Buffalo clover
(Trifolium reflexum)

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

Buffalo clover is a spring- to early summer-blooming wildflower that occurs naturally in dry open woodlands and along woodland edges. It has a wide range throughout Central and Eastern North America. However, for unknown reasons, its populations have declined significantly in recent decades across much of its range. Its beautiful reddish flowers are attractive to pollinators, and the plant may serve as a larval host for the Eastern tailed-blue butterfly (*Cupido comyntas*).

Photo by Emily Bell

Stems are green to purplish, erect or ascending, and may reach up to 2 feet tall. They can be either smooth or villous. The palmate, compound leaves are green with three elliptical leaflets. Leaves are alternately arranged. The globe-shaped inflorescences are made up of 10 to 50 flowers that are typical of the pea family, each with a red keel petal and white wing petals.

The genus name *Trifolium* is from the Latin *tres*, meaning "three," and *folium*, meaning "leaf." It refers to the characteristic compound leaves composed of three leaflets common to this genus.

Family: Fabaceae (Legume, bean or pea family)
Native range: Scattered occurrences in North to Central Florida
  To see where natural populations of Buffalo clover have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.
Lifespan: Annual to short-lived perennial
Soil: Sand
Exposure: Full sun to part shade
Growth habit: up to 2'
Propagation: Seed
Florida regions of landscape suitability: North, Central
Garden tips: Best suited in a naturalistic setting or wildflower meadow, but could also be used as a mass planting or tall groundcover.

Buffalo clover is occasionally available from nurseries that specialize in Florida native plants. Visit www.PlantRealFlorida.org to find a nursery in your area.
Seeds may be available from the Florida Wildflower Growers Cooperative at www.FloridaWildflowers.com.

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