

Feay's palafox

(*Palafoxia feayi*)

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

Feay's palafox is a very unique wildflower, endemic only to Florida's central and southern peninsula. Although it is a member of the Aster family, it bears few visual similarities. It is more woody than herbaceous; its blooms are without the petal-like ray florets; and its disk florets are tubular. They are white to pinkish in color. Most noticeable are the dark purple- to maroon-colored stigmas and the curved, white styles that extend from the ends of each disk floret. At the base of each flower are bracts that vary in color from green to purple. Leaves are oppositely arranged, oval-shaped toward the base, and get smaller and more linear toward the top of the plant. The leaf surface is rough to the touch.

Feay's palafox occurs naturally in sandhills, scrubby flatwoods, and scrub. It is attractive to a variety of butterflies and bees.



Photo by Stacey Matrazzo

Family: Asteraceae (Aster, daisy or composite family)

Native range: Central and South Florida

To see where natural populations of Feay's palafox have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Hardiness: Zones 9–11

Soil: Well-drained, sandy soils

Exposure: Full sun to minimal shade

Growth habit: 4–6'+

Propagation: Seed

Garden tips: Feay's palafox is not suited for the small garden. Its tendency to grow tall and lanky makes it best suited for larger plantings with other tall-growing genera such as *Silphium*, *Liatris*, and *Andropogon*. It is easily propagated from seed, although seed is not readily available.

Feay's palafox plants are occasionally available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit PlantRealFlorida.org to find a native nursery on your area.