

Carolina ponysfoot

(*Dichondra carolinensis*)

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

If you've got a regularly irrigated lawn or a landscape that naturally holds moisture, chances are Carolina ponysfoot occurs there. One could call it a weed, but we prefer to give a little more respect to this lovely little wildflower. Native from the South central through Southeastern U.S., this species occurs throughout Florida in moist hammocks and floodplain forests. It is also frequently found in disturbed sites.



Photo by Emily Bell

Carolina ponysfoot is a prostrate and spreading groundcover that roots via stem nodes. Its dime- to quarter-sized leaves are suborbicular to reniform and sparsely pubescent on the undersides. The diminutive flowers have five light green pilose sepals that alternate between the five white petals. Seeds are born in two-lobed capsules, each typically containing one seed.

Carolina ponysfoot is edible and can be eaten raw or cooked. It can also be dried for tea.

Family: Convolvulaceae (Morning glory family)

Native range: Throughout Florida

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

Hardiness: Zones 8A–11A

Lifespan: Perennial

Soil: Consistently moist sandy, limestone or organic soils

Exposure: Full sun to part shade

Growth habit: Low-growing (1–2 inches high) spreading herb

Propagation: Division of rooted stems

Garden Tips: Carolina ponysfoot makes a great groundcover in natural gardens and mixes well with other low growing spreaders like Frogfruit (*Phyla nodiflora*).

Carolina ponysfoot is occasionally available from nurseries that specialize in Florida native plants. Visit www.PlantRealFlorida.org to find a nursery in your area.



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