

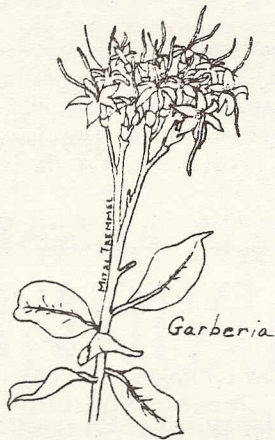
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# GARBERIA

by Eve A. Hannahs

*Garberia fruticosa* syn. *G. heterophylla* of the Asteraceae apparently has no common name. The handsome shrub is classified as threatened on the Florida Endangered Plant List. Threatened because of loss of habitat which is scrub and coastal dunes in central and northern peninsular Florida.



The much-branched shrub sometimes reaches three or more feet. Evergreen spatulate leaves are downy; rose-purple flowers are found in dense, flat-topped clusters on the ter-

minals: brown pappus persists in winter. The fall blooming plant is frequented by butterflies for nectaring. In early November ten butterfly species were counted on one individual plant.

Seeds collected in late fall and early winter germinated seemingly 100% when scrub sand was used. Germination was poor in potting mix, and survivors turned yellow when reaching 3-4 inches. Seeds were barely covered with sand, kept moist, and covered with newspaper until germination. Plants had an excellent survival rate and at ten months are 8 inches tall. (I do not know the additional growth rate or the age of bloom-producing plants, as my experience is limited to last year's plantings.)

*Garberia* is often found at the edges of woods in a sand pine situation. When swales are "improved" and sodded the plant is lost. Rescue has proven unsuccessful because of the usual deep roots of plants in sandy habitats.

In early November many plants were observed growing near fences (out of the reach of mowing machines) on I-4 east of Orlando and on the sand hills of rural Flagler County roadsides. Apparently it has wide distribution in its chosen areas. It is also salt resistant.

*Garberia* is a valued addition to the native plant garden and, as it is easily propagated, it should be available to those with the proper habitat. □