

FLORIDA: IT'S MORE THAN JUST THE "SUNSHINE STATE."

When most people think of Florida, they think theme parks, white sand beaches, and plastic pink flamingos. These things are a part of Florida, but what few people realize is that there is much more to the real Florida.

Real Florida includes the lakes and rivers, the wetlands, estuaries and coastal savannas, and the pine flatwoods. It includes the tropical hardwood hammocks of extreme southern Florida, the dry scrub of the central peninsula, and the rich slope forests of northern Florida and the Panhandle. What do all of these places have in common? Plants!

Plants are important for many reasons—they provide food, jobs, medicines, wildlife habitat and places of beauty. There are more than 80 different plant communities in Florida, some of which are unique in the world. These communities include more than 2,400 native plant species, many of which are found only in Florida. Plants are an important part of what Florida is—they give us a sense of place.

SO... WITH ALL OF THESE PLANTS TO CHOOSE FROM, LANDSCAPING SHOULD BE A SNAP!

Living in Florida means you have lots of plant choices for your yard, both native and exotic. Exotic plants are plants that have been brought into the state from elsewhere in the world. Some exotic plants grow so well in Florida's environment that they spread from the yard into natural areas and can crowd out the native plants and animals we are trying to protect!

Take the time to learn about a plant before you buy it. This information can help you decide where (and whether) to plant it in your yard. Native plant landscaping is based on the principle of putting the right plant in the right place. Rather than first choosing your plants and then modifying the site to suit them—a process that often requires much time, effort, topsoil, fertilizer, pesticide, water and mulch—first determine the nature of your site (such as soil pH, content and moisture, and amount of sunlight), then select the native plants that will thrive in that location.

Native plants have adapted over many centuries to nature's harshest conditions: heat, humidity, insects, storms, floods, freeze, frost, and drought. The wise use of native plants can do much to eliminate the monotony and lifelessness of the typical urban setting. Native plants and diversity of wildlife are intertwined. So plant a variety of natives in your landscape, and they will come!

TOP 10 REASONS TO GROW NATIVE:

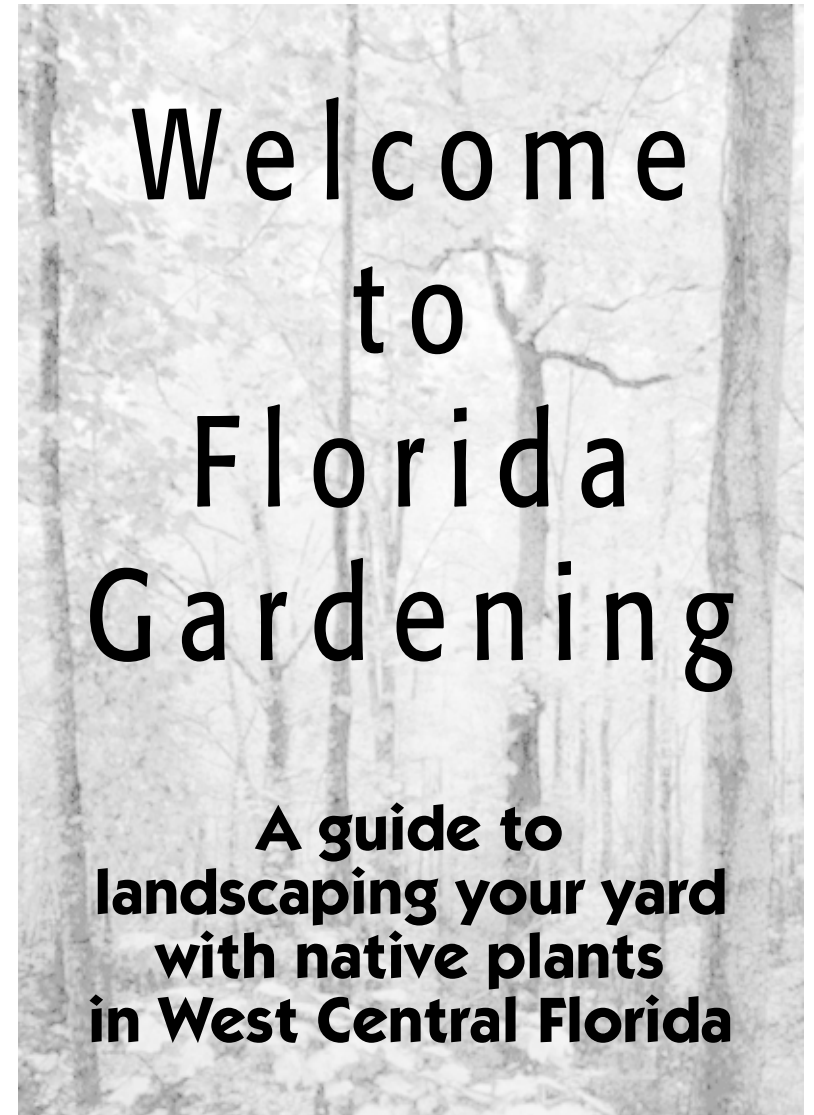
10. Central Florida native plants are ideally adapted to central Florida soils;
9. Birds, butterflies and other wildlife will be attracted to your garden;
8. You'll minimize the need for fertilizers and pesticides;
7. Your plants won't require much maintenance, so you'll have time to enjoy them;
6. Heat and humidity, freeze and frost, dryness and drought will pose little problem for your plants;
5. You'll be preserving Florida's unique natural heritage;
4. You'll have the pleasure of seasonal variations in your garden;
3. Once established, your plants will seldom need supplemental watering, an important feature in this thirsty state;
2. Your landscaping will be unique and interesting;
1. And the number one reason to grow Florida native plants...

