

SMALL'S JOINTWEED

Polygonella myriophylla (Small) Horton

Synonyms: *Dentoceras myriophylla* Small;
Polygonum dentoceras T.M. Schust. & Reveal

Family: Polygonaceae (buckwheat)

FNAI Ranks: G3/S3

Legal Status: US-Endangered; FL-Endangered



Field Description: Low **shrub** with sprawling, zigzag **branches**, rooting at nodes and forming low mats; branches with reddish-brown, cracked bark. **Leaves** tiny, needle-like, with **ocrea** (papery sheaths) surrounding the stems; **ocrea** without bristles. **Flowers** very small, with 5 showy, white sepals and no petals, in clusters at ends of erect branches.

Similar Species: Tall jointweed (*Polygonella gracilis*) is erect, unbranched, and leafless most of the year. October flower (*Polygonella polygama*) is also erect, although lower stems may be spreading. Large-flowered jointweed (*Polygonella robusta*) has bristly ocrea and large, pinkish flowers.

Related Rare Species: Large-leaved jointweed (*Polygonella macrophylla*), state-threatened, is a small, erect shrub with broad, spoon-shaped leaves found in Panhandle coastal scrub; its flowers may be red or white. Also see Florida jointweed (*Polygonella basiramia*) in this guide.

Habitat: Open, sandy areas within scrub; mostly on white sands.

Best Survey Season: Flowers and fruits all year.

Small's jointweed

Polygonella myriophylla

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to ridges of central FL.

Conservation Status: Scrub habitat has been greatly reduced, and fewer than 150 populations remain; many of these are protected in 10 parks and conservation areas.

Protection and Management: Small's jointweed requires large-scale natural disturbance, such as catastrophic fire, every 10 - 40 years, to create openings in scrub for seed germination.

References: Coile 2000, Hawkes and Menges 1996, Kral 1983, Lewis and Crawford 1995, Menges and Kohfeldt 1995, USFWS 1998, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

