

Native Trees for South Florida¹

A.W. Meerow, H.M. Donselman, and T.K. Broschat²

In recent years, the subject of native plants has taken on new significance in Florida horticulture. Some of the reasons for this include the loss of natural areas to development, coastal deterioration due to disturbance of native vegetation, and concern about water use to support exotic landscapes composed of introduced species. The introduction of exotic plants that naturalize and, in some cases, out-compete native species, has become of great concern in various parts of Florida. Fortunately, relatively few of the hundreds of exotic ornamentals that have been introduced into the state fall into this category. Two in particular, Brazilian pepper (*Schinusterebinthifoliosus*) and punk tree (*Melaleucaquinquenervia*) have become noxious weeds in central and south Florida.

Many counties are considering landscape ordinances that require that a percentage of native plant materials be used in all future developments. Several have already implemented such ordinances. This will result in a need for wider availability of native plant materials. Woody landscape plant producers, landscape architects, and home gardeners

in Florida need to become informed about and prepared for the production and cultural needs of native plants.

In actuality, native plants are not really new to our nursery industry. Many native trees are already well-represented in the inventories of south Florida nurseries. Such "staples" of Florida horticulture as sea grape (*Coccolobauvifera*), cabbage palm (*Sabalpalmetto*), mahogany (*Swieteniamahagoni*), bald cypress (*Taxodiumdistichum*), southern red cedar (*Juniperussilicicola*), live oak (*Quercusvirginiana*), southern magnolia (*Magnoliagrandidflora*), gumbo limbo (*Burserasimaruba*), and silver buttonwood (*Conocarpuserectus* var. *sericeus*) are all native to the state.

Arguments for the Use of Native Plants

A number of claims both for and against the use of native plants have been proposed. Some claims made in favor of native plants are:

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 2. A. W. Meerow, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Ft. Lauderdale-REC; H.M. Donselman, former associate professor; T.K. Broschat, Professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Ft. Lauderdale-REC, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611. The Florida Energy Extension Service receives funding from the Energy Office, Department of Community Affairs, and is operated by the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences through the Cooperative Extension Service. The information contained herein is the product of the Florida Energy Extension Service and does not necessarily reflect the view of the Florida Energy office.

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1. **Energy efficiency:** Because native plants are adapted to our soils, temperatures and rainfall patterns, they require less irrigation and fertilization. This argument can be true if several factors hold, namely that the right native has been chosen for the site to be landscaped, and the original soil profile and hydrology at the site have not been altered. For example, a wetland species like pond apple, *Annonaglabra*, is not going to prosper if planted on dry, limestone fill. All too often, native topsoils have been removed and water flow patterns changed during development. If such is the case, an attempt to recreate the original composition of trees and shrubs may fail. Of course, any newly planted tree, whether native or exotic, will require regular irrigation until it becomes established.

2. **Low maintenance:** Native plants are resistant to pests and diseases in Florida because they have evolved under constant exposure to these organisms. Plants do not evolve in isolation. The resistance to pests and diseases is sometimes as much a result of interactions between the plants that make up a vegetational association as it is because of the individual genetic resources of any one particular species. Native plants may not demonstrate any "advantages" in this respect when planted in disturbed sites or mixed with species not usually associated with them. And certainly, as with any new planting, regular care during establishment is necessary.

3. **Ecological-educational factor:** The use of native trees in landscapes preserves the state's natural resources. This argument is perhaps the best one for wider use of native plants. Florida's continued rise in population does place enormous pressures on our native vegetation. The educational benefits of native plant landscapes are of great value, particularly in teaching new residents about our state's natural bounty.

Arguments Against the Use of Native Plants

Claims made against the landscape use of native plants include:

1. **They are slow-growing.** Plants differ in their growth rates as much as in any other characteristic. Native plants range as widely in this category as exotics. In many cases, slow growth rates can be improved with regulated nutritional levels during production. Cultivar selection and evaluation programs also can improve slow growth rates. In some situations, slow growth rates may be advantageous; for example, slower growing trees will require less pruning to control size or prevent interference with power lines.

2. **They are unattractive.** Native plants include attractive trees like satin leaf (*Chrysophyllum oliviforme*) and more homely species such as wax myrtle (*Myricacerifera*). Both have a niche in landscape situations.

3. **Their propagation is difficult, therefore native plants are expensive.** Certain plants become widely available in the trade in part because they are easy to produce. This knowledge comes about through research, in both the private and public sectors. It is true that many choice native species are tricky to propagate successfully, but on the whole, this is due to the fact that few research efforts have been applied in that direction. This is now beginning to change.

