

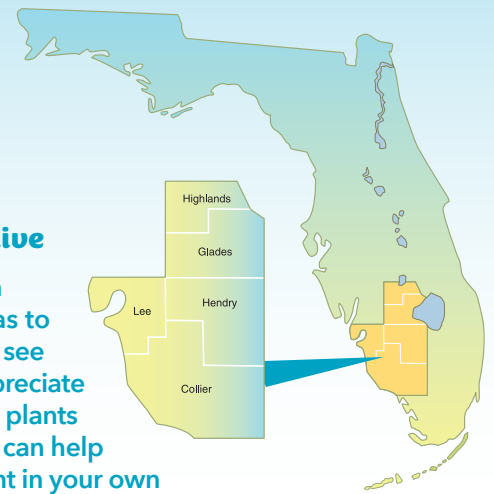


# Good Citizen Guide to Natural Florida

## Southwest Region

### Learn about where you live

Florida's Southwest Region has a variety of natural areas to discover. Visit these areas to see the "real" Florida and to appreciate their diversity. Seeing native plants in their natural communities can help you learn about what to plant in your own landscape to make your yard more sustainable.



### Discover some of the Region's native plant communities



#### Coastal Strand

Densely vegetated areas with sandy or mixed sand-shell substrates. Found on active coastlines with beaches, many are located on barrier islands. They are subject to salt spray and high winds. Typical plant communities include dense thickets of xerophytic plants including sea grape and saw palmetto.

#### Where to visit Coastal Strand

- Barefoot Beach Preserve (Collier County)
- Cayo Costa State Park (Lee County)
- Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (Collier County)



#### Tidal Marsh

Found in coastal areas, primarily along low-energy shorelines and within bays and estuaries. Tidal marsh is subject to inundation with sea water on a daily basis and vegetation occurs between the low and high tidal zones.

#### Where to visit Tidal Marsh

- Estero Bay Preserve State Park (Lee County)
- Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge (Collier County)



#### Mangrove Forest

Mangroves grow in areas inundated by tides. Mangrove forest species include red, white, and black mangrove and buttonwood. Red mangrove has distinctive prop roots and grows closest to the water. Mangrove forests protect the coast from waves, storms and flooding.

#### Where to visit Mangrove Forest

- J.N. Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge (Lee County)
- Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (Collier County)
- Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge (Collier County)



#### Swamp

Swamps are forested floodplains or depressions where trees grow in water most of the year. They have a closed canopy of cypress, pond apple, strangler fig and willow, and abundant ferns and epiphytes.

#### Where to visit Swamp

- Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary (Collier County)
- Big Cypress National Preserve (Collier County)
- Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park (Collier County)
- Highlands Hammock State Park (Highlands County)
- Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest (Collier and Hendry Counties)
- Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve (Lee County)



#### Hammock

Hammocks are stands of trees that form an island within a contrasting ecosystem. Maritime hammocks are coastal and differ in dominant species from hammocks further inland. Typical coastal trees include seagrape, live oak and gumbo limbo. Pines, cabbage palms and live oak dominate inland hammocks.

#### Where to visit Hammock

- Big Cypress National Preserve (Collier County)
- Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (Collier County)
- Daniels Preserve at Spanish Creek (Lee County)
- Highlands Hammock State Park (Highlands County)



### Wet Prairie

Wet prairie usually occurs on acidic, saturated soils. Most are in flat topography where they occur in shallow depressional areas. Plants include sedges, grasses, wildflowers and scattered shrubs and trees. These wetlands are associated with frequent fire.

### Where to visit Wet Prairie

- Big Cypress National Preserve (Collier County)
- Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (Collier County)



### Mesic Flatwoods

Mesic flatwoods are found in often extensive flat areas characterized by sandy soils usually with a hardpan at moderate depth; fire is frequent. Typical vegetation includes a long-leaf pine overstory, sometimes sparse, with a wiregrass dominated groundcover and little understory.

### Where to visit Mesic Flatwoods

- Big Cypress National Preserve (Collier County)
- Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (Collier County)
- Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest (Collier and Hendry Counties)
- Prairie Pines Preserve (Lee County)

## Easy to grow native plants for home landscapes in the Southwest Region



### Bring the beauty of native plants home

Florida's Southwest Region has many beautiful native plant communities. In addition to visiting them, you can bring a bit of natural Florida to your landscape by planting natives. Fortunately there are many options to choose from and many plants are adaptable to a wide range of conditions. Plant selection and planting advice is available from Florida Native Plant Society chapters as well as local extension agents and nurseries. Here are just a few suggestions for plants to consider for home gardens and landscapes.

### Rain garden and freshwater shoreline plantings



(1) *Sisyrinchium angustifolium* (blue-eyed grass); (2) *Crinum americanum* (string lily); (3) *Hibiscus coccineus* (scarlet hibiscus); (4) *Iris savannarum* (prairie iris); (5) *Pontederia cordata* (pickerelweed). Not pictured: *Sagittaria lancifolia* & *S. latifolia* (duck potato); *Thalia geniculata* (alligator flag); *Hibiscus grandiflorus* (swamp rosemallow); *Bacopa monnieri* (herb-of-grace); *Hymenocallis latifolia* (perfumed spiderlily); *Eleocharis cellulosa* and *E. interstincta* (spike rush); *Juncus* species (soft rush); *Spartina bakeri* (sand cordgrass)

### For inland homes

(1) *Asclepias tuberosa* (butterfly milkweed); (2) *Elephantopus elatus* (elephant's foot); (3) *Lyonia lucida* (fetterbush); (4) *Liatris garberi* (Garber's gayfeather); (5) *Bejaria racemosa* (tarflower); (6) *Piloblephis rigida* (wild pennyroyal). Not pictured: *Eragrostis elliottii* (Elliott's lovegrass); *Coreopsis leavenworthii* (Leavenworth's tickseed); *Serenoa repens* (saw palmetto); *Vaccinium myrsinites* (shiny blueberry); *Pinus elliottii* (slash pine)



### For coastal homes



(1) *Lantana involucrata* (wild sage); (2) *Opuntia stricta* (prickly pear); (3) *Coccoloba uvifera* (seagrape); (4) *Ernodea littoralis* (golden creeper); (5) *Yucca aloifolia* (Spanish bayonet); (6) *Uniola paniculata* (sea oats). Not pictured: *Suriana maritima* (bay cedar); *Casasia clusiifolia* (seven year apple); *Croton punctatus* (beach tea); *Sesuvium portulacastrum* (sea purslane)



The purpose of the Florida Native Plant Society is to preserve, conserve and restore the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

### Florida Native Plant Society

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