

# Leavenworth's tickseed

(*Coreopsis leavenworthii*)

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

Florida's state wildflower is *Coreopsis*, also known as tickseed, and refers to all 12 native species native to Florida. Many of these occur only in North Florida and the Panhandle. The most common species, Leavenworth's tickseed, is almost entirely endemic to Florida — its only other occurrences are in two Alabama counties. Leavenworth's tickseed can bloom year-round. Its natural habitat is mesic pine flatwoods, but it is often used as a component of mixed wildflower and butterfly gardens, and is excellent for sunny roadsides, highway medians and powerline easements. It attracts many pollinators and is eaten by rabbits (if you're lucky enough to have rabbits in your landscape).



Photo by Vince Lamb

The 1- to 2-inch wide daisy-like flowers have a center of dark brown to black disk florets surrounded by bright yellow scalloped ray florets. Its bright green leaves are small, narrow and range from simple to lobed to deeply divided, thus giving the plant a more open appearance. Leaves are oppositely arranged. Stems are slender and glabrous with many branches. Seeds are born in awned achenes with membranous wings. Their resemblance to small bugs is the basis for the plant's common name of "tickseed."

**Family:** Asteraceae (Aster, daisy or composite family)

**Native range:** Nearly throughout Florida

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

**Hardiness:** Zones 8A–11

**Soil:** Moist, acidic soils

**Exposure:** Full sun

**Growth habit:** 1–3'+ tall

**Propagation:** Seed

**Garden tips:** Leavenworth's tickseed needs a site that offers space for it to reseed. It can reseed between other plants, such as other wildflowers, if they are not too competitive. Though it can tolerate some drought and drier soils, it will not perform as well. Moist soils also allow for reseeding—important in maintaining the species.

Seeds are available through the Florida Wildflower Cooperative at [www.FloridaWildflowers.com](http://www.FloridaWildflowers.com). Plants are often available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit [PlantRealFlorida.org](http://PlantRealFlorida.org) to find a native nursery on your area.