

Vivian Negron-Ortiz

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

The breeding system and reproductive success of a Florida Panhandle federally listed species: *Rhododendron minus* var. *chapmanii* (Ericaceae).

Monitoring was initiated to comply with recovery initiatives of the federally listed shrub species, endangered *Rhododendron minus* var. *chapmanii*. A plot containing high density of *R. m. chapmanii* was established, the plants were marked, and the female reproductive output (flowers produced, fruit set) and plant size (number of stems, height) were recorded. In addition, hand-pollination experiments were used to determine the breeding system. Preliminary results indicated that the flowers are protandrous and primarily visited by bumblebees. Reproductive output was higher in 2008, but the average flowering stems was higher in 2009; growth was similar for both years. Pollination studies will be completed in 2010, and monitoring will be continued to determine the long-term status of this population.

Field Assistants: Dr. David L. Gorchoy (Miami University, OH), Ms. Alicia Newberry (A FWS intern; currently a biologist with Florida Natural Area Inventory)