



Common Name: SMALL-FLOWERED MEADOWBEAUTY

Scientific Name: *Rhexia parviflora* Chapman

Other Commonly Used Names: none

Previously Used Scientific Names: none

Family: Melastomataceae (meadowbeauty)

Rarity Ranks: G2/SH

State Legal Status: Special Concern

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: OBL

Description: Perennial **herb** up to 16 inches (40 cm) tall, usually shorter. **Stems** square, with each side of the stem more or less the same width; mostly hairless except for hairy leaf nodes. **Leaves** ½ - 1¼ inches (1.5 - 3 cm) long, opposite, oval with broadly pointed tips, sparsely hairy, with 3 conspicuous veins; margins with small, hair-tipped teeth; only the leaves at midstem have **leaf stalks**. **Flower cluster** appears leafy due to large bracts. **Flowers** about ¾ inch (2 cm) across, with 4 white (rarely pale pink), nearly round petals that fall easily; **stamens** with bright yellow, slightly curved **anthers**; flowers face outward. **Fruit** about ¼ inch (5 - 7 mm) long, with a short neck and round body.

Similar Species: Pale meadow-beauty (*Rhexia mariana*) has white to pale pink flowers, narrow leaves without leaf stalks, distinctly hairy stems, and flowers more than ¾ inch (2 cm) across. It has only a few narrow bracts in the inflorescence. It tends to be weedy and occurs in drier habitats.

Related Rare Species: Nuttall's meadowbeauty (*Rhexia nuttallii*, Special Concern) occurs in wet pine flatwoods and bogs in Brantley and Wayne Counties. It has hairless, angled stems less than 12 inches (30 cm) tall, with hairy leaf nodes, oval to nearly round leaves about ½ inch (1 - 1.5 cm) long, rose-pink flowers with straight anthers about 1/16 inch long, and glandular-hairy fruit. Also see awned meadowbeauty (*Rhexia aristosa*) elsewhere on this web site.

Habitat: Edges of limesink ponds; wet, peaty sands around depression ponds with pond cypress and swamp tupelo.

Life History: Small-flowered meadowbeauty is a perennial herb that reproduces sexually as well as vegetatively by the spread of short, slender rhizomes. It dies back in the fall, overwintering as rhizomes. Its flowers are self-incompatible, requiring that pollen be carried between plants for fertilization to take place. It is likely pollinated by bees. The bright yellow anthers (pollen-bearing structures in the flower) are curved and appear to be hinged at the junction with the stamen's filament, or stalk. Bees grasp the anther and "buzz" it, shaking pollen from a tiny pore at the tip of the anther.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering (July–September).

Range: Georgia, Alabama, and Florida

Threats: Fire suppression, clearing and conversion of habitat, ditching, draining, and filling in wetlands. Lowering of water table by excessive drawdown for agricultural irrigation and urban water use.

Georgia Conservation Status: Small-flowered meadowbeauty was last seen in Georgia in the 1940s in Baker County.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Allow prescribed fire in uplands to burn into the edges of depression ponds. Avoid placing firebreaks in the transition zone between uplands and ponds. Avoid mechanical disturbances such as clearing, logging, and silvicultural site preparation. Avoid ditching, draining, and filling in isolated wetlands. Protect natural water table levels from excessive drawdown.

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