

# Florida's Native Bromeliads:

## Powdery Strap Airplant

Scientific name: *Catopsis berteroniana*  
(J.A. and J.H. Shultes) Mez.

Other common names:

Powdery catopsis, West Indies catopsis,  
yellow catopsis, mealy wild pine

Status in Florida:

Endangered

Threats to this plant in Florida:

Illegal collecting, Mexican bromeliad weevil  
(*Metamasius callizona*), habitat destruction



Photo by J.H. Frank/UF

Distribution: Florida, Mexico, West Indies, Central and South America

Distribution in Florida: Collier, Miami-Dade, and mainland Monroe Counties

Occurrence in Florida: Rare

Habitat: Rockland hammock; slough; marine tidal swamp; usually found in strong light, on high branches of host tree

Description: Tank epiphyte; when flowering, grows to 40 - 130 cm (16-51 in.); leaves are yellowish-green, up to 45 cm (18 in.), with a white, chalky, powdery covering, especially at the base; 15-50 flowers with white petals (1.0 - 1.2 cm; 3/8 - 1/2 in.) develop on a stout scape, usually with 2-8 lateral branches; floral bracts (6-8 mm; 1/4 - 1/3 in.) and sepals (1.2 cm; 1/2 in.) yellow-green; seed capsule 1.5 cm (1/2 - 5/8 in.) long; seeds often germinate on the capsule

Time of flowering: All year, especially fall - winter

Unusual characteristics: One of two known carnivorous bromeliads, it is thought to trap insects in its tank with the slippery powder on its leaf bases.

References

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