4. **They are generally unavailable.** Even with the limited amount of in-depth knowledge on native plant propagation, there are currently more than 50 nurseries within the state listed by the Association of Florida Native Nurseries, with a combined plant inventory of more than 500 species. A substantial number of native species are already represented in the inventories of "traditional" nurseries.

Landscape Situations for Native Trees

In certain landscape situations, native plants are particularly desirable. These include:

1. *New development with pre-existing vegetation in which a tree canopy has been retained.* Some showy exotics can look out of place in landscapes in which a great deal of pre-existing native vegetation has been spared the bulldozer's

blade. In such developments, the use of additional native materials may create a more harmonious and aesthetic effect.

2. *Environmentally sensitive areas such as the coastal strand, barrier islands, and wetlands.* These areas have suffered a great deal of mismanagement and shortsighted development. Many of the plants native to these environmentally sensitive areas are particularly adapted to the specialized conditions found there. The use of these native plants may actually help to slow further deterioration of some of these environments.
3. *Public areas (parks, beaches, nature centers).* Native plants should be a priority in public areas for their environmental and educational value.

Considering Site Factors

The characteristics of the planting site must be carefully considered when choosing native plant materials for landscaping. First, some concerns relating to the past history of the site must be addressed.

What was the original vegetation of the area? This knowledge will indicate which native plants will perform best on the site. Assuming the native soil and hydrology have not been modified, native species that once grew in a given location are likely to do better when re-planted than species from very different types of native habitat.

Have the native soil and/or hydrology been modified? During development, topsoil is often removed and original drainage patterns disturbed. Fill soil of very different quality may have been brought in to replace the topsoil removed. If such is the case, it may be impossible to re-establish the same species that once grew on the site, or it may require a great deal of maintenance to do so.

Additional consideration must be given to the present condition of the site. Does the site accumulate standing water? What is the soil type: muck? white sand? coral rock? Is there salt spray exposure on the site? Will the landscape plants have to be integrated with turf, and possibly be subjected

to turf-oriented irrigation practices? All of these factors will influence the degree of success with which particular native species will perform in a landscape. The size of the lot also may restrict the use of some species whose mature dimensions require a lot of space.

Finally, certain aesthetic factors come into play when choosing natives, just as they do with exotic plant materials. What landscape functions need to be fulfilled? Should the trees primarily provide shade, barrier effects, beauty in the form of flowers or fruit, or is low maintenance the main criterion for plant selection?



1. The paurotis palm (*Acoelorrhaphe wrightii*) is a native, clumping palm that makes an attractive vertical accent in close spaces

Planting Native Trees

Planting native tree species is no different from planting exotics. Amending the backfill soil (the soil originally excavated from and then returned to the planting hole) is not recommended. The top of the root ball of nursery stock should be placed in the soil



2. Pigeon plum (*Coccoloba diversifolia*), a hardwood hammock-dwelling relative of the sea grape, makes a fine, slow-growing urban tree.



3. The geiger tree (*Cordia sebestena*) has spectacular orange flowers and a high salt tolerance.

at the same depth at which it grew in the field or the container. Large masses of circling roots in container stock should be slit lengthwise to stimulate lateral root production. It may be necessary or desirable to reduce top growth; this should be accomplished by *thinning out* (the well-distributed removal of one or several branches at their point of origin), rather than *heading back* (cutting all top growth back to approximately the same level). Thinning cuts will preserve the natural shape of the tree.

The trees should be regularly irrigated after planting, and a mulch of organic material is recommended. A top-dressing of a slow-release fertilizer can be applied within the dripline of the tree before the mulch is placed down. If rainfall is received on a regular basis in the first few months after planting, this may be sufficient for establishment of small container stock (1 gallon size). If not, periodic irrigation will be necessary. Larger plants may require a year or more to properly establish in the landscape. The frequency of irrigation (weekly, to several times per week during the first few months)

will depend on temperature and the water-holding capacity of the soil. Irrigation frequency can be reduced in successive months. Generally, the production of new growth is the best indication that a tree is becoming established. Supplementary fertilization 1 to 2 times per year may be desirable, at least during the first year after planting. Some native plant producers recommend using fertilizer formulations with good trace mineral analyses traditionally designed for palms, particularly if the native trees are being planted on fill soils.

How to Use the Selection Table

Table 1 and Table 2 of native tree species suitable for use in south Florida will help in making the right choices for various landscape situations. The list is by no means a complete inventory of the subtropical or tropical tree species that are native to the state. However, the list is representative of those native trees that have proven themselves in the landscape, are available from nurseries, or are judged worthy of wider use and availability. The trees in the tables are arranged alphabetically by scientific name, accompanied by one or more common names (same list of trees in both tables).

