

SMOOTH-SEEDED HAIRY NUTRUSH

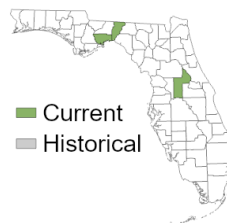
Scleria bellii LeBlond

Synonyms: *Scleria* sp. 1

Family: Cyperaceae (sedge)

FNAI Ranks: G3/S1

Legal Status: US-none; FL-none



Leaves 3 - 7 mm wide, ciliate with stiff hairs on margins and primary veins, rarely with hairs between the veins. Mesic flatwoods at Aucilla Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: A small herb with **achene** body smoothish with broad low rises, epapillate except for a few retrorse pappi at the very base, sometimes a faint transverse ridge near the base; achene including **hypogynium** 2.5 - 3.2 (-3.4) mm long, 2.3 - 2.7 mm wide; **hypogynium disk** 1.4 - 1.8 (-2.1) mm wide, 0.1 - 0.2 (-0.3) mm thick; tubercles 6 (rarely 3 deeply lobed); longer cilia on **terminal inflorescence** primary bract 1.1 - 2.2 mm; longer **pistillate scale keel** cilia 0.5 - 1.0 mm; leaf blades (2.5-) 3 - 7 mm wide, ciliate with stiff hairs on margins and primary veins, rarely with a few stiff hairs between the veins, lacking fine puberulent hairs.

Similar Species: In the field, this very rare species resembles fringed nutrush (*Scleria pauciflora*), fringed nutrush (*Scleria ciliata*), and broad-leaved hairy nutrush (*Scleria ciliata* var. *elliottii*). From the former, its seeds are longer (2.5 - 3.5 mm long vs. 2.5 mm or less long). From the latter two species, its seed surface has low, indistinct bumps (tubercles) vs. abundant, distinctly raised bumps in those two species.

Related Rare Species: There are no other closely related rare species in Florida. Florida Keys nutrush (*Scleria lithosperma* var. *lithosperma*), a watchlist species, from south Florida is quite different from smooth-seeded hairy nutrush.

Habitat: Coastal prairies, wet pine savannas shallowly underlain by coquina limestone in the Coastal Plain.

Best Survey Season: May - September

Range-wide Distribution: Currently known from scattered sites from NC south to FL and west to TX; disjunct in Mexico and Cuba.

Conservation Status: Only two populations are currently known in Florida. Portions of both populations are located on a roadside and a powerline right-of-way where they are subject to habitat management techniques that may or may not be beneficial to their persistence in the habitat.

Protection and Management: Work with powerline company in the management of right-of-ways to avoid habitat management techniques that would be deleterious to the element (e.g. herbicide treatments).

References: LeBlond et al. 2015, NatureServe 2025, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2024.



Achene body smoothish except at base. Mesic flatwoods at Aucilla Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

smooth-seeded hairy nutrush

Scleria bellii



Seed surface has low, indistinct bumps. Tubercles typically six. Photo © Scott Ward.



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