

Florida's Native Bromeliads: West Indian Tufted Airplant

Scientific name:

Guzmania monostachia (L.) Rusby ex. Mez

Other common names:

Fuchs' bromeliad; strap-leaved guzmania

Status in Florida:

Endangered

Threats to this plant in Florida:

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



Photo by J.H. Frank/UF

Distribution: Florida, West Indies, Mexico, Central America to northern Peru and Brazil

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

Occurrence in Florida: Seldom found but locally abundant (restricted to a few plant communities in southern FL); in deep slough habitat, where water depth, water-holding capacity of the peat soils, and canopy provide optimal conditions, 100 plants may appear on a single tree

Habitat: Terrestrial (rockland hammock), palustrine (slough, strand swamp); most abundant on pop ash (*Fraxinus caroliniana*) and pond apple (*Annona glabra*)

Description: Tank epiphyte; may be terrestrial; bright green, flexible, non-scaly, strap-shaped leaves, nearly parallel-sided and tapering abruptly at the tip, 2-3 cm (3/4 - 1 1/8 in.) wide and up to 50 cm (20 in.) long (usually 25-30 cm [10-12 in.]); leaves may be green-and-white striped (var. *variegata*); single floral spike ("monostachia" means "one spike") up to 40 cm (16 in.), with many spirally-arranged flowers; salmon-colored apical floral bracts in Florida; white flowers, 3 cm (1 1/8 in.) long; long, cylindrical seed capsules, up to 4 cm (1 1/2 in.); may produce many vegetative offshoots

Time of flowering: All year, mainly February - August, especially May - July

References

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