BANDED WILD-PINE
Tillandsia flexuosa Sw.
Synonyms: none
Family: Bromeliaceae (pineapple)
FNAI Ranks: G5/S3
Legal Status: US-none FL-Threatened
Wetland Status: US-none+ FL-UPL


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Field Description: Medium-large rosette airplant. The overlapping leaves are spirally twisted at the base and banded green and silver. Flowers are borne on a slender stalk with few blooms, these pink in color. Banded wild-pine is one of the most distinctive airplants in Florida. The combination of twisted leaves and horizontal bands of green and silver are unique to this species.

Similar Species: Banded wild-pine can be distinguished from the other rosette-forming airplants (Tillandsia spp.), by its leaves that are broader and cross-banded with green and silver, and pink inflorescence.

Related Rare Species: Banded wild-pine can be distinguished from the other rosette-forming airplants (Tillandsia spp.), by its leaves that are broader and cross-banded with green and silver, and pink inflorescence.

Habitat: Hammocks, cypress swamps, scrub and coastal communities; epiphytic.

banded wild-pine ***Tillandsia flexuosa***

Best Survey Season: Spring-summer.

Range-wide Distribution: Usually found in coastal areas. West Indies, Central and South America. In Florida, restricted to the southern peninsula.

Conservation Status: The most serious threats to this species are the Mexican bromeliad weevil and conversion of its habitat to urban, suburban, or agricultural uses.

Protection and Management: The state of Florida lists this species and most other rosette-forming bromeliads as threatened or endangered. The Mexican bromeliad weevil (Metamasius callizona) has killed many plants since its accidental introduction in Broward County in 1989. These weevils were first reported in Hendry County in 1997. This insect burrows into, and destroys, the leafy rosettes of this epiphyte. Since most Tillandsia species are slow to mature, protecting the trees in primary habitats will encourage the development of healthy epiphyte populations. Research has been conducted for possible biological control agents, and a test release of a parasitic fly was performed in 2007.

References: Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.