

LACE-LIP LADIES'-TRESSES

Spiranthes laciniata (Small) Ames

Synonyms: none

Family: Orchidaceae (orchid)

FNAI Ranks: G4G5/S3S4

Legal Status: US-none FL-Threatened

Wetland Status: US-FACW++ FL-FACW



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Field Description: Terrestrial orchid, 20-95 cm tall, densely pubescent with capitate (ball-tipped) hairs. Leaves are lanceolate. The flowers are 10-50 in a single rank, spiraled or second; sepals and petals are similar, white to ivory with an oblong lip, the apex undulate-lacerate, the central portion of the lip, yellow; individual flower size about 1 cm.

Similar Species: This species is easily distinguished from the more common *Spiranthes vernalis*, which it resembles, by its balled-tipped hairs rather than the pointed articulate hairs found on *S. vernalis*. It typically flowers later than *S. vernalis*.

Related Rare Species: This species is easily distinguished from the more common *Spiranthes vernalis*, which it resembles, by its balled-tipped hairs rather than the pointed articulate hairs found on *S. vernalis*. It typically flowers later than *S.*

lace-lip ladies'-tresses

Spiranthes laciniata

vernalis.

Habitat: Hypericum-sedge marshes and open cypress swamps. Also found in wet grassy roadsides, ditches, swamps, and shallow open water, often in the prairies of the southern counties.

Best Survey Season: Spring-summer; May - July

Range-wide Distribution: Found in the southeastern United States. Throughout Florida.

Conservation Status: The long-term viability of Ladies'-tresses may require active management, such as invasive species removal and/or periodic mowing, in order to maintain ideal habitat conditions for this species. Excessive deer browse may also be a threat. This species can be difficult to survey because of its inconspicuous and unpredictable nature.

Protection and Management: Fire exclusion and competition from invasive exotic plants contribute to the decline of this species.

References: Brown, P.M. 2002. Wild Orchids of Florida. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.