



Common Name: FEW-FLOWERED GOLDEN-ASTER

Scientific Name: *Pityopsis oligantha* (Chapman ex Torrey & Gray) Small

Other Commonly Used Names: coastal plain golden-aster, few-headed grass-leaved golden-aster

Previously Used Scientific Names: *Chrysopsis oligantha* Chapman ex Torrey & Gray,
Heterotheca oligantha (Chapman ex Torrey & Gray) V.L. Harms

Family: Asteraceae/Compositae (aster)

Rarity Ranks: G3/S1S2

State Legal Status: Special Concern

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: FAC

Description: Perennial **herb** with erect **stems** 8 - 20 inches (20 - 50 cm) tall, the lower stem covered with silky, silvery hairs; the upper stem with dark, knob-tipped, glandular hairs. **Lower leaves** 3 - 12 inches (8 - 30 cm) long and up to ½ inch (3 - 14 mm) wide, grass-like, silky-hairy. **Stem leaves** fewer than 7, much reduced in size and scattered along the stem. **Flower heads** about 1½ inches (4 cm) wide, 1 - 6 per plant, on long stalks. Each **flower head** composed of 11 - 16 yellow, strap-shaped **ray flowers** and 25 - 40 yellow **disk flowers** in a central disk; the base of the head is surrounded by several series of green **bracts** forming a cup (involucre) around the base, ½ inch (9 - 11 mm) high, covered with knob-tipped, glandular hairs. **Fruits** less than ¼ inch (4 - 5 mm) long, dry, seed-like, ribbed, and hairy.

Similar Species: Grass-leaved golden-aster (*Pityopsis graminifolia*) is abundant in dry habitats throughout Georgia. It has more than 7 stem leaves per plant and more than 6 flower heads per stem. The upper stem has few or no glandular hairs, and the lower leaves are usually wider than ¾ inch (2 cm).

Related Rare Species: See sandhill golden-aster (*Pityopsis pinifolia*) on this website.

Habitat: Dry to moist longleaf pine-wiregrass savannas and flatwoods, seepage slopes, bogs, edges of cypress ponds.

Life History: Few-flowered golden-aster is a perennial herb that reproduces sexually as well as vegetatively by the spread of rhizomes. Its flowers are pollinated by a variety of butterflies and bees and the seeds are dispersed by wind, gravity, and small animals.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering (April–May, usually much earlier than other golden-asters) and fruiting (May–June).

Range: Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Louisiana.

Threats: Conversion of longleaf pine-wiregrass habitat to pine plantations, pastures, and developments. Ditching and draining of wetlands. Fire suppression.

Georgia Conservation Status: Three populations are known, none on conservation land.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Apply prescribed fire every 2 - 3 years. Avoid clearcutting, ditching, and other disturbances to the ground cover.

Selected References:

Chafin, L.G. 2007. Field guide to the rare plants of Georgia. State Botanical Garden of Georgia and University of Georgia Press, Athens.

Cronquist, A. 1980. Vascular flora of the southeastern United States, Vol. 1, Asteraceae. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

FNA. 2006. Flora of North America, Vol. 20, Magnoliophyta: Asteridae, Part 7: Asteraceae, Part 2. Oxford University Press, New York.

NatureServe. 2008. NatureServe Explorer. Arlington, Virginia.
<http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>

Pitts-Singer, T.L., J.L. Hanula, and J.L. Walker. 2002. Insect pollinators of three rare plants in a Florida longleaf pine forest. Florida Entomologist 85(2): 308-316

Sample, J.C. and F.D. Bowers. 1985. A revision of the goldenaster genus *Pityopsis* (Compositae/Astereae). Biological Series 29. Department of Biology, University of Waterloo, Ontario.

Weakley, A.S. 2008. Flora of the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia, northern Florida, and surrounding areas. University of North Carolina Herbarium, Chapel Hill.
<http://www.herbarium.unc.edu/flora.htm>

Author of Species Account: Linda G. Chafin

Date Compiled or Updated:

L. Chafin, July 2008: original account

K. Owers, Feb. 2010: added pictures



FEW-FLOWERED GOLDEN-ASTER
Pityopsis oligantha

