



Common Name: FLORIDA WILD PRIVET

Scientific Name: *Forestiera segregata* (Jacquin) Krug & Urban

Other Commonly Used Names: Florida privet, Florida swamp privet

Previously Used Scientific Names: none

Family: Oleaceae (olive)

Rarity Ranks: G4/S2

State Legal Status: Rare

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: none

Description: Shrub or small tree up to 10 feet (3 meters) tall. Twigs grayish-brown, smooth and hairless, with conspicuous white patches (lenticels). **Leaves** ½ - 2 inches (1.5 - 5 cm) long, widest above the middle, with blunt or rounded tips and narrow, tapering bases; opposite, with very short or no leaf stalks; leaf margins without teeth; both surfaces hairless, lower surface with many tiny gland dots; evergreen or falling in late winter just before new growth. **Female and male flowers** on separate plants, in clusters held close to twigs of the previous year. **Flowers** have no petals or sepals but the

clusters are surrounded by greenish-yellow bracts so that a cluster resembles a single flower with greenish-yellow petals. **Fruit** about ¼ inch (5 - 7 mm) long, round, waxy, blue-black, in clusters.

Similar Species: Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) and other non-native privets have stalked leaves and showy flowers, and hold their flower and fruit clusters at the ends of their twigs. Florida wild privet is distinguished from other native privets by its blunt leaf tips and lack of leaf stalks.

Related Rare Species: See Godfrey's wild privet (*Forestiera godfreyi*) on this website.

Habitat: Coastal/maritime forests and shrub-scrub areas over shell mounds on or near barrier islands or bordering salt marshes. Often with live oak, red cedar, red bay, devilwood, and yaupon holly.

Life History: Florida wild privet is dioecious, meaning that female and male flowers are on different plants. The female-flowering plants of Florida wild privet often grow in patches somewhat separated from patches of male-flowering plants. Typically, early-flowering plants such as Florida wild privet are wind-pollinated, but the clustered arrangement of these flowers mimics a single, showy flower and suggests that the plant has evolved to attract insect pollinators. The fruits are probably dispersed by small animals.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering, from late winter–early spring, before the leaves appear; some plants may flower later in the year on the current year's twigs; fruits are usually present through the summer.

Range: Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and the West Indies.

Threats: Clearing and development in coastal habitats. Digging and destruction of shell mounds. Invasion by exotic pest plants.

Georgia Conservation Status: Seven populations are known; most on state or federal park lands or military bases.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Protect coastal forests from clearing and development. Protect shell mounds from digging, clearing, dredging, and spoil deposition. Eradicate exotic pest plants.

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