

Native Plants

What is a native plant?

Although many definitions exist, the term “native” is widely used to describe a plant species that existed naturally in an area prior to European contact (~1500), and not as a result of direct or indirect human influence.

Tips on Selecting Native Plants

Plant Origin: For plants that have a wide natural range, plant origin/source should be considered. This is because species derived from more northern climates or different environmental conditions may not grow well under Florida conditions, which could affect growth, flowering, seed yield, plant quality and overall survival of the plant.

Right Plant, Right Place: It is important to never select native plants simply because they are native. Instead, select them because it is the “right plant for the right place.” Because residential and commercial landscapes typically have disturbed soils or areas where fill dirt has been brought on site, native plants cannot automatically be expected to thrive in these environments which are very unlike their native habitats. Also, never assume native plants will be more tolerant to adverse soil conditions, moisture stress or pests (insects, diseases) than nonnative species.

Natives, Cultivars & FFL

Although not considered true natives, native plant cultivars (man-made selections or hybrids) are suitable for landscapes because they have been shown to perform well under those conditions.

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) promotes environmentally sustainable practices and low-maintenance plants including native plants, native cultivars, and non-native, non-invasive species.

See our plant selection guide at:
https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_2015.pdf

Reference: Norcini, J. G. (2007). *Native Plants: An Overview*. University of Florida. Publication #ENH1045



Follow these 9 principles to make your yard a Florida-Friendly™ Yard!



Go Wild, Plant Native!

Part 2: Underutilized Native Plants for North Florida Landscapes



Right Plant, Right Place

Plants selected to suit a specific site will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizer, and pesticides.

Water Efficiently

Conserve water and maintain a healthy yard by irrigating only when you lawn and landscape need water.

Fertilize Appropriately

Less is often best. Over-use is hazardous to plants and the environment.

Mulch

A 3” mulch layer helps retain moisture, enrich soil, and suppress weeds.

Attract Wildlife

Plants in your yard that provide food, water, and shelter can conserve Florida’s diverse wildlife.

Manage Yard Pests Responsibly

Unwise use of pesticides can harm people, pets, beneficial insects, wildlife, and the environment.

Recycle

Grass clippings, leaves, and yard trimmings recycled on site provide nutrients to the soil & reduce waste.

Reduce Stormwater Runoff

Water running off your yard can carry pollutants which adversely impact water quality.

Protect the Waterfront

Waterfront property (on a river, stream, lake, or pond) should be carefully protected to maintain water quality for both humans and wildlife.

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Uncommon & Underutilized Native Plants for the Landscape

Trees:

<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	American Hornbeam, Blue-beech, Musclewood
<i>Carya aquatic</i>	Water Hickory
<i>Carya glabra</i>	Pignut Hickory
<i>Carya tomentosa</i>	Mockernut Hickory
<i>Castanea pumila</i>	Ashe's Chinquapin
<i>Cornus asperifolia</i>	Rough-leaf Cornel
<i>Cornus foemina</i>	Swamp Dogwood
<i>Crataegus spp.</i>	Hawthorn
<i>Fraxinus caroliniana</i>	Pop Ash, Water Ash
<i>Ilex ambigua</i>	Carolina Holly, Sand Holly
<i>Ilex opaca var. arenicola</i>	Scrub Holly
<i>Lyonia ferruginea</i>	Rusty Lyonia
<i>Nyssa spp.</i>	Black Gum, Tupelo
<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	Eastern Hophornbeam
<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>	Laurel Cherry
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black Cherry
<i>Quercus laevis</i>	Turkey Oak
<i>Salix caroliniana</i>	Carolina Willow
<i>Styrax americanus</i>	American Snowbell
<i>Tilia americana</i>	Basswood, American Linden
<i>Ulmus americana</i>	American Elm
<i>Vaccinium arboretum</i>	Sparkleberry, Farkleberry

Ferns:

<i>Asplenium spp.</i>	Spleenwort
<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	Southern Lady Fern
<i>Dryopteris ludoviciana</i>	Southern Wood Fern
<i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	Cinnamon Fern
<i>Thelypteris spp.</i>	Maiden Fern
<i>Woodwardia spp.</i>	Chain Fern

Shrubs:

<i>Aralia spinosa</i>	Devil's Walkingstick
<i>Asimina spp.</i>	Pawpaw
<i>Bejaria racemose</i>	Tarflower, Flyweed
<i>Euonymus americanus</i>	American Strawberry Bush
<i>Gaylussacia spp.</i>	Huckleberry
<i>Geobalanus oblongifolius</i>	Gopher-apple
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Witch-hazel
<i>Hypericum spp.</i>	St. John's-wort
<i>Ilex cassine var. myrtifolia</i>	Myrtle-leaf Holly
<i>Leucothoe axillaris</i>	Costal Dog-hobble
<i>Litsea aestivalis</i>	Pondspice
<i>Lyonia spp.</i>	Staggerbrush, Fetterbush
<i>Osmanthus americanus</i>	Wild Olive, American Devilwood
<i>Rhododendron viscosum</i>	Swamp Azalea
<i>Rhus copallinum</i>	Winged Sumac
<i>Viburnum nudum</i>	Possum Haw

Vines:

<i>Centrosema virginianum</i>	Spurred Butterfly Pea
<i>Clematis crispa</i>	Swamp Leather Flower
<i>Clematis reticulata</i>	Netleaf Virgin's-bower
<i>Decumaria barbara</i>	Climbing Hydrangea
<i>Ipomoea cordatotriloba</i>	Tievine
<i>Ipomoea hederifolia</i>	Scarlet Morning Glory
<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	Virginia creeper

Flowers:

<i>Agalinis fasciculata</i>	Beach False Foxglove
<i>Aletris lutea</i>	Yellow Colic-root
<i>Aregemone spp.</i>	Prickly-poppo
<i>Asclepias humistrata</i>	Sandhill Milkweed, Pinewoods Milkweed
<i>Asclepias lanceolata</i>	Fewflower Milkweed
<i>Balduina angustifolia</i>	Costalplain Honeycombhead
<i>Bidens spp.</i>	Beggarticks
<i>Calydorea caelestina</i>	Bartram's Ixia
<i>Carphephorus corymbosus</i>	Florida Paintbrush, Costal-plain Chaffhead
<i>Conoclinium coelestinum</i>	Blue Mistflower
<i>Coreopsis nudata</i>	Swamp Tickseed, Georgia Tickseed
<i>Helenium spp.</i>	Sneezeweed
<i>Helianthemum spp.</i>	Rockrose
<i>Helianthus radula</i>	Rayless Sunflower
<i>Lilium catesbaei</i>	Pine Lily
<i>Phyla nodiflora</i>	Frogfruit, Turkey Tangle Fogfruit
<i>Physostegia purpurea</i>	Obedient plant, Eastern False Dragonhead
<i>Ruellia caroliniensis</i>	Carolina Wildpetunia
<i>Scutellaria integrifolia</i>	Helmet Skullcap
<i>Solidago spp.</i>	Goldenrod
<i>Symphotrichum dumosum</i>	Rice Button Aster
<i>Verbseina virginica</i>	Frostweed, White Crownbeard
<i>Veronica angustifolia</i>	Narrow-leaf Ironweed
<i>Veronica gigantea</i>	Tall Ironweed