

# Hairy chaffhead

(*Carphephorus paniculatus*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary\\_of\\_botanical\\_terms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms).

Hairy chaffhead is a stunning perennial wildflower found in moist flatwoods and savannas where it tends to form large colonies. It typically blooms from late August through December, with peak flowering in October. Its beautiful fuschia flowers provide nectar for butterflies.

Hairy chaffhead's many purple flowers are rayless, with tubular disk florets and extended stigmas. They are born in dense, terminal, elongated panicles. Flower stalks emerge from basal rosettes of oblong to elliptic, petiolate leaves that vary in length from 1 to 8 inches.

Stem leaves are significantly smaller, lanceolate

and sessile. They may be appressed. Margins are mostly entire. Leaf arrangement is alternate.

Stems and flower stalks are reddish-purple, covered in hairs and sticky to the touch. Seeds are born in achenes.

Some botanists have separated most species of the genus *Carphephorus* into the genera *Litrisa* and *Trilisa*. Both genera names are anagrams of the genus *Liatris*, whose flowers have a similar appearance to *Carphephorus* flowers. Under this convention, *C. paniculatus* is known as *Trilisa paniculata*. The common names Hairy Trilisa and Deertongue are also accepted, although Deertongue is also an accepted synonym for Vanillaleaf (*C. odoratissimus*). "Deertongue" refers to the straplike shape of both plant's basal leaves.

**Family:** Asteraceae (Aster, composite or daisy family)

**Native range:** Nearly throughout except the southernmost counties

To see where natural populations of Hairy chaffhead have been vouchered, visit [www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu](http://www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu).

**Hardiness:** Zones 8A–10A

**Lifespan:** Perennial

**Soil:** Moist to wet, well-drained sandy soils

**Exposure:** Full sun

**Growth habit:** 2–3'+ tall

**Propagation:** Seed, division

**Garden tips:** Hairy chaffhead is suitable for naturalistic and restoration habitats, as well as informal butterfly gardens. The plant is neither drought nor salt tolerant. It is deciduous and will die back in winter.

Hairy chaffhead plants are occasionally available from nurseries that specialize in Florida native plants. Visit [www.PlantRealFlorida.org](http://www.PlantRealFlorida.org) to find a nursery in your area.



Photo by Mary Keim