IT'S EASY AND FUN!

SUGGESTED BOOKS TO GET YOU STARTED:

- *Butterfly Gardening with Florida's Native Plants*, by Craig Huegel
- *Florida Plants for Wildlife*, by Craig Huegel
- *Florida Wildflowers in Their Natural Communities*, by Walter Kingsley Taylor
- *The Guide to Florida Wildflowers*, by Walter Kingsley Taylor
- *Florida Wildflowers and Roadside Plants*, by C. Ritchie Bell and Bryan J. Taylor
- *A Gardener's Guide to Florida Native Plants*, by Rufino Osorio
- *Gardening for Florida's Butterflies*, by Pamela F. Traas
- *Florida Butterfly Gardening*, by Marc and Maria Minno
- *The Guide to Florida Wildflowers*, by Walter Kingsley Taylor
- *Landscaping for Florida's Wildlife*, by Joe Schaefer and George Tanner
- *The Right Plants for Dry Places*, by the Suncoast Native Plant Society

Contact your county cooperative extension service and local Florida Native Plant Society chapter for additional information.



Compiled by the Suncoast Native Plant Society,
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Some West Central Florida Favorites:

→ **PALMS**—shrub to tree-size ←

- W L Needle palm, *Rhapidophyllum hystrix*
- W L Dwarf palmetto, *Sabal minor*
- S D W L Cabbage palm, *Sabal palmetto*
- S D W L Saw palmetto, *Serenoa repens*

→ **LARGE TREES**—over 40 feet tall ←

- W L Red maple, *Acer rubrum*
- D L Pignut hickory, *Carya glabra*
- S D W B L Southern red cedar, *Juniperus virginiana*
- W B L Sweet bay, *Magnolia virginiana*
- S D B L Red bay, *Persea borbonia*
- S D L Longleaf pine, *Pinus palustris*
- S D W B L Live oak, *Quercus virginiana*
- W L Bald cypress, *Taxodium distichum*
- D W B L Winged elm, *Ulmus alata*

→ **SMALL TREES**—under 40 feet tall ←

- S D B L Sweet acacia, *Acacia farnesiana*
- W L Fringe tree, *Chionanthus virginicus*
- W B L Swamp dogwood, *Cornus foemina*
- W L Loblolly bay, *Gordonia lasianthus*
- W B L Dahoon holly, *Ilex cassine*
- S D W B L Yaupon holly, *Ilex vomitoria*
- D L Turkey oak, *Quercus laevis*
- W B L Swamp bay, *Persea palustris*
- S D L Tough bumelia, *Sideroxylon tenax*
- S D W B L Hercules club, *Zanthoxylum clava-herculis*

