

Hairy chaffhead

(*Trilisa paniculata*)

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

Hairy chaffhead is a stunning perennial wildflower found in moist flatwoods and savannas where it tends to form large colonies. It typically blooms from late August through December, with peak flowering in October. Its beautiful fuchsia flowers provide nectar for butterflies, bees, and other pollinators.

Hairy chaffhead's many purple flowers are rayless, with tubular disk florets and extended stigmas. They are born in dense, terminal, elongated panicles. Flower stalks emerge from basal rosettes of oblong to elliptic, petiolate leaves that vary in length from 1 to 8 inches. Stem leaves are significantly smaller, lanceolate and sessile. They may be appressed. Margins are mostly entire. Leaf arrangement is alternate. Stems and flower stalks are reddish-purple, covered in hairs and sticky to the touch. Seeds are born in achenes.



Photo by Emily Bell

There is currently a lack of genetic clarity among the genera *Carphephorus*, *Trilisa* and *Litrisa*, and additional research is needed to reach a more unanimous agreement on their classifications. This species has been previously classified as *Carphephorus paniculatus* and is still referred to as such in many resources.

The common names Hairy trilisa and Deertongue are also accepted, although Deertongue is also an accepted synonym for *Vanillaleaf* (*T. odoratissima*). "Deertongue" refers to the straplike shape of both plant's basal leaves.

Family: Asteraceae (Aster, composite or daisy family)

Native range: Nearly throughout except the southernmost counties

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

Lifespan: Perennial

Soil: Moist to wet, well-drained sandy soils

Exposure: Full sun

Growth habit: 2–3'+ tall

Propagation: Seed, division

Florida regions of landscape suitability: North, Central, South

Garden tips: Hairy chaffhead is suitable for naturalistic and restoration habitats, as well as informal butterfly gardens. The plant is neither drought nor salt tolerant. It is deciduous and will die back in winter.

Hairy chaffhead 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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