

ANTILLEAN TREE CACTUS

Pilosocereus millspaughii (Britton) Byles & G.D. Rowley

Synonyms: *Pilosocereus polygonus* (Lam.) Byl. & Rowl.

Family: Cactaceae (cactus)

FNAI Ranks: GNR/SX

Legal Status: US-none; FL-Endangered



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Field Description: **Tree** or **shrub** cactus with unsegmented, columnar, and glabrous **stems**. **Flowers** nocturnal or curpuscular. Flowering **areoles** both tomentose with hairs less than 5 mm long and silky with the silken hairs greater than 8 mm long and ca. 25 - 37 μ m wide, are visibly conspicuous and exserted, dense and generally parallel and straight to slightly curved; **spines** to 7 cm long.

Similar Species: See related rare species section.

Related Rare Species: There are two rare species of tree cactus (*Pilosocereus* sp.) in Florida: Antillean tree cactus and Key tree cactus (*Pilosocerus robinii*). The flowering areoles in Antillean tree cactus have tomentose hairs that are visibly conspicuous and exserted, dense, and generally straight and parallel, while Key tree cactus' tomentose hairs are visibly inconspicuous and densely matted, intertwined, bent, curled, and irregular. Additionally, the spines of the Antillean tree cactus are up to 7 cm long, while the Key tree cactus spines are only up to 3 cm long.

Antillean tree cactus

Pilosocereus millspaughii

Habitat: Rockland hammocks.

Best Survey Season: March - September.

Range-wide Distribution: South FL (Key Largo); West Indies (southern Bahamas, central Cuba, and Hispaniola).

Conservation Status: Extirpated.

Protection and Management: None, population is extirpated.

References: Franck et al. 2019, Weakley 2022, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.



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