

## BLUEFLOWER BUTTERWORT

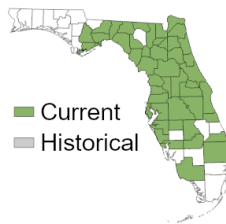
*Pinguicula caerulea* Walt.

**Synonyms:** none

**Family:** Lentibulariaceae (butterwort)

**FNAI Ranks:** G4/S3S4

**Legal Status:** US-none; FL-Threatened



Leaves in a basal rosette, carnivory with slimy upper leaf surfaces. Wet flatwoods at Aucilla Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

**Field Description:** Perennial, carnivorous **herb** with fleshy, yellow-green leaves, **rosettes** usually 5 - 10 (-15) cm across. Glandular hairs on the upper **leaves, flower stalks,** and **calyx** exude a sticky substance that traps small insects, such as ants. Expanded **corolla** greater than 1.8 cm across; **palate** markedly exserted from the throat of the corolla; **corolla** violet, expanded portion of corolla markedly 'veiny' (darker along the veins); **seeds** (0.4-) 0.5 - 0.8 mm long.

**Similar Species:** Blueflower butterwort is unmistakable in bloom since it is the only Florida butterwort with a large, purple, conspicuously veined flower.

**Related Rare Species:** Chapman's butterwort (*Pinguicula planifolia*), state-threatened, has broad reddish leaves and purple flowers. Other butterworts are hard to identify without flowers. Primrose-flowered butterwort (*Pinguicula primuliflora*), state-endangered, has flowers with purple petals, a white ring above the throat, and a yellow tube with reddish veins. Yellow-flowered butterwort (*Pinguicula lutea*), also state-threatened, occurs in well drained, rarely inundated habitats. Godfrey's butterwort (*Pinguicula*

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*Pinguicula caerulea*

*ionantha*), state-endangered, has a distinctive large pale purple to white corolla with a palate that protrudes from its throat.

**Habitat:** Pine flatwoods and wet prairies.

**Best Survey Season:** Winter-spring.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Southeast NC (Carteret and Johnston counties) south to South peninsular FL, west to the eastern Panhandle FL.

**Conservation Status:** This species is vouchered from much of the Florida peninsula and some counties of the eastern panhandle. Threats include forestry operations and fire exclusion.

**Protection and Management:** Butterworts prefer open sunny areas and are sensitive to soil disturbance. Prairies and flatwoods should be burned every 2-4 years and heavy machinery should be excluded from wetlands. Maintenance of natural hydrology is critical.

**References:** Godfrey and Wooten 1981, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2024, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.



Flowers lilac with streaks of purple appearing 'veiny'. Expanded flowers over 1.8 cm across. Ecotone of basin swamp and restoration mesic flatwoods at Aucilla Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

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*Pinguicula caerulea*



Carnivory via the slimy upper leaf surface. Ecotone of wet prairie and pond cypress depression at Lafayette Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area.  
Photo by Ethan Hughes.



Growing in mesic flatwoods at Aucilla Wildlife Management Area. Photo by  
Kelly Anderson.