Rare Plants of Louisiana

**Rhynchospora compressa** - flat-fruit beakrush

Sedge Family (Cyperaceae)

**Rarity Rank:** S2/G4

**Range:** AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, SC

**Recognition:**
- Cespitose perennial from a caudex, stems erect and stiff, to 1 m tall
- Lower stems leafy, fertile stems with sparse foliage
- Inflorescence of erect terminal and long-stalked axillary cymes
- Fruit an achene about 1.5 mm long, with the faces flat or sunken centrally (versus trigonous or bulging); achene with transverse ridges or reticulation
- Tubercle of fruit bearing a circular, flat, plate-like base, extending outward over the narrowed achene summit

**Flowering/Fruiting Time:** May to June

**Light Requirement:** Full sun

**Wetland Indicator Status:**
OBL – almost always in wetlands

**Habitat:** Longleaf pine flatwoods savannas.

**Threats:**
- Residential or commercial development
- Conversion to slash or loblolly pine plantations
- Hydrological alterations
- Soil damage from timber harvesting and planting activities (eg. bedding)
- Fire exclusion or inappropriate fire regime

**Beneficial Management Practices:**
- Use of growing season prescribed fire (April-June) at a frequency of every 1 to 3 years
- Thinning over densely-stocked stands (only during very dry conditions)
- No bedding, plowed fire lines or other soil disturbance that may alter natural water flow patterns

**LA River Basins:** Pearl, Pontchartrain, Calcasieu, Sabine
Specimen of *Rhynchospora compressa*. Courtesy of LSU Herbarium.

**References:**
