

MICCOSUKEE GOOSEBERRY

Ribes echinellum (Coville) Rehd.

Synonyms: *Grossularia echinella* Coville

Family: Grossulariaceae (gooseberry)

FNAI Ranks: G1/S1

Legal Status: US-Threatened; FL-Endangered



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Field Description: Low, spiny **shrub** to 1 m tall, forming small thickets. **Stems** with shredding bark, rooting at the tips where they touch the soil. **Leaves** less than 2.5 cm long, simple, alternate, 3-lobed with each lobe toothed, veins spread outward from the top of the leaf stalk into the lobes; deciduous in summer, with new leaves appearing in fall and overwintering. Pale green **flowers**, hanging from long stalks and usually solitary, with 5 small **petals** and 5 conspicuous, spreading **sepals**; **stamens** dangle well below the petals and sepals. The round, glandular-hairy **floral tube** matures into a very spiny **berry**, less than 2.5 cm wide.

Similar Species: Immature parsley haw (*Crataegus marshallii*) shrubs have been mistaken for Miccosukee gooseberry. Thorns of parsley haw are single; gooseberry thorns are often forked. Parsley haw is deciduous in the winter, and the leaf veins spread out from along a central midvein.

Related Rare Species: None.

Habitat: Mixed hardwood or beech-magnolia forests on slopes and in bottomlands.

Miccosukee gooseberry

Ribes echinellum

Best Survey Season: Spring; March, fruit mature in April and May. Leaves (except during summer), spines, and stems are distinctive all year.

Range-wide Distribution: Known only from Jefferson County, FL (type locality) and McCormick County, SC.

Conservation Status: All known sites in FL are on private lands; one population is protected by conservation easement.

Protection and Management: Avoid logging and changes to hydrology. Monitor and control invasive species such as Chinese privet and Japanese honeysuckle.

References: Coile 2000, Coville 1924, Federal Register 1984, Federal Register 1985, Godfrey 1988, Harper 1925, Kral 1983, Reed and Cruz 1997, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

