

# Recommended Native Landscape Plants for Florida's Treasure Coast<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Plants are considered native to Florida if they were here at the time of European contact in the early sixteenth century (1513). Florida has more than 2,400 native species of plants, with some found only in Florida (Wunderlin 1998). They have survived through the ages because they are adapted to Floridian soils, temperature, and rainfall patterns. Each plant is associated with specific natural plant communities or ecosystems that occur throughout Florida, such as the coastal strand, sand scrub, sandhills, hammocks, flatwoods, and swamps. Although the Florida Association of Native Nurseries (FANN) estimates that only about 25% of our native flora is in commercial production (FANN 2003), interest in native landscaping continues to increase as evidenced by the recent influx of native plant literature and books. Still, data indicate that native plant sales in Florida have remained essentially constant over recent years with estimated total sales of \$100.9 million in 2000 (Hodges and Haydu 2002).

Because of demand for the use of native plants in the landscape, "Native Florida Landscaping (ORH 3815C)" was developed and added to the UF curriculum to teach students how to incorporate these plants into existing landscapes. With a "Right Plant, Right Place" concept in mind, native plants can offer unique attributes that fulfill color, line, form, texture, and scale requirements of a variety of landscapes. Proven native performers of the Florida Treasure Coast (Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River Counties) will be discussed with relation to function, form, and landscape use.

## Useful Native Plant Resources

### Books

Barnett, M. R., and D. W. Crewz. 1997. *Common Coastal Plants in Florida: A Guide to Planting and Maintenance*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Bell, C. R., and B. J. Taylor. 1982. *Florida Wild Flowers and Roadside Plants*. Chapel Hill, NC: Laurel Hill Press.

Daniels, J. C. 2000. *Your Florida Guide to Butterfly Gardening*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Dehgan, B. 1998. *Landscape Plants for Subtropical Climates*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Haehle, R. G., and J. Brookwell. 2004. *Native Florida Plants* (2nd ed.). Lanham, MD: Taylor Trade Publishing.

Huegel, C. N. 2010. *Native Plant Landscaping for Florida Wildlife*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Nelson, G. 1996. *The Shrubs & Woody Vines of Florida*. Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press.

Nelson, G. 2000. *The Ferns of Florida*. Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press.

Nelson, G. 2010. *Best Native Plants for Southern Gardens*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Nelson, G. 2010. *The Trees of Florida* (2nd ed.). Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press.

Nelson, G. 2011. *Botanical Keys to Florida's Trees, Shrubs and Woody Vines*. Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press.

Rogers, G. K. 2011. *Landscape Plants for South Florida*. Palm Beach Gardens, FL: George Rogers Publishing.

Simberloff, D., D. C. Schmitz, and T. C. Brown (eds.). 1997. *Strangers in Paradise*. Washington, D. C.: Island Press.

Suncoast Native Plant Society. 1997. *The Right Plants for Dry Places*. St. Petersburg, FL: Great Outdoors Publishing.

Taylor, W. K. 2009. *A Guide to Florida Grasses*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Wasowski, S., and A. Wasowski. 2010. *Gardening with Native Plants of the South*. Lanham, MD: Taylor Trade Publishing.

Wunderlin, R. P., and B. F. Hansen. 2011. *Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida* (3rd ed.). Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

### Useful Native Plant Websites

Cowley, M. 1997–2005. Florida's Native Plants. Useful information about native gardening, plants for birds, and butterfly plants.  
<http://www.nsis.org/garden>

Florida Association of Native Nurseries. 2013. Contains wholesale and retail plant listings, news and events, and useful "know the difference" articles.  
<http://www.floridanativenurseries.org/>

Florida Wildflowers Growers Cooperative. 2013. Informative brochures, planting information, seed availability, and photo gallery.  
<http://www.floridawildflowers.com/>

Florida-Friendly Landscaping (FFL) Program. 2011. Informative website with designing information, plant database, landscaping tips, and glossary. Teaches homeowners about low-maintenance plants and environmentally sustainable practices.  
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>. (Direct link to the Florida-friendly interactive database and yard at <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/resources/apps/plant-guide/>.)