S = Moderate to high salt tolerance
D = Drought tolerant
W = Grows best in a moist area of your yard
B = Larval and/or nectar plant for butterflies
L = Provides food and/or cover for wildlife
s,d,w = applies to some species, but not all

→ **SHRUBS** ←

- S D L American beautyberry, *Callicarpa americana*
- S D B L Coral bean, *Erythrina herbacea*
- S D W B L Florida privet, *Forestiera segregata*
- S D W B L Firebush, *Hamelia patens*
- W St. Andrew's cross, *Hypericum hypericoides*
- W L Yellow anise, *Illicium parviflorum*
- D W L Rusty lyonia, *Lyonia ferruginea*
- S D B L Simpson's stopper, *Myrcianthes fragrans*
- S D W B L Wax myrtle, *Myrica cerifera*
- S D W B L Shiny wild coffee, *Psychotria nervosa*
- S D B L Rouge plant, *Rivina humilis*
- D L Little blueberry, *Vaccinium darrowii*
- D L Shiny blueberry, *Vaccinium myrsinites*
- D W B L Walter's viburnum, *Viburnum obovatum*
- D L Hog plum, *Ximenia americana*

→ **WILDFLOWERS** ←

- W B White swamp milkweed, *Asclepias perennis*
- D B Butterfly weed, *Asclepius tuberosa*
- D Green eyes, *Berlandiera subacaulis*
- W B Golden canna, *Canna flaccida*
- d w B Carphophorus, *Carphophorus* spp.
- B Tickseed, *Coreopsis leavenworthii*
- S W Swamp lily, *Crinum americanum*
- S D B Blanket flower, *Gaillardia pulchella*
- W B Tampa vervain, *Glandularia tampensis*
- W B L Narrowleaf sunflower, *Helianthus angustifolius*
- D B Scorpion-tail, *Heliotropium angiospermum*
- W Prairie iris, *Iris hexagona*
- d w B Blazing star, *Liatris* spp.
- W B L Cardinal flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*
- S D B Spotted beebalm, *Monarda punctata*
- D B Manyflower beardtongue, *Penstemon multiflorus*
- D B Florida false sunflower, *Phoebanthus grandiflorus*
- D B Silkgrass, *Pityopsis graminifolia*
- D B L Blackeyed Susan, *Rudbeckia hirta*
- S D B Tropical sage, *Salvia coccinea*
- s d w B Goldenrod, *Solidago* spp.
- D W Spiderwort, *Tradescantia ohiensis*
- W B Giant ironweed, *Vernonia gigantea*

→ **GROUNDCOVERS** ←

- s W B Water hyssop, *Bacopa* spp.
- D B Twinflower, *Dyschoriste oblongifolia*
- S D B L Beach or dune sunflower, *Helianthus debilis*
- S D L Gopher apple, *Licania michauxii*
- D W B Powderpuff, *Mimosa strigillosa*
- D B Wild pennyroyal, *Piloblephis rigida*
- D B Adam's needle, *Yucca filamentosa*
- S D Coontie, *Zamia pumila*

→ **FERNS** ←

- S W L Leather fern, *Acrostichum danaeifolium*
- W L Swamp fern, *Blechnum serrulatum*
- W L Cinnamon fern, *Osmunda cinnamomea*
- W L Royal fern, *Osmunda regalis*
- W L Southern shield fern, *Thelypteris kunthii*
- W L Netted chain fern, *Woodwardia areolata*

→ **GRASSES** ←

- D W L Wiregrass, *Aristida beyrichiana*
- S D L Elliott's lovegrass, *Eragrostis elliottii*
- D L Purple lovegrass, *Eragrostis spectabilis*
- S D W L Muhly grass, *Muhlenbergia capillaris*
- S D W L Sand cordgrass, *Spartina bakeri*
- D W L Fakahatchee grass, *Tripsacum dactyloides*
- S D L Dwarf fakahatchee grass, *Tripsacum floridanum*

→ **VINES** ←

- W B Climbing aster, *Aster carolinianus*
- D B Carolina jessamine, *Gelsemium sempervirens*
- W Moon flower, *Ipomoea alba*
- D B L Coral honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens*
- S D B L Purple passionflower, *Passiflora incarnata*
- S D B L Corky-stem passionflower, *Passiflora suberosa*

Happy Planting!