

GEORGIA MILKWORT

Senega leptostachys (Shuttlew. ex A. Gray) J.F.B.

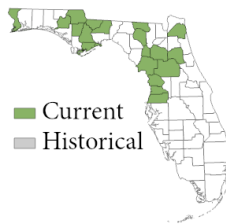
Pastore & J.R. Abbott

Synonyms: *Polygala leptostachys* Shuttlew. ex Gray

Family: Polygalaceae (milkwort)

FNAI Ranks: G3G4/S3S4

Legal Status: US-none; FL-none



Photos by Floyd Griffith

Field Description: Annual herb with one erect stem to about 15 cm tall. Leaves linear, whorled in groups of 3 - 5 leaves along the main stem. Flowers small, numerous, borne in a raceme with asynchronous flowering. Sepals white with green midvein. Petals white and yellow.

Similar Species: Coastalplain milkwort (*Polygala setacea*) does not have whorled leaves; its leaves are reduced to a 1 mm long scale. Coastalplain Milkwort is found in wetter habitats including flatwoods and bogs. Whorled milkwort (*Polygala verticillata*) has multiple racemes and flowers are typically tinted rose pink.

Related Rare Species: Tiny milkwort (*Polygala smallii*) and Lewton's milkwort (*Polygala lewtonii*) are endemic to Florida.

Georgia milkwort

Senega leptostachys

Habitat: Sandhill and ruderal areas with dry, sandy soil.

Best Survey Season: Flowers summer-fall.

Range-wide Distribution: Primarily in northern Florida. Also in southern Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi.

Conservation Status: This species is currently not protected at the federal or state level. Threatened by habitat loss due to conversion for agriculture and housing.

Protection and Management: To maintain high quality habitat, growing season prescribed fires should occur every 1-3 years.

References: Small 1933, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011, Wunderlin et al. 2018