

Soft greeneyes

(*Berlandiera pumila*)

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

Soft greeneyes is a perennial herbaceous wildflower found in sandhills and pinelands throughout the Panhandle and north Florida. It blooms in spring and summer and attracts a variety of pollinators, including butterflies, bees and wasps.

Soft greeneyes' showy flowers are comprised of ± 8 bright yellow ray florets around a center of green disk florets. The florets turn maroon and emit a subtle chocolate scent as they open. Bracts are overlapping and ciliate. Leaves are ovate to lanceolate with toothed margins and a velvety surface.

They may be petiolate or sessile and are alternately arranged. Stems are tomentose, giving them a grayish tint. Seeds are born in cypselae, which are attached to the bracts. Once the seeds disperse, a green plate-like disk remains, giving the genus its common name, "greeneyes." This is a distinguishing feature of species within the *Berlandiera* genus.

The genus name *Berlandiera* refers to 19th century naturalist Jean-Louis Berlandier, who collected botanical specimens in Mexico and Texas. The genus *pumila* is from the Latin *pumilus*, meaning "dwarf" and referring to its small stature (as it compares to other plants).

Family: Asteraceae (Aster, composite or daisy family)

Native range: Panhandle, north peninsula to Volusia and Marion counties

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

Hardiness: Zones 7–9

Lifespan: Perennial

Soil: Dry to well-drained sandy soils

Exposure: Full sun to minimal shade

Growth habit: up to 3' tall

Soft greeneyes plants are not generally propagated for commercial sale. Look for them this summer in north Florida's uplands — and don't forget to stop and smell the chocolate!



Photo by Eleanor Dietrich