

Pale meadowbeauty

(*Rhexia mariana*)

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

Pale meadowbeauty is an herbaceous perennial wildflower with showy blooms that vary in color from white to pink. Flowers have four petals, four sepals, and eight long stamens with curving yellow anthers that extend far beyond the bloom. Leaves are narrowly elliptic to lanceolate with three veins and toothed margins. They are oppositely arranged. Stems are hairy, as is the hypanthium, where the seeds develop. The hypanthium is distinctly urn-shaped and long (see photo), providing a good attribute for identification in all meadowbeauties.

Pale meadowbeauty occurs naturally in wet flatwoods, open savannas, marshes, bogs and wet roadsides. It flowers spring through fall and attracts many bees and butterflies.

Family: Melastomataceae (also Melastomaceae)

Native range: Throughout Florida except Suwannee, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties

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

Hardiness: Zones 7–10

Soil: Moist, acidic sandy or loamy soils

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade

Growth habit: up to 2' tall

Propagation: Seeds, cuttings

Garden tips: Although it is not common in the commercial market and is not easily propagated, Pale meadowbeauty can do well in a landscape with moist soils. It will sucker and can colonize, but it is not aggressive and will not outcompete other wildflowers.

Pale meadowbeauty is occasionally available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit PlantRealFlorida.org to find a native nursery on your area.



Photo by Eleanor Dietrich



Urn-shaped hypanthium after petals have fallen off. Once seeds develop and disperse, it will turn brown and brittle. Photo by Stacey Matrazzo