The Florida Native Plant Society. 2011. Information about upcoming native conferences, local chapters, and publication links. The site also contains a state map where you can click on your county and see what native species grow in your area.  
<https://www.fnps.org/>

Native Plant Network. 2009. A forum for dispersing practical information about planting and growing native plants for conservation, restoration, reforestation, and landscaping. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. <https://nnp.rngr.net> [Accessed 4/12/2022]

Reforestation, Nurseries, & Genetic Resources (RNGR). This program's mission and site is to supply people who grow forest and conservation seedlings with the very latest technical information and to provide links to other organizations and individuals with similar interests. <http://www.rngr.net>

Wilson, S. B. 2011. Florida Native Landscaping. Website contains a virtual garden tour and hyperlinked plant identification sheets showing flower, fruit, form, and leaf characteristics.  
<https://irrecenvhort.ifas.ufl.edu/fnl/index.html>

### Related Ask IFAS (EDIS) or UF/IFAS Extension Publications

Meerow, A. W., T. K. Broschat, and H. M. Donselman. 2011. *Native Trees for South Florida*. EES-57. Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.  
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/eh157>

Norcini, J. G. 2012. *Native Plants: An Overview*. ENH1045. Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.  
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep297>

### Sources to Obtain Native Plants for the Treasure Coast

D. R. Bates Liners Plus, 17639 64th Place North, Loxahatchee, FL 33470, 561-790-3246, E-mail: [d.r.bates@att.net](mailto:d.r.bates@att.net),  
<https://www.facebook.com/drbbateslinersandgallons/>

Florida Association of Native Nurseries (FANN). Native Plant & Service Directory. Wholesale and retail catalogs available online at [www.afnn.org](http://www.afnn.org).

Indian Trails Native Nursery, 6315 West Park Lane, Wellington, FL 33449,  
<https://www.indiantrailsnativenursery.com/>

Meadow Beauty Nursery, 5782 Ranches Road, Lake Worth, FL 33463, 561-601-9673, <http://meadowbeautynursery.com/>

Mesozoic Landscapes, 7667 Park Lane Road, Lake Worth, FL 33449-6728, 561-313-6661, E-mail: [moyroud@prodigy.net](mailto:moyroud@prodigy.net)

The Natives, 1617 Champagne, Davenport, FL 33837, 863-422-6664, <http://www.thenatives.net>

Plant Real Florida. A website dedicated to homeowners that lists landscape professionals, environmental consultants, garden and landscape products for native landscaping, and retail nurseries and garden centers that sell native plants. Also contains relevant information on native plants and landscaping with natives.  
<http://www.plantrealflorida.org/>

### Gardens Within or Near the Treasure Coast with Native Plant Displays

Environmental Learning Center, 255 Live Oak Drive, Vero Beach, FL 32963, 772-589-5050,  
<https://www.discoverelc.org>

Heathcote Botanical Gardens, Inc., 210 Savannah Road,  
Fort Pierce, FL 34982, 772-464-4672,  
<https://www.heathcotebotanicalgardens.org>

IRREC Teaching Garden, Indian River Research and  
Education Center, University of Florida, 2199 S. Rock Road,  
Fort Pierce, FL 34945, 772-468-3922,  
<https://irrec.ifas.ufl.edu>

Mounts Botanical Gardens, 531 North Military Trail, W.  
Palm Beach FL 33415, 561-233-1757,  
<http://www.mounts.org>

Pan's Garden, 386 Hibiscus Ave., Palm Beach, FL 33480,  
561-832-0731,  
<https://www.palmbeachpreservation.org/visit/pans-garden> [Accessed 4/12/2022]

## Local Treasure Coast Chapters of the Florida Native Plant Society\*\*\*

Cocoplum Chapter, Jensen Beach. Region: Martin County.

Conradina Chapter, Melbourne. Region: Southern portion  
of Brevard County.

Eugenia Chapter, Vero Beach. Region: Indian River County.

Lakela's Mint Chapter, Fort Pierce. Region: St. Lucie  
County.

\*\*\*For statewide membership information and meeting  
dates and locations of local chapters, see  
<https://www.fnps.org/>.








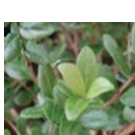
## Literature Cited

Florida Association of Native Nurseries (FANN). 2003.  
*Native Plant & Service Directory*. Retrieved 10  
April 2007. <https://www.fann.org>

Hodges, A. W., and J. J. Haydu. 2002. *Economic Impacts of  
the Florida Environmental Horticultural Industry,  
2000*. Econ. Info. Rpt. EI 02-3, Food and Resource  
Economics Department. Gainesville: University of  
Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Wunderlin, R. P. 1998. *Guide to Vascular Plants*. Gainesville:  
University Press of Florida.

