

# White twinevine

(*Sarcostemma clausum*)

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

White twinevine is an evergreen twining vine with large clusters of fragrant flowers. It occurs naturally in swamps, moist hammocks, coastal strands and wetland edges. Flowers typically bloom in summer and fall, but may bloom throughout the year.

White twinevine's flowers are born in large umbels along the stem. Corollas consist of five pubescent white petals, each with a purple base. This forms a purple ring in the flower's center. The calyx is five-lobed. Leaves are dark green, linear to oblong and somewhat succulent. They are oppositely arranged. Stems are stout. Seeds are born in erect follicles that dry and split open as the fruit matures. Each seed is attached to a white silky pappus that catches the wind and aids in dispersal.



Photo by Bob Peterson (CC BY 2.0)

Like many members of the milkweed family, White twinevine is a larval host plant for Monarch, Queen and Soldier butterflies. Their caterpillars have adapted to feed on the plant, which contains a milky latex that is toxic to most animals. The flowers are also an important nectar source for bees and wasps.

Some sources classify this species as *Funastrum clausum*. It has also been known as *Asclepias clausa* and *Cynachum clausum*.

**Family:** Apocyanaceae (Dogbane or milkweed family)

**Native range:** Central peninsula south to the Keys

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

**Hardiness:** Zones 9b–11

**Lifespan:** Perennial

**Soil:** Alkaline to mildly acidic, moist soil

**Exposure:** Full sun to partial shade

**Growth habit:** 10–30'+ long

**Propagation:** Seed, cuttings

**Garden tips:** This is an aggressive vine that can grow in many directions. In a home landscape, it may be difficult to control. It is best suited for a fence, arbor or trellis. This plant is not tolerant of freezing temperatures.

Although not generally cultivated for commercial sale, White twinevine 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.