



Orange milkwort, also known as the bog bachelor button and candy weed, is a biennial herbaceous plant native to the Eastern United States throughout the coastal plains from Louisiana to Florida and up to New York. Obovate to spatulate leaves form a basal rosette with stems reaching 3-7 inches in height. Leaves along stems are alternate. Non-fragrant, vibrant orange flowers in the form of dense racemes are displayed throughout most of the year in Florida.

It is found growing on acidic sites including bogs, moist pine and hardwood forests, and along ditches. Orange milkwort prefers damp to intermittently flooded soils; it's able to survive droughty conditions temporarily but will not persist on highly draining soils without regular irrigation. Orange milkwort does not transplant well due to a strong taproot and is hardly offered commercially.

Growth Form	Herbaceous
Growth Rate	Slow, Biennial
Potential Size	Height: 3-7 in. Spread: 2-4 in.
Leaves	Simple, obovate Basal Rosette Alternate on stems Margin entire
Flowers	Showy Orange Self-pollinating Bloom Mar-Nov
Fruit	Capsule Seeds ant dispersed Matures spring-fall



Interestingly, the seeds have a fleshy structure attached containing high levels of oil, called an elaiosome, which is designed to attract ants and encourage seed dispersal with their efforts. Ants will consume the elaiosome, leaving the viable seed intact. The specific epithet on this plant can be confusing as well. The term "lutea" actually means yellow, which can be quite odd considering the strong orange coloration. It's thought that the name came from the fact that flowers turn yellow once dried.

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