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Atlantic St. John's Wort, *Hypericum tenuifolium* Synonym: *Hypericum reductum*[1]

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Note: This fact sheet is also available as a chapter in a comprehensive manual titled Dune Restoration and Enhancement for the Florida Panhandle, available in pdf form here: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/SG/SG15600.pdf. Please see the manual for more information about other useful and attractive native plants for dunes and for further information about restoration and preservation techniques.

Hypericaceae

Figure 1. Credit: Gabriel Campbell, UF/IFAS

Atlantic St. John's wort occurs throughout Florida and more broadly west to Alabama and northeast to North Carolina on beach dunes and scrub plant communities frequently associated with wet depression areas. *Hypericum* is a large genus of plants with 31 species in Florida alone (Wunderlin et al. 2017). This plant is a prolific flower producer that attracts numerous pollinators

General Description

Atlantic St. John's wort is a semi-woody to herbaceous perennial subshrub with a decumbent growth habit; forming a small rounded shrub to a low mat that rarely reaches above 1.5 ft. *Leaves* are simple, opposite, and needlelike. *Stems* are often decumbent and matted and are 6-angled in cross-section when young. *Flowers* have 5 persistent sepals, 5 yellow petals, and bear numerous stamens. They are 0.4 to 01.8 in wide, are axillary and terminal, are solitary or grow in small clusters called cymules or dichasia, and flower from June to September. *Fruits* are capsules 6 to 10 mm long and turn brown when ripe.

Figure 2. Credit: Mack Thetford, UF/IFAS

Propagation

Atlantic St. John's wort can be propagated from stem cuttings. The following is adopted from Thetford and Miller (2004). Collect 4-in terminal stem cuttings during the growing season. Remove leaves of bottom ½ in of cutting and quick dip in auxin [NAA (1-Naphthaleneacetic acid) 500 to 1000 ppm, or IBA (Indole-3-butyric acid) 1000 to 5000 ppm, or Dip 'N Grow] for 1 second (Thetford and Miller 2002). Root cuttings in 72-cell flats with a well-drained substrate under intermittent mist and natural photoperiod. Roots initiate within 2 to 3 weeks. By week 4, rooted cuttings may be removed from mist, and by week 6, transplants can be moved into larger pots (4-in, 1-qt or 1-gal). Rooted cuttings benefit from fertigation with a complete fertilizer solution providing nitrogen at a rate of 150 ppm 1 to 2 times a week before transplanting to larger containers. An additional 4 to 6 weeks of outdoor production with supplemental irrigation is required to develop a full rootball.

No published information on germination requirements of *Hypericum tenuifolium* is available. Germination requirements for the related species, *H. perforatum* are variable across populations but need light to germinate with constant (15 and 25°C) or fluctuating (25/15°C) day/night temperatures and are non-dormant (Pérez-García et al. 2006). Light has been reported as

necessary for germination of other *Hypericum* sp. with similar optimal germination temperatures, but physiological or physical dormancies have also been reported (Çirak et al. 2007; Çirak 2007.)

Outplanting

No published information on outplanting information is presently available for Atlantic St. John's wort. The authors have successfully transplanted this species in home landscape situations with minimal supplemental irrigation. In Florida, *H. tenuifolium* is considered a facultative wetland species (occurs in wetlands 67% to 99% in the wild) (Wunderlin et al. 2017) and in coastal communities this species is associated with coastal interdunal swales and adjacent low ridges.

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