Introduction
The marsh elder is a tardily deciduous maritime shrub that is native to coastal saline wetlands in the southeastern part of the country. Its native habitat includes the saline grasses and rushes. The leaves of this shrub are dull green and lanceolate and have serrate margins. The roughly pubescent leaves have three prominent veins originating together at the base of the leaf. They bow away from each other and partially come back together near the tip of the leaf. This 4-to 6-foot-tall shrub has greenish flower heads that are borne terminally in panicles. Flowers are abundant and appear from July to September. The small fruits are dark purplish brown achenes that are covered with pale dots of resin.

General Information
Scientific name: *Iva frutescens*
Pronunciation: EYE-vuh froo-TESS-enz
Common name(s): marsh elder
Family: Compositae
Plant type: shrub
USDA hardiness zones: 8 through 10 (Fig. 1)
Planting month for zone 8: year round
Planting month for zone 9: year round
Planting month for zone 10: year round
Origin: native to Florida
Uses: border
Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

Description
Height: 4 to 6 feet
Spread: 4 to 6 feet
Plant habit: upright; oval
Plant density: moderate
Growth rate: moderate
Texture: medium

Culture
Light requirement: plant grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: well-drained; extended flooding; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay
Drought tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerances: good
Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.
**Other**

**Roots**: usually not a problem  
**Winter interest**: no special winter interest  
**Outstanding plant**: not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential**: not known to be invasive  
**Pest resistance**: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

**Use and Management**

Marsh elder adapts well to clipping, so it can be used in the landscape as a low hedge or border plant. Its tolerance to wet soil and compact habit makes it well suited for planting near a foundation of a building.

*Iva frutescens* is native to Florida’s coastal marshes and shores and requires a full-sun position in the landscape. It grows in well-drained basic (high pH) soils but is moderately tolerant of drought and wetness. Its ability to grow in brackish water makes it a good candidate for embankment restoration and stabilization.