

Sixangle foldwing

(*Dicleptera sexangularis*)

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

Also known as False mint, Sixangle foldwing is a modest yet eye-catching wildflower found in coastal hammocks and strands, ruderal areas and mangrove swamps, and along salt marsh edges. It typically flowers spring through early fall, but may bloom year-round. Its bright red blooms are particularly attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies. The plant is a larval host for the Cuban crescent butterfly.

Sixangle foldwing's flowers are tubular, curved and two-lipped. Two stamens with yellow anthers extend just beyond the upper lip. Most blooms are somewhat compressed. They are born in terminal or axillary spikes. Leaves are ovate to lanceolate with entire margins. Leaf arrangement is opposite. Stems are six-angled and multi-branched. Seeds are born in small green capsules that turn brown as they mature.

The genus name *Dicliptera* is from the Greek meaning "double-folding wings." The species epithet *sexangularis* and its common descriptor reference the plant's six-angled stems. The common name False mint refers to the flower's similarity to flowers in the Mint (Lamiaceae) family, especially Tropical sage (*Salvia coccinea*).

Family: Acanthaceae (Acanthus family)

Native range: Central and southern peninsula (primarily coastal counties), the Keys and Calhoun County

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

Hardiness: Zones 8–11

Lifespan: Perennial

Soil: Moist, well-drained sandy or calcareous soils

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade

Growth habit: 1–4' tall

Propagation: Seed, cuttings

Garden tips: Sixangle foldwing is easy to grow and can tolerate a variety of conditions, including moderate exposure to salt. However, if plants do not receive enough moisture, particularly when located in full sun, flowers will be small and leaves will turn yellowish. This plant is a prolific self-seeder and will readily populate moist open areas. It can become weedy if not maintained.

Plants are occasionally available from nurseries that specialize in Florida native plants. Visit www.PlantRealFlorida.org to find a nursery in your area.



Photo by Alan Cressler, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center