Special attention should be paid to environmental factors such as soil pH, light requirements, and drought and salt tolerances (Table 1). Table 2 offers information on plant type, shape, flower color, flower characteristics, flowering season, and uses for the native trees listed. In Table 1, *drought tolerance* refers only to Florida conditions and should be interpreted as follows:

High: will not require supplemental irrigation *after* establishment; *Medium:* may require occasional irrigation during periods of unusual water stress; and *Low:* will require supplemental irrigation during periods of drought.

Salt tolerance (Table 1) should be interpreted as follows: *High:* will withstand direct salt spray and soil salinity; *Medium:* should be protected from direct salt spray but will withstand moderately saline conditions; and *Low:* sensitive to salt.

Under the category of Hardiness Zone, *subtropical* refers to the transitional area between central and tropical Florida where an occasional winter frost will occur. *Tropical* refers to southernmost mainland Florida and the Keys where winter frosts are rare to nonexistent. To illustrate, silver buttonwood is categorized in Table 1 as a subtropical/tropical tree with a high tolerance for salt and drought. Before installing a large-scale landscape using native trees listed as *tropical* only, it is best to confer with your county cooperative extension service agent about minimum winter temperatures expected in your area. If a particular species can be used in central and north Florida as well, this has been indicated (Table 1).



4. The silver buttonwood (*Conocarpus erectus* var. *sericeus*) is a very salt- and drought-tolerant species.

Obtaining Native Plants

Native plants should not be transplanted from the wild without the permission of the landowner, and never from public lands. In general, it is best to leave wild populations intact, unless the plants face destruction from development. Superior clones in native populations should be identified where possible, and nursery stock propagated vegetatively or from seed. The advantages of seed vs. clonal propagation is that a degree of the genetic diversity of the species is maintained in cultivation.

There is a place in Florida horticulture for both superior exotic and native ornamentals. The "native plant movement" should not be looked upon as a threat, but as an impetus to add to the diversity of landscape materials at our disposal in Florida.

Table 1. Height, growth rate, soil pH, hardiness zone, salt tolerance, drought tolerance, light requirements, and nutritional requirements of native trees for south Florida.

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Natural Height (in feet) | Growth Rate | Soil pH | Hardiness Zone* | Salt Tolerance | Light Requirement | Drought Tolerance | Nutritional Requirement |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Acacia farnesiana</i> | Sweet acacia | 10-12 | Medium | Wide | C,ST,T | Medium | High | High | Medium |
| <i>Acer rubrum</i> | Red maple | 35-50 | Fast | Wide | C,N,ST | Low | High | Low | Low |
| <i>Acoelorrhaphe wrightii</i> | Paurotis palm, everglades palm | 15-25 | Slow | Wide | C,ST,T | Medium | Medium, high | Medium | Medium |
| <i>Amphitecna (Enallagma) latifolia</i> | Black calabash | 20-30 | Medium | Wide | ST,T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Annona glabra</i> | Pond apple, alligator apple | 25-40 | Medium | Wide | C,ST,T | Medium | High | Low | Low |
| <i>Ardisia escallonioides</i> | Marberry, marleberry | 15-25 | Medium | Wide | ST,T | High | Medium, high, low | Medium | Low |
| <i>Avicennia germinans</i> | Black mangrove | 20-30 | Medium | Wide | T | High | High | Low | Low |
| <i>Bourreria succulenta</i> var. <i>revoluta</i> | Strongbark | 20 | Medium | Wide | ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Bumelia</i> spp. | Buckthorn, saffron plum, bumelia | 20-40 | Medium | Wide | C,N,ST,T | Medium, low | Medium | Medium, high | Medium |
| <i>Bursera simaruba</i> | Gumbo limbo, tourist tree | 40-60 | Medium | Wide | ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Canella alba</i> | Wild cinnamon | 20-35 | Slow | Wide | ST,T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Chrysophyllum oliviforme</i> | Satin leaf | 30-40 | Slow | Wide | ST,T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Citharexylum fruticosum</i> | Fiddlewood | 25-30 | Slow | Wide | C,ST,T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Clusia rosea</i> | Pitch apple, autograph tree | 25-30 | Slow | Wide | T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Coccoloba diversifolia</i> | Pigeon plum | 25-30 | Slow | Wide | ST,T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Coccoloba uvifera</i> | Sea grape | 15-30 | Medium | Wide | ST,T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Coccothrinax argentata</i> | Silver palm | 10-20 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | High | Medium, high | High | Low |
| <i>Conocarpus erectus</i> | Buttonwood | 30-50 | Medium | Wide | ST,T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Cordia sebestena</i> | Geiger tree | 20-25 | Medium | Wide | T | High | High | High | Low |

