

Shortleaf rosegentian

(*Sabatia brevifolia*)

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

Shortleaf rosegentian is a herbaceous annual wildflower that occurs in moist to wet pine flatwoods, coastal swales and wet prairies throughout Florida. Its white, starlike flowers typically bloom in spring through fall, but may bloom in winter if temperatures are unseasonably warm. They primarily attract butterflies.

Individual flowers have five white petals with a greenish-yellow base. Calyces are five-lobed. Each flower has five bright yellow stamens surrounding a greenish-yellow pistil. Flowers are borne on branched stems. Leaves are short (<1" long), narrowly linear (1/8" wide) and sessile. They are oppositely arranged and may be appressed as they ascend the stem. Leaf surface is glabrous. Fruits are small capsules containing many tiny seeds.

The genus *Sabatia* is most likely a reference to Liberato Sabbati, an Italian botanist. The species epithet *brevifolia* is from the Latin *brevi*, or short, and *folium*, or leaf, referring to the plant's short leaves.

Family: Gentianaceae (Gentian family)

Native range: Nearly throughout

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

Hardiness: Zones 7–10

Soil: Moist to moderately dry, sandy soils

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade

Growth habit: 1–2'+ tall

Propagation: Seed

Garden tips: Shortleaf rosegentian is not commercially grown. Look for it in its natural habitat.



Photo by Katherine Edison



Photo by Eleanor Dietrich