

Florida's Native Bromeliads: Twisted Airplant

Scientific name:

Tillandsia flexuosa Swartz

Former name:

Tillandsia aloifolia Hook

Other common names:

Banded airplant; flexuous wild-pine,
striped airplant

Status in Florida:

Threatened

Threats to this plant in Florida:

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



Distribution: Florida, West Indies, Panama,
Venezuela, Colombia

Distribution in Florida: Broward, Charlotte, Collier,
Hendry, Highlands, Lee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe,
Palm Beach Counties

Occurrence in Florida: Infrequent

Habitat: Exposed habitats, often near the coast;
terrestrial (xeric hammock [pinelands, scrub], shell
mound, rockland hammock, coastal berm, maritime
hammock); marine (marine tidal swamp); estuarine
(estuarine tidal swamp)

Description: Tank epiphyte; 20-80 cm (8-31 in.) tall;
pale gray leaves with twisted tips and broad white
bands; slender inflorescence, simple or with few
branches; spreading floral bracts; zig-zag (flexuous)
floral axis (flower stem); flowers spreading, with
sepals 2-3 cm (3/4 - 1 1/8 in.) long and rose or purple
petals (4 cm [1 1/2 in.] long), capsules 5 cm (2 in.) long

Time of flowering: Every month except November and
December, mostly spring to summer

References

- Coile, Nancy C. 2000. *Notes on Florida's Endangered and Threatened Plants*. FDACS/DPI, Bureau of Entomology, Nematology and Plant Pathology, Botany Section. Contribution No. 38, 3rd ed., Gainesville, FL.
<http://www.virtualherbarium.org/EPAC>
- Flora of North America Association. 2000. *Flora of North America, Vol. 22*.
<http://flora.huh.harvard.edu/FNA>
- Florida Natural Areas Inventory. 1997. *Matrix of Habitats and Distribution by County of Rare/Endangered Species of Florida*. Florida Natural Areas Inventory/The Nature Conservancy.
<http://www.fnai.org>
- Long, Robert W. and Olga Lakela. 1976. *A Flora of Tropical Florida*. Banyan Books, Miami.
- Ward, Daniel B. (ed.). 1979. *Plants, Vol. 5. In: Rare and Endangered Biota of Florida*, P.C.H. Pritchard (ed.). University Presses of Florida, Gainesville, 175 p.