

COOLEY'S MEADOWRUE

Thalictrum cooleyi Ahles

Synonyms: none

Family: Ranunculaceae (buttercup)

FNAI Ranks: G1/S1

Legal Status: US-Endangered; FL-Endangered



Cooley's meadowrue flower. Photo by Gary Knight.

Field Description: Perennial **herb** with erect, smooth **stems** to 122 cm tall. **Leaves** alternate, smooth, divided into numerous narrow, stalked leaflets about 2.5 cm long with entire margins or 2 - 3 teeth at the tips. **Flowers** in loose, open clusters; male and female flowers on separate plants, **male flowers** have yellow sepals, no petals, and long, pinkish-purple stamens (photo, left); **female flowers** have green sepals, no petals, and numerous small, spindle-shaped fruits.

Similar Species: Waxy meadowrue (*Thalictrum amphibolum*) and Piedmont meadowrue (*Thalictrum macrostylum*), both found in upland glades and hammocks in the Panhandle, have round or oval leaflets.

Related Rare Species: Rue-anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*), state-endangered, an herb less than 25 cm tall, has 3 - 5 flowers with 5 showy white sepals, blooming in early spring, and rounded leaflets. Common further north, rue-anemone occurs in FL only in rich slope forests in Gadsden and Liberty counties; most populations are on private land.

Cooley's meadowrue

Thalictrum cooleyi

Habitat: Wet prairies and flatwoods or seepage slopes over basic soils; occurs in FL in a utility right-of-way through former flatwoods.

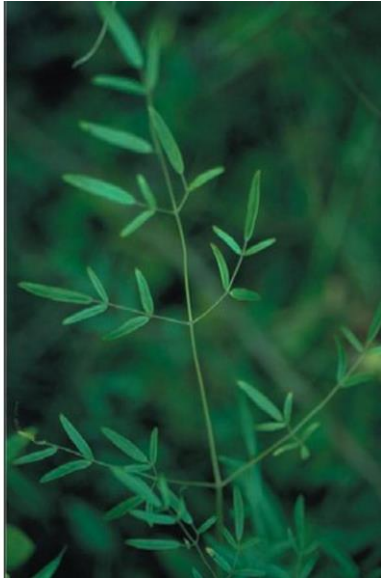
Best Survey Season: Spring; mid-May to July; August - October, possibly earlier when burned; leaflets are distinctive throughout the growing season.

Range-wide Distribution: FL, 4 counties in southeast NC, and possibly one county in southwest GA.

Conservation Status: The single population in Florida is on a utility right-of-way within a property protected by a conservation easement, where it is monitored and burned periodically.

Protection and Management: Burn every 2 - 3 years. Avoid soil disturbance, drainage, or other hydrological alterations.

References: Ahles 1959, Boyer 1993, Coile 2000, Kral 1983, Renee 2015, USFWS 2008, USFWS 2020, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2024.



Cooley's meadowrue leaves. Photo by Gary Knight.

