

Cupid's-Shaving-Brush/Florida Tassel-Flower (*Emilia fosbergii*)

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Cupid's-Shaving-Brush

Cupid's-Shaving-Brush (*Emilia fosbergii*) is primarily an erect winter annual belonging to the Aster (Asteraceae) family. It can be more than three feet tall with the taller plants usually branching. The stems are smooth near the top and hairy at the base and are somewhat weak which makes the plants sprawling once they are sufficiently tall.

Range

Cupid's-Shaving-Brush is not native to Florida. Nevertheless, it is found throughout Central and South Florida but not usually in the Panhandle. It also occurs in Louisiana, Texas and California. The species is distributed worldwide, occurring in the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America south into Brazil, western Pacific Island, Java and Tropical Africa. It grows in open weedy areas, lawns, and other moist disturbed areas. They appear year-round in South Florida but are more abundant from October through March.



Seedling with prominent basal leaves



Flowering plant

Leaves

A cluster of basal leaves forms early. The leaves at the base are broadly lanceolate, with broad tip, and winged petioles. A central floral stem is then produced. The leaves at top of the stem have no petioles and are clasped to the stem (sessile). All leaves have toothed margins.



A sessile leaf and an emerging branching stem



Terminal leaves



Typical leaf shapes moving from the bottom to the top of plants

Flowers

Flower buds occurs at the top of each stem, which may be two to three feet tall. The flowers have no ray florets, and typically have 50 or more disk florets. Flowers range in color from pinkish thru purple to red and are produced on long stalks.



Variations in flower colors



Variations in flower colors

Fruit

The fruit are minute achenes. They are connected to a mass of fine white bristles known as pappus and are easily carried by the wind. Reproduction occurs when these floating seeds find suitable places to germinate.



Brown achenes and white bristle pappi



Flower and pappi

All pictures taken by Stephen H. Brown
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This fact sheet was reviewed by Peggy Cruz, Lee County Extension and Connie Brennan, Lee County Master Gardener.

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