

Tall elephantsfoot

(*Elephantopus elata*)

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

Tall elephantsfoot is a short-lived, perennial wildflower. Its small flowers are tubular and pale lavender. Flowerheads are subtended by three leaf-like bracts that are hairy and deltoid in shape. Stems are hairy and erect, emerging from a basal rosette of flat, elliptic to lanceolate leaves. Stem leaves are elliptic, sessile and alternately arranged. The abundance of hairs on much of the foliage gives it a grayish hue.

Tall elephantsfoot typically blooms summer through fall. It occurs naturally in flatwoods, sandhills, upland mixed woodlands, ruderal areas and wet prairies. It attracts a variety of pollinators.

The genus *Elephantopus* comes from the Greek *elephantos*, or elephant, and *pous*, or foot.

The species name, *elatus*, comes from the Latin, *elat*, or raised. Hence the common name, tall elephantsfoot. Both the scientific and common names are a reference to the flat basal leaves from which the tall flower stalk arises.

Family: Asteraceae (Aster, composite or daisy family)

Native range: Nearly throughout Florida

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

Hardiness: Zones 8–11

Soil: Slightly moist to very dry, sandy soils

Exposure: Full sun to shade

Growth habit: 2–3'+ tall

Propagation: Seeds

Garden tips: Tall elephantsfoot does well in a naturalized meadow but can also be a nice addition to a more formal wildflower garden.

Tall elephantsfoot seeds are often available from the Florida Wildflowers Growers Cooperative at www.FloridaWildflowers.com. Plants are often available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit PlantRealFlorida.org to find a native nursery on your area.



Photo by Valorie Catalano