

Hammock snakeroot

(*Ageratina jucunda*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms.

Hammock snakeroot is a low-growing, herbaceous perennial shrub with a woody base. It is found in pine flatwoods, sandhills, hammocks, upland mixed woodlands, and along roadsides and stream banks throughout Florida's peninsula and Eastern Panhandle. It blooms in late summer through early winter (typically September through January), attracting a variety of butterflies, including hairstreaks, Julias, skippers and crescents. Bees and hummingbirds like it, too, but the plant is poisonous to both humans and livestock if ingested.



Photo by Wayne Matchett

Like other members of the Eupatorieae tribe of the Aster family, Hammock snakeroot's flowers have no ray florets — only disk florets are present. They are white, tubular and born on in flat-topped clusters on branched stems. Leaves are petiolate and deltoid to narrowly rhombic with serrate margins. They are oppositely arranged and often drooping.

The species epithet *jucunda* comes from the Latin *jucundus*, which means “pleasing” or “delightful.” Perhaps that's because the sprinkling of its blooms looks like a fairy dusted the landscape.

Family: Asteraceae (Aster, daisy or composite family)

Native range: Eastern panhandle and throughout peninsular Florida

To see where natural populations of Hammock snakeroot have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Hardiness: Zones 8–11

Soil: Moist but well-drained soils

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade

Growth habit: 2–3' tall (usually taller than wide)

Propagation: Seed

Garden tips: Hammock snakeroot makes a nice low shrub border, but also works well in naturalistic plantings and in mixed beds. It can tolerate short periods of drought once established.

Hammock snakeroot seeds are available through the Florida Wildflowers Growers Cooperative at www.FloridaWildflowers.com. Plants are often available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit PlantRealFlorida.org to find a native nursery on your area.