

IDENTIFICATION: American Chaffseed (*Schwalbea americana*) is a member of the figwort family Scrophulariaceae. A perennial herb occurring in sandy, acidic, soils with a fluctuating water table. Typically found in open, fire maintained, moist pine flatwoods, bog borders and ecotones between peaty wetlands and dry sandy soils. The stems are unbranched or branched only at the base and grow to a height of 12 to 31 inches. Alternate leaves are one to two inches in length, lance-shaped to elliptic, and entire. Large purplish-yellow, tubular flowers appear from April to June. It is a hemiparasite (partially dependent on another plant as a host). Dependent on fire, mowing or fluctuating water tables to maintain its required open to partly-open habitat conditions. Appears to be shade intolerant.



It was [federally listed as an endangered species](#) in 1992. Threats to the American chaffseed include collecting, excessive disturbance, and loss of open habitat due to development and natural vegetational succession. No critical habitat designation was made at the time of listing because of the likelihood of increased collecting and trampling by collectors and photographers.

FORESTRY CONSIDERATIONS: Fire is essential to the continued survival of these plants. Maintain drainage patterns to help insure survival of these plants.

DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTY: Recent collections or observations as noted by the Natural Heritage Section of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources have been limited to Baldwin and Bullock counties. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service believes this species may also occur in Barbour, Clarke, Escambia, Macon and Russell counties.

Photo Credit: U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Text Credit: Threatened and Endangered Species of Alabama: A Guide to Assist with Forestry Activities, Second Edition, USFWS



This information is provided by the Alabama Forestry Commission

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