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|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Dipholis salicifolia</i> | Willow-leaved busic | 30-50 | Medium | Wide | ST, T | Low | High | Medium | Low |
| <i>Eugenia</i> spp. | Stoppers | 15-20 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | High | Medium, high | High | Low |
| <i>Exostema caribaeum</i> | Princewood | 20-25 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | Low | High | Medium | Medium |
| <i>Ficus aurea</i> | Strangler fig | 40-50 | Fast | Wide | ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Ficus citrifolia</i> | Shortleaf fig | 40-50 | Fast | Wide | ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Gordonia lasianthus</i> | Loblolly bay | 30-40 | Medium | Wide | C, N, ST | Low | High | Low | Medium |
| <i>Guaiacum sanctum</i> | Lignum vitae | 10-20 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Guapira discolor</i> | Blolly | 35-50 | Medium | Wide | ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Guettarda elliptica</i> | Everglades velvetseed | 10-20 | Medium | Alkaline | T | Low | Medium | Low | Medium |
| <i>Guettarda scabra</i> | Rough velvetseed | 15-30 | Medium | Alkaline | T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Gymnanthes lucida</i> | Crabwood | 15-30 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i> | Mahoe, sea hibiscus | 30-45 | Fast | Wide | ST, T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Hypelate trifoliata</i> | White ironwood | 30-40 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Ilex cassine</i> | Dahoon holly | 25-40 | Medium | Acid | C, N, ST | Medium | High | Medium | Low |
| <i>Ilex krugiana</i> | Tawnyberry holly | 25-40 | Medium | Wide | T | High | Medium | Medium | Medium |
| <i>Ilex vomitoria</i> | Yaupon holly | 20-25 | Medium | Wide | C, N, ST | High | Medium, high | High | Low |
| <i>Juniperus silicicola</i> | Southern juniper | 25-30 | Medium | Wide | C, N, ST | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Krugiodendron ferreum</i> | Black ironwood | 20-30 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Languncularia racemosa</i> | White mangrove, white buttonwood | 40-60 | Medium | Wide | ST, T | High | High | Low | Low |
| <i>Lysiloma latifolia</i> | Wild tamarind | 40-50 | Fast | Wide | ST, T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Magnolia grandiflora</i> | Southern magnolia | 60-100 | Medium | Acid | C, N, ST | High | High | High | Medium |
| <i>Magnolia virginiana</i> | Sweetbay | 40-60 | Medium | Acid | C, N, ST, T | Low | High | Low | Medium |

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|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Mastochodendron foetidissimum</i> | Mastic | 45-70 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Myrcianthes fragrans</i> | Twinberry | 20-30 | Medium | Wide | ST, T | High | Medium, high | High | Low |
| <i>Myrica cerifera</i> | Wax myrtle | 15-25 | Medium | Wide | C, N, ST | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Nectandra coriacea</i> | Lancewood | 30-40 | Medium | Wide | C, ST, T | Low | High | Medium | Medium |
| <i>Persea borbonia</i> | Red bay | 50-60 | Medium | Wide | C, N, ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Pinus clausa</i> | Sand pine | 60-80 | Slow | Wide | C, N, ST | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Pinus elliotii</i> var. <i>densa</i> | South Florida slash | 80-100 | Fast | Wide | C, ST, T | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Piscidia piscipula</i> | Jamaican dogwood, fish-poison tree | 35-50 | Fast | Wide | T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Plantanus occidentalis</i> | Sycamore | 70-110 | Fast | Wide | C, N, ST | Low | High | Low | Medium |
| <i>Prunus myrtifolia</i> | West Indian cherry | 15-40 | Medium | Wide | T | Low | High | Medium | Medium |
| <i>Psuedophoenix sargentii</i> | Buccaneer palm, cherry palm | 10-15 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | High | Medium, high | High | Medium |
| <i>Quercus laurifolia</i> | Laurel oak | 60-100 | Fast | Wide | C, N, ST | Low | High | High | Low |
| <i>Quercus virginiana</i> | Live oak | 50-80 | Medium | Wide | C, N, ST | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Reynosa septentrionalis</i> | Darling plum | 20-30 | Slow | Wide | ST, T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Rhizophora mangle</i> | Red mangrove | 30-80 | Medium | Wide | ST, T | High | High | Low | Low |
| <i>Roystonea elata</i> | Florida royal palm | 60-125 | Medium | Wide | ST, T | Medium | High | Medium | Medium |
| <i>Sabal palmetto</i> | Cabbage palmetto, sabal palm | 45-70 | Slow | Wide | C, N, ST, T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Salix caroliniana</i> | Coastal plain willow | 20-30 | Fast | Wide | C, N, ST | Low | High | Low | Low |
| <i>Sapindus saponaria</i> | Soapberry | 35-45 | Medium | Wide | C, ST, T | High | High | High | Low |

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|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Schaefferia frutescens</i> | Florida boxwood | 20-40 | Slow | Alkaline | T | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium |
| <i>Simarouba glauca</i> | Paradise tree | 35-50 | Slow | Wide | T | Medium | High | High | Medium |
| <i>Swietenia mahogany</i> | Mahogany | 35-60 | Fast | Wide | ST,T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Taxodium distichum</i> | Bald cypress | 60-100 | Medium | Wide | C,N,ST | Medium | High | High | Low |
| <i>Tecoma stans</i> | Yellow elder | 10-20 | Fast | Wide | ST,T | Medium | High | High | Medium |
| <i>Thrinax morrisii</i> | Key thatch palm | 15-30 | Slow | Wide | ST,T | High | Medium, high | High | Low |
| <i>Thrinax parviflora</i> | Florida thatch palm | 20-25 | Slow | Wide | ST,T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Thrinax radiata</i> | Thatch palm | 15-25 | Slow | Wide | ST,T | High | Medium, high | High | Low |
| <i>Tilia floridana</i> | Florida basswood | 30-60 | Fast | Acid | C,N,ST, | Low | Medium | Low | High |
| <i>Ximenia americana</i> | Tallowwood plum | 20-25 | Medium | Wide | ST,T | High | High | High | Low |
| <i>Zanthoxylum clava-herculis</i> | Hercules club, toothache tree | 25-50 | Medium | Wide | C,N,ST | Medium | Medium | High | Medium |
| <i>Zanthoxylum fagara</i> | Wild lime | 20-30 | Medium | Wide | ST,T | High | High | High | Low |

*C=Central; ST=Subtropical; T=Tropical; N=North

Table 2. Plant type, foliage and flower color, flower characteristics, flowering season, uses and notes for native trees for south Florida.

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Plant Type | Shape | Flower Color | Flower Characteristics | Flowering Season | Uses | Notes |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|------------------|---|--|
| <i>Acacia farnesiana</i> | Sweet acacia | Evergreen | Oval, round | Yellow | Showy, fragrant | Year-round | Parks; medians | Small, thorny, bushy tree. Flowers used for perfume. |
| <i>Acer rubrum</i> | Red maple | Deciduous | Oval | Red | Showy | Winter, spring | Shade; perimeters; parking lots; medians; boulevards; residences; buffers | Excellent red fall color. Good for wet sites. |

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| <i>Acroelorrhaphe wrightii</i> | Purotis palm, everglades palm | Palm | Upright, clumping | White | Insignificant | Spring | Medians; residences; buffers | Susceptible to manganese deficiencies. |
| <i>Amphitecna (Enallagma) latifolia</i> | Black calabash | Evergreen | Round | Yellow | Insignificant | Spring | Parks; residences | Not particularly wind resistant. |
| <i>Annona glabra</i> | Pond apple, alligator apple | Evergreen | Oval | Whitish-yellow | Insignificant | Year-round | Buffers | Good for swampy sites. |
| <i>Ardisia escallonioides</i> | Marlberry, marlberry | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant, fragrant | Fall | Residences; buffers | Often shrubby. Attracts wildlife. |
| <i>Avicennia germinans</i> | Black mangrove | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant, fragrant | Spring | Parks; residences (along estuaries); perimeters | Grows in brackish water sites. |
| <i>Bourreria succulenta</i> var. <i>revoluta</i> | Strongbark | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant | Year-round | Residences | Can be a large shrub. Native to the Keys. |
| <i>Bumelia</i> spp. | Buckthorn, saffron plum, bumelia | Deciduous, evergreen | Round | White | Insignificant | Fall | Perimeters; parks; parking lots | Several native spp. reach tree size; not all are cold hardy; thorny. |
| <i>Bursera simaruba</i> | Gumbo limbo, tourist tree | Deciduous | Round | Green | Insignificant | Winter, spring | Shade; perimeters; parking lots; boulevards; residences | Large branches will root directly in the ground. Attractive bark. |
| <i>Canella alba</i> | Wild cinnamon | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant | Spring, summer | Residences | An attractive native flowering tree. Not readily available. |
| <i>Chrysophyllum oliviforme</i> | Satin leaf | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant | Fall | Shade; parking lots; medians; boulevards; residences; parks | Leaves glossy on top and bronzy satin below. |

Table 2. Plant type, foliage and flower color, flower characteristics, flowering season, uses and notes for native trees for south Florida.

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Plant Type | Shape | Flower Color | Flower Characteristics | Flowering Season | Uses | Notes |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--|--|
| <i>Citharexylum fruticosum</i> | Fiddlewood | Evergreen | Round | White | Insignificant, fragrant | Year-round | Parks; boulevards; residences | Forms with hairy leaves also occur. |
| <i>Clusia rosea</i> | Pitch apple, autograph tree | Evergreen | Round | Pink and white | Showy | Summer | Parks; residences | Has stilt roots. Leaves very tough and leathery. |
| <i>Coccoloba diversifolia</i> | Pigeon plum | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant | Spring | Residences; parks; parking lots; medians; boulevards | Attractive bark. Variable leaf shape and size. Good small native tree. |
| <i>Coccoloba uvifera</i> | Sea grape | Evergreen | Round, spreading | White | Insignificant | Summer | Edible fruit; buffers; parks | Edible fruit used for jelly. Good seaside plant. Broad spreading. |
| <i>Coccothrinax argentata</i> | Silver palm | Palm | Single-trunked | White | Showy | Summer | Residences; medians; parks; parking lots | Excellent slow-growing native palm. Other similar species available. |
| <i>Conocarpus erectus</i> | Buttonwood | Evergreen | Round | Orange, purplish-green | Insignificant | Summer | Residences; parks; boulevards; medians; parking lots | Good seaside plant. A silver-leafed variety is widely grown. |
| <i>Cordia sebestena</i> | Geiger tree | Evergreen | Oval | Orange | Showy | Year-round | Residences; parks; boulevards | Frequently attacked by geiger beetles that feed on leaves. |
| <i>Dipholis salicifolia</i> | Willow-leaved busic | Evergreen | Round | White | Insignificant | Year-round | Residences; parks | Many species, some with edible fruits. |
| <i>Eugenia</i> spp. | Stoppers | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant | Spring, summer | Residences; parks | Many species, some with edible fruits. |

Table 2. Plant type, foliage and flower color, flower characteristics, flowering season, uses and notes for native trees for south Florida.

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Plant Type | Shape | Flower Color | Flower Characteristics | Flowering Season | Uses | Notes |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Exostema caribaeum</i> | Princewood | Evergreen | Oval | White | Showy, fragrant | Spring, summer | Parks; residences | Hard wood used for cabinetwork. |
| <i>Ficus aurea</i> | Strangler fig | Evergreen | Spreading | Orange | Insignificant | Summer | Parks; shade | This native fig often begins its life as an epiphyte. |
| <i>Ficus citrifolia</i> | Shortleaf fig | Evergreen | Round | Yellow | Insignificant | Year-round | Residences; parks; boulevards | A native fig without aerial roots. Well-adapted for south Florida. |
| <i>Gordonia lasianthus</i> | Loblolly bay | Evergreen | Oval | White | Showy, fragrant | Summer | Residences; shade; parks; boulevards | A good native for wet areas. Only for northern part of south Florida. |
| <i>Guaiacum sanctum</i> | Lignum vitae | Evergreen | Round | Blue | Showy | Year-round | Residences; parks | A small, slow-growing native tree. G.officinale is similar. |
| <i>Guapira discolor</i> | Blolly | Evergreen | Round | Greenish-yellow | Insignificant | Spring, summer | Residences; shade; boulevards; parks | A drought-tolerant native tree. |
| <i>Guettarda elliptica</i> | Everglades velvetseed | Evergreen | Oval | Yellow | Showy | Spring | Parks; residences; shade | A small, tropical hammock tree with some shade tolerance. |
| <i>Guettarda scabra</i> | Rough velvetseed | Evergreen | Oval | White | Showy | Winter, spring | Parks; parking lots; residences | An attractive, salt-tolerant coastal native for south Florida. |
| <i>Gymnanthes lucida</i> | Crabwood | Evergreen | Oval | Red | Insignificant | N/A | Residences; parks | A small native tree that is not readily available. |

Table 2. Plant type, foliage and flower color, flower characteristics, flowering season, uses and notes for native trees for south Florida.

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Plant Type | Shape | Flower Color | Flower Characteristics | Flowering Season | Uses | Notes |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---|---|
| <i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i> | Mahoe, sea hibiscus | Evergreen | Round, spreading | Yellow, red | Showy | Year-round | Parks; buffers; problem tree | Wood can be weak. Requires shaping to be tree-like; weedy. |
| <i>Hypelate trifoliata</i> | White ironwood | Evergreen | Round | White | Insignificant | Spring, summer | Residences; parks | A small native tree. May not be readily available. |
| <i>Ilex cassine</i> | Dahoon holly | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant | Spring | Parks; perimeters; residences | Red-berried native holly. Grows in boggy sites. |
| <i>Ilex krugiana</i> | Tawnyberry holly | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant | Spring | Parks; residences; shade | A native, tropical holly. |
| <i>Ilex vomitoria</i> | Yaupon holly | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant | Spring, summer | Residences; parks; buffers | Selected varieties available. |
| <i>Juniperus silicicola</i> | Southern juniper | Evergreen | Pyramidal | Brown | Cone | Spring | Perimeters; parks; residences; buffers | This native pyramidal tree is well-adapted to Florida landscapes. |
| <i>Krugiodendron ferreum</i> | Black ironwood | Evergreen | Round | Greenish-yellow, green, yellow | Insignificant | Spring | Residences; parks; boulevards | Slow-growing; dense-wooded. |
| <i>Laguncularia racemosa</i> | White mangrove, white buttonwood | Evergreen | Oval | Green | Insignificant, fragrant | Spring | Shade; parks; perimeters; residences; buffers | Grows best in warm coastal areas. |
| <i>Lysiloma latisiqua</i> | Wild tamarind | Deciduous | Weeping, spreading | White | Insignificant | Spring, summer | Residences; shade; boulevards; parks; parking lots; medians | This outstanding tree has a weeping shape. |
| <i>Magnolia grandiflora</i> | Southern magnolia | Evergreen | Oval | White | Showy, fragrant | Spring | Residences; parks; shade; perimeters; buffers; medians | This hardy tree has large, leathery leaves and showy flowers. |

Table 2. Plant type, foliage and flower color, flower characteristics, flowering season, uses and notes for native trees for south Florida.

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Plant Type | Shape | Flower Color | Flower Characteristics | Flowering Season | Uses | Notes |
|--|------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| <i>Magnolia virginiana</i> | Sweetbay | Deciduous | Oval | White | Showy, fragrant | Summer | Residences; shade; parks; medians; boulevards | Good for wet sites. Attractive silvery leaves. |
| <i>Mastichodendron foetidissimum</i> | Mastic | Evergreen | Round | Greenish-yellow | Insignificant | Spring, summer, fall | Shade; perimeters; parking lots; medians; residences | Female trees have messy fruit. |
| <i>Myrcianthes fragrans</i> | Twinberry | Evergreen | Round | White | Insignificant, fragrant | Year-round | Residences; parks; medians; boulevards | A native shrub that can be pruned into a small tree. |
| <i>Myrica cerifera</i> | Wax myrtle | Evergreen | Oval | White | Insignificant | Summer, spring | Residences; parks; buffers; problem tree | Can be weedy. Root suckers profusely and stains masonry. |
| <i>Nectandra coriacea</i> | Lancewood | Evergreen | Oval, round | White | Insignificant | Year-round | Shade; perimeters; residences; buffers | A small native tree for the Keys. |
| <i>Persea borbonia</i> | Red bay | Evergreen | Oval, round | Green | Insignificant | Spring | Residences; parks; shade; boulevards | Good for wet sites. Insect galls disfigure leaves. |
| <i>Pinus clausa</i> | Sand pine | Evergreen | Oval | Brown | Cone | Spring | Parks; shade; residences | Very tolerant of dry, sandy soils. |
| <i>Pinus ellioti</i> var. <i>densa</i> | South Florida slash | Evergreen | Oval | Brown | Cone | Spring | Parks; residences; buffers; boulevards | Intolerant of grade changes, irrigation, and traffic above the root system. |
| <i>Piscidia piscipula</i> | Jamaican dogwood, fish-poison tree | Evergreen | Spreading | Whitish-lavender, white, lavender | Showy | Spring | Parks; residences; medians | Bark and other tree parts have been used to stun fish. Native to the Keys. |
| <i>Plantanus occidentalis</i> | Sycamore | Deciduous | Oval, round | Green | Insignificant | Spring | Parks; residences; shade; boulevards | Large deciduous tree for moist sites. Exfoliating bark. |

Table 2. Plant type, foliage and flower color, flower characteristics, flowering season, uses and notes for native trees for south Florida.

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Plant Type | Shape | Flower Color | Flower Characteristics | Flowering Season | Uses | Notes |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| <i>Prunus myrtifolia</i> | West Indian cherry | Evergreen | Round | White | Insignificant | Spring | Parks; residences; shade | A tropical substitute for cherry laurel (<i>P. caroliniana</i>) |
| <i>Pseudophoenix sargentii</i> | Buccaneer palm, cherry palm | Palm | Single-trunked | Yellow | Insignificant | Summer | Residences; parks | A very slow-growing, small native palm. |
| <i>Quercus laurifolia</i> | Laurel oak | Evergreen | Oval | Green | Insignificant | Spring | Shade; residences; parks; boulevards | A fast-growing, but comparatively short-lived tree. |
| <i>Quercus Virginiana</i> | Live oak | Evergreen | Spreading | Green | Insignificant | Spring | Shade; boulevards; residences; parks | A wind-resistant, long-lived oak. |
| <i>Reynosa septentrionalis</i> | Darling plum | Evergreen | Round | Greenish-yellow | Insignificant | Spring, summer | Residences; parks; boulevards | Fruits are edible. |
| <i>Rhizophora mangle</i> | Red mangrove | Evergreen | Round, pyramidal | Yellow | Insignificant | Year-round | Parks | A native stilt-rooted tree or shrub growing in salt or brackish water. |
| <i>Roystonea elata</i> | Florida royal palm | Palm | Single-trunked, columnar | Yellow | Insignificant | Spring | Parks; residences; boulevards; perimeters | Trunk diameter more uniform than the Cuban royal palm. |
| <i>Sabal palmetto</i> | Cabbage palmetto, sabal palm | Palm | Single-trunked | White | Insignificant | Spring, summer, fall | Residences; parks; boulevards; parking lots; medians; perimeters | Our state tree. Small plants are difficult to transplant. |
| <i>Salix caroliniana</i> | Coastal plain willow | Evergreen | Round | Green | Insignificant | Spring | Parks | Grows in wet areas around lakes and ponds. |
| <i>Sapindus saponaria</i> | Soapberry | Deciduous | Oval, round | White | Insignificant | Winter, spring | Parks; residences; boulevards | Fruit contains a soap-like material used in some tropical countries. |
| <i>Schaefferia frutescens</i> | Florida boxwood | Evergreen | Oval | Green | Insignificant | Spring | Perimeters; parks | Useful as a large, informal hedge. |

Table 2. Plant type, foliage and flower color, flower characteristics, flowering season, uses and notes for native trees for south Florida.

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Plant Type | Shape | Flower Color | Flower Characteristics | Flowering Season | Uses | Notes |
|---------------------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| <i>Simarouba glauca</i> | Paradise tree | Evergreen | Oval | Yellow | Insignificant | Spring | Residences; parks; boulevards | Does well in exposed locations. New foliage is red. |
| <i>Swietenia mahogany</i> | Mahogany | Evergreen | Round | Greenish-yellow | Insignificant | Spring | Residences; shade; parks; boulevards; medians; parking lots | Tolerates high winds. Mahogany webworm often defoliates tree briefly. |
| <i>Taxodium distichum</i> | Bald cypress | Deciduous | Oval, pyramidal | Green | Cone | Spring | Parks; shade; residences; boulevards | Pyramidal growth habit when young. Var. <i>nutans</i> common and more upright. |
| <i>Tecoma stans</i> | Yellow elder | Evergreen | Round | Yellow | Showy | Year-round | Residences; parks; boulevards | Must be trained and shaped into a tree. |
| <i>Thrinax morrisii</i> | Key thatch palm | Palm | Single-trunked | White | Showy | Spring | Residences; parks; medians | A slow-growing native. Other species of thrinax are cultivated. |
| <i>Thrinax parviflora</i> | Florida thatch palm | Palm | Single-trunked | White | Showy | Spring, summer, fall | Residences; parks; medians | A slow-growing native palm. Rarely cultivated. |
| <i>Thrinax radiata</i> | Thatch palm | Palm | Single-trunked | White | Showy | Spring | Residences; parks; medians | An excellent slow-growing native palm. Not widely available. |
| <i>Tilia floridana</i> | Florida basswood | Deciduous | Round | Yellow | Insignificant | Spring, summer | Buffers; parks; residences; shade | Sprouts vigorously from base. Good nectar source for bees. |
| <i>Ximenia americana</i> | Tallowwood plum | Evergreen | Oval | Yellow | Insignificant | Year-round | Parks; residences | Spiny stems, edible fruits. |

Table 2. Plant type, foliage and flower color, flower characteristics, flowering season, uses and notes for native trees for south Florida.

| Scientific Name | Common Name | Plant Type | Shape | Flower Color | Flower Characteristics | Flowering Season | Uses | Notes |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|------------------|--------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---|
| <i>Zanthoxylum clava-herculis</i> | Hercules club, toothache tree | Deciduous | Round | White | Insignificant | Spring | Buffers; perimeters; parks | Thorny. |
| <i>Zanthoxylum fagara</i> | Wild lime | Evergreen | Round, spreading | Green | Insignificant | Year-round | Parks; residences | Has recurved prickles. Foliage has lime aroma when bruised. |