

CRANEFLY ORCHID

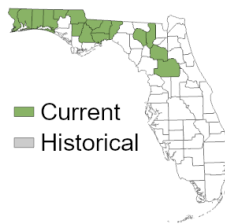
Tipularia discolor (Pursh) Nutt.

Synonyms: none

Family: Orchidaceae (orchid)

FNAI Ranks: G5/S4

Legal Status: US-none; FL-Threatened



Leaf solitary with purplish undersurface. Many scattered large limestone boulders present. Upland hardwood forest at Aucilla Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: A small terrestrial **orchid** with overwintering basal **leaves** (green on upper surface and dark purple on lower surface); leafless solitary **flowering stalks** in the summer; **flowers** spurred.

Similar Species: Very distinctive with its overwintering green and purple basal leaves and leafless flowering spikes with spurred flowers in summer.

Related Rare Species: There are no other closely related rare species in Florida.

cranefly orchid

Tipularia discolor

Habitat: Upland hardwood forest, upland mixed woodland, hammocks, and ravine forests.

Best Survey Season: Flowering July - September; fruiting August - November (and persisting until next growing season).

Range-wide Distribution: Southeastern MA, southern NY, OH, IN, and southern MI south to north peninsular FL and TX.

Conservation Status: Occurring as a uncommon herb within upland hardwood forest, mesic and hydric hammocks and ravines in north Florida and the panhandle, where it is mainly threatened by silviculture.

Protection and Management: Protect slope forest, upland hardwood forest, hammocks, and upland mixed woodland from conversion to urban, suburban, silviculture, and agricultural uses. Actively manage invasive plant species.

References: Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2024, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.



Solitary flowering stalk in fruit. Upland hardwood forest at Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.