

## TINY POLYGALA

*Polygala smallii* R.R. Sm. & D.B. Ward

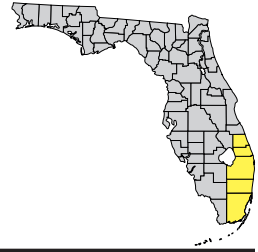
**Synonym:** *Polygala arenicola* Small

**Family:** Polygalaceae (milkwort)

**FNAI Ranks:** G1/S1

**Legal Status:** US–Endangered FL–Endangered

**Wetland Status:** US–none FL–UPL



Roger Hammer

**Field Description:** Perennial **herb** with 1 - 4 usually unbranched stems to 4 inches tall; if branches are present, they are often buried in sand and the plants appear tufted. **Leaves** to 0.5 inch wide and 2 inches long, often taller than the flower heads, lance-shaped and slightly wider toward the tip, alternate, succulent, crowded on the stem. **Flowers** small, numerous in a crowded head at the top of the stem, yellow-green, with 2 wing-like sepals, 3 small sepals, and petals fused into a keel with a projecting fringe.

**Similar Species:** Bachelor's buttons or candyroot (*Polygala nana*) flowers are usually bright yellow, sometimes greenish-yellow; its leaves are distinctly wider at the tip, almost spoon-shaped. It occurs in wet pine flatwoods.

**Related Rare Species:** See Lewton's milkwort (*Polygala lewtonii*) in this guide.

## Tiny polygala

## *Polygala smallii*

**Habitat:** Pine rockland, scrub, sandhill, and open coastal spoil piles.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowers all year.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Endemic to Atlantic Coast Ridge of SE FL.

**Conservation Status:** Of 11 known populations, 7 occur in managed areas and 4 occur on lands that may soon be purchased for conservation.

**Protection & Management:** Purchase and protect intact habitats on the Atlantic Coast Ridge. Use prescribed fire to create and maintain sandy openings. Eradicate exotic pest plants. Monitor known populations.

**References:** Bradley and Gann 1995, Coile 2000, IRC 1999, USFWS 1998, Smith and Ward 1976, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

