

Practical Exercise #1 – Keying using Word “Pictures” (without “Picture Keying”)

This is a short practical exercise where you test yourself – in sort of a game – to see if you can use Weakley’s “Key to Keys” [Handout #4 – i.e. a “doctored up” red-font version of Weakley’s 2017 key to (most) genera in the Aster family)].

Trying it means two things:

- 1) during the process, forget about the I (for Illustration) in HIPDAD at least while keying (looking at illustrations/drawings afterwards is OK).
and
- 2) it compels folks to actually use terms while keying/playing (the game).
In so doing, it is a practical way to become familiar with the terms.

You are encouraged to use Harris and Harris – Plant Identification Terminology (if needed) or any other resource EXCEPT another person. It is OK to check with another person when both parties are done with the exercise. If you hit a “road block” (e.g. take a wrong turn in the key, etc.) let Dr. Bob know.

It goes like this: use Key to Keys to determine the genus* of a plant:

You find a plant in South Georgia (or N FL) in a dry, sandy scrub or pineland habitat. A good Plant Analysis** shows the following characters:

1. Herbaceous perennial or sub-shrub (sub = almost – maybe with a caudex)
2. Numerous whitish disciform (not discoid) heads in terminal corymb-like arrangements
3. Lvs. opposite (at least on the lower nodes)

If you go the shrub route, tell me what you think it is (at least to genus)?

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* If you want to try to get to species, you will have to use Handout #5 – the 104 page (2017) treatment of the family by Weakley.

** If you need to review what Plant Analysis entails, perhaps some of the slides near the end of the presentation may help (especially if it is a member of the Asteraceae/Compositae (Aster family)).