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Subject: Relationship of Croton punctatus to Other Similar
Species of Croton in the Southeast United States

To: POSI File

One character that separates Croton punctatus along with C. texensis from all other species of Croton in the Southeast is the absence of petals. Croton texensis differs from C. punctatus in that the leaves are usually much narrower, the plants are annuals and rarely over one foot high and C. texensis behaves more like a weed.

Since it can be difficult to determine whether petals may have been present on plants that are well into fruit, four other species could possibly be confused with Croton punctatus and all are found on the Coast Plain. C. punctatus is the most likely species to be encountered on sand dunes near beaches from N. Carolina to Texas. Croton argranthemum can be found on sandhills (but probably associated more with woodland areas rather than coastal strand?) and unlike C. punctatus, the leaves of C. argranthemum are 2 to 3 to 5 times longer than broad.

Croton berlanderi is often found growing in thickets or through branches of shrubs in sandy places.

Croton capitatus is a weed-like species and Croton engelmannii has toothed and sword shaped leaves and occurs more on dry soil.

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