

FLORIDA KEYS BLACKBEAD

Pithecellobium keyense Britt. ex Britt. & Rose

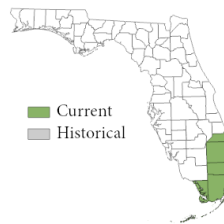
Synonyms: none

Family: Fabaceae (pea)

FNAI Ranks: G4G5/SNR

Legal Status: US-none FL-Threatened

Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-FAC



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Field Description: A large shrub to small tree, usually highly branched, with gray bark. Leaves are pinnately compound with four, yellow-green leaflets. A distinguishing characteristic of Florida Keys blackbead is having a petiole that is shorter than the stalk between the two pairs of leaflets. Flowers are clustered into tight, globose heads and have long showy stamens that vary from white to pink. Fruits are distinctive long, coiled pods that split open to expose black seeds, each partially enclosed by a red aril.

Similar Species: Of the other species in the State, Florida Keys Blackbead (*P. keyense*) has mostly glabrous inflorescences axes, the largest leaflets (3-) that average 4-5 (-9) cm long, and branches that are usually unarmed.

Related Rare Species: None.

Habitat: Coastal rockland hammocks and barrens.

Florida Keys blackbead

Pithecellobium keyense

Best Survey Season: Winter-spring.

Range-wide Distribution: South Florida, the West Indies, Mexico, and Central America.

Conservation Status: Listed state-threatened and tracked as vulnerable in Florida, this species is vouchered from 6 counties in south Florida.

Protection and Management: Protect rockland hammocks and barrens from clearing, development and erosion. Eradicate invasive plant species.

References: Wunderlin and Hansen 2011, Little 1979.