

Baldwin's milkwort

(*Polygala balduinii*)

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

Baldwin's milkwort is one of only a few white milkworts found in Florida. It typically blooms spring through fall and occurs naturally in wet pine flatwoods, marshes and coastal swales.

Flowers are small, white or greenish and borne in dense cymes atop branched stems. Sepals are large, lateral and petal-like. Leaves are lanceolate with pointy tips. They are alternately arranged and become reduced and sessile as they ascend the stem. Seeds are borne in a capsule.

The genus name *Polygala* comes from the Greek *polys*, which means "many or much," and *gala*, meaning "milk." It is so-named because it was once believed that the presence of *Polygala* species in cow fields would result in higher milk production (hence the common name of "milkwort" for both the genus and family.) The species epithet *balduinii* pays homage to William Baldwin, an American physician and botanist who made significant contributions to the field of botany in the late 1700s and early 1800s.



Photo by Stacey Matrazzo

Family: Polygalaceae (Milkwort family)

Native range: Nearly throughout

To see where natural populations of Baldwin's milkwort have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Hardiness: Zones 7–11

Lifespan: Annual or biennial (may act as perennial in South Florida)

Soil: Moist to wet

Exposure: Full sun

Growth habit: 1–3' tall

Baldwin's milkwort is generally not for sale commercially. Visit a sunny open wetland to see it!