

## FLORIDA MERRYBELLS

*Uvularia floridana* Chapman

**Synonyms:** *Oakesiella floridana* (Chapm.)

Small

**Family:** Colchicaceae (meadow-saffron)

**FNAI Ranks:** G3/S2

**Legal Status:** US-none; FL-Endangered



Leaves sessile; flowers solitary on stalk with six tepals cream to pale yellow in color. Photo taken at Joe Budd WMA by Kelly Anderson.

**Field Description:** Erect, **perennial herb** to 16" tall, with a single, once-branched, angled stem (non-flowering plants are unbranched). **Leaves** 1.6 - 2.8" long, without leaf stalks, alternate, narrowly oval with pointed tips, smooth, dull green, somewhat fleshy and waxy; margins with tiny teeth visible with magnification. **Flowers** up to 1" long, 1 per stem, nodding, pale yellow, with 6 long-pointed **tepals** (3 sepals + 3 petals), with a leafy **bract** on the flower stalk just below the flower. **Fruit** to 1" long, 3-angled, drooping.

**Similar Species:** Perfoliate bellwort (*Uvularia perfoliata*) has stems that appear to pass through the middle of the leaves. Sessile-leaved bellwort (*Uvularia sessilifolia*) tepals are blunt-tipped, and the flower stalk lacks the leafy bract. Both occur in upland hammocks in the Panhandle.

**Related Rare Species:** Florida merrybells is the only species of *Uvularia* listed in FL.

## Florida merrybells

*Uvularia floridana*

**Habitat:** Bottomlands and floodplain forests, moist ravines.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowers and fruits March - April.

**Range-wide Distribution:** FL, AL, GA, SC.

**Conservation Status:** Less than 15 occurrences are known in Florida. Agricultural and residential development, and adverse forestry practices threaten this species.

**Protection and Management:** Prevent clearcutting and establishment of pine plantations in slope forests, ravines, and floodplains. Control exotic pest plants, especially Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*).

**References:** Clewell 1985, Coile 2000, Radford et al. 1968, Small 1933, Ward 1979, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011, Wunderlin et al. 2018.



Leaves sessile; flowers solitary on stalk with six tepals cream to yellow in color. Photo taken at Joe Budd WMA by Kelly Anderson.



Leaves sessile; fruit capsule is three-winged. Photo taken at Joe Budd WMA by Kelly Anderson.



Growing on sandy terrace of bottomland seepage forest. Photo taken at Joe Budd WMA by Kelly Anderson.

