

Florida yellow flax

(*Linum floridanum*)

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

Florida yellow flax is a demure perennial wildflower found in sandhills and flatwoods throughout the state. It typically blooms summer through fall but may bloom year-round. It is attractive as a larval food to butterflies and moths, including the variegated fritillary.

Florida yellow flax flowers have five yellow petals, yellow filaments and white anthers. Flowers are borne on or near the end of the stem, but only a few will open at a time. Leaves are small (usually ½-inch long), simple and linear to lanceolate. They are alternately arranged and may become appressed as they ascend the stem. Stems are stiff, glabrous and branched. Fruits are small (about ½-inch long) ovoid capsules.

The genus name *Linum* is from the Latin word for flax plant, from which the word “linen” is derived. Fibers of common flax (*Linum usitatissimum*), a cousin of Florida yellow flax, are used to produce linen; its seeds for linseed oil.



Photo by Mary Keim

Family: Linaceae (Flax family)

Native range: Nearly throughout

To see where natural populations of Florida yellow flax have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Hardiness: Zones 7–10b

Soil: Dry to moderately moist sandy soils

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade

Growth habit: up to 24” tall

Garden tips: Florida yellow flax is not commercially propagated. It is best admired in its natural habitat.