

Coastal false asphodel

(*Triantha racemosa*)

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

Coastal false asphodel is a delicate summer wildflower that inhabits open pine savannahs, bogs and seepage slopes. While it can be found throughout the Southeastern Coastal Plain from New Jersey south to Florida and westward into Texas, it is most common in the southern states from the Carolinas to Mississippi.



Photo by Emily Bell

Very inconspicuous when not in bloom, Coastal false asphodel has a basal rosette of narrow leaves growing up to 12 inches long, giving it grass-like appearance. A raceme of small flowers clustered in groups of two to three occurs at the end of a 15- to 28-inch scape. Individual flowers have six white petals, six spreading stamens with light yellow to brown anthers, and a protruding light green to white style. Following pollination of the flowers, burgundy capsules are produced, each containing two or more seeds. However, some research suggests reproduction of this species via seed is negligible and that its population growth is predominately rhizomatous.

There is little known about Coastal false asphodel's pollination biology, although it has been observed to attract both flies and butterflies. The common name false asphodel refers to its similar appearance to plants in the genus *Asphodelus*, which are native to Eurasia and Africa.

Family: Tofieldiaceae

Native range: Panhandle and Northeast Florida

To see where natural populations of Coastal false asphodel have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Hardiness: Zones 8A–9A

Lifespan: Perennial

Soil: Moist acidic soils

Exposure: Full sun

Growth habit: Up to 28 inches

Coastal false asphodel is not commercially available. Visit a natural area to see them.



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