Table 1. Florida Native Landscape Plants for the Treasure Coast: Foundation.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Borrichia frutescens</i>	Sea ox-eye daisy	Moderate to fast	2–4 ft tall 2–3 ft wide	Pubescent gray-green foliage; large yellow daisy-like flowers attract butterflies; salt-tolerant plants spread by rhizomes and can be hedged.	
<i>Capsicum annuum</i> var. <i>glabriusculum</i>	Bird pepper	Moderate to fast	1.5–3 ft tall 1.5–3 ft wide	Evergreen, dwarf and densely branched small leaved shrub; green ripening to red small fire-hot chili peppers are savored by birds.	
<i>Chrysobalanus icaco</i>	Cocoplum	Moderate	5–15 ft tall 3–10 ft wide	Shiny, green dense foliage can be hedged; salt- and drought-tolerant; provides wildlife cover; varying colors of purple to white fruit are edible.	
<i>Eugenia foetida</i>	Spanish stopper	Slow to medium	15–20 ft tall 8–15 ft wide	Large shrub or small tree; can be pruned and may have a rounded appearance; small oval leaves and small red fruits are desirable to wildlife.	
<i>Hymenocallis latifolia</i>	Spider lily	Moderate after well established	2–3 ft tall 2–3 ft wide	Dark green, clumping, maintenance-free perennial with strap-like leaves producing large showy white flowers; salt-tolerant plant self maintains its height; also used as a ground cover and for borders.	
<i>Ilex vomitoria</i> <i>Schilling's</i> or <i>'Schellings Dwarf'</i>	Schilling's dwarf holly	Slow	3–4 ft tall 3–4 ft wide	Very compact, dense with small leaves; drought-tolerant; dwarf forms are male and do not produce fruit.	
<i>Lantana involucrata</i>	Wild lantana, wild sage	Moderate	3–5 ft tall 1–3 ft wide	Coarse, spoon-shaped leaves; dainty, white to light pink lace-like flower clusters are attractive to butterflies; dark pink to blue fruit are edible by wildlife.	
<i>Myrcianthes fragrans</i>	Simpson's stopper	Slow	5–20 ft tall 3–5 ft wide	Densely branched leaves are variable in shape and color; some plants have reddish new growth; dainty, fragrant white flowers followed by wildlife-edible orange-red berries; distinctive reddish flaking bark on mature plants; salt-tolerant plants can be hedged and shaped.	




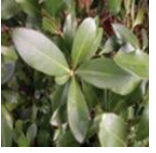



Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Morella cerifera</i>	Southern wax myrtle	Moderate	4–15 ft tall 3–5 ft wide	Short lived, salt tolerant; densely branched, multi-trunked and sometimes sucking shrub or small tree; soft, serrated, narrow leaves; female plants produce waxy berries on stems that are eaten by birds; prefers moist conditions but adaptable to dryer conditions; tolerates some pruning.	
<i>Psychotria nervosa</i>	Wild coffee	Moderate to fast	5–15 ft tall 3–5 ft wide	Multi-stemmed bush with shiny, dark green, puckering leaves; clusters of tiny white flowers that attract bees and butterflies are followed by red to maroon fruit eaten by birds; can be hedged to desired height.	
<i>Randia aculeata</i>	White indigo berry	Slow	3–6 ft tall 3–4 ft wide	Densely foliated, rounded to oval, leathery leaves; stiff branches, small white flowers and white berries with blue pulp; some ecotypes bear spines; indestructible and drought tolerant once established.	
<i>Myrsine cubana</i>	Myrsine	Slow	5–10 ft tall 3–4 ft wide	Versatile to dry or moist conditions and sun or shade; salt tolerant; dark green shiny leaves have lighter mid-vein; small, greenish white inconspicuous flowers; female plants produce small dark brown or black fruits that attract birds; plants can be pruned.	
<i>Senna mexicana</i> var. <i>chapmanii</i>	Chapman's senna	Fast	3–6 ft tall 2–4 ft wide	Short lived, drought- and salt-tolerant woody perennial; loosely branching evergreen is host for sulphur butterfly caterpillars; prominent clusters of large yellow flowers borne on the leaf axils give rise to flