7 mm long; paleae 5.5 - 7.0 mm long

Similar Species: Snow squarestem (*M. nivea*), which is characterized by fertile plants 0.5 - 2.2 m tall; main stems (2-) 4 - 15 mm wide at the base of the plant; petiole (2-) 5 - 40 mm long; larger leaf blades (2.5-) 4 - 12 cm wide; inflorescence head 0.8 - 3.2 cm wide with 30 - 100 flowers; larger phyllaries (2.5-) 3 - 4 mm wide; corollas 7 - 9 mm long

pineland blackanthers

Melanthera parvifolia

Related Rare Species: Can be confused with snow squarestem (*Melanthera nivea*), which is characterized by fertile plants 0.5 - 2.2 m tall; main stems (2-) 4 - 15 mm wide at the base of the plant; petiole (2-) 5 - 40 mm long; larger leaf blades (2.5-) 4 - 12 cm wide; inflorescence head 0.8 - 3.2 cm wide with 30 - 100 flowers; larger phyllaries (2.5-) 3 - 4 mm wide; corollas 7 - 9 mm long

Habitat: Moist to dry hammocks, pine flatwoods, pine rocklands and coastal strand; disturbed areas.

Best Survey Season: Flowering and fruiting all year.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to south peninsular FL

Conservation Status: Occurs in >20 conservation areas throughout south FL and is imperiled. Most common on the Miami Rock Ridge and in Big Cypress (IRC 2022).

Protection and Management: Protect existing pine rocklands and mesic flatwoods through conservation and appropriate prescribed fire management. Eradicate invasive plant species within known locations.

References: Gann, Stocking, and Collaborators 2022, Long and Lakela 1971, Small 1933, Weakley 2020, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011



Flower 0.6 - 1.8 cm wide; corollas 4.5 - 6.5 mm long. Growing in wet prairie with marl at Okaloacoochee Slough Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



Leaf blades ovate to three lobed. Growing in mesic flatwoods at Okaloacoochee Slough Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



Growing in wet prairie with marl at Okaloacoochee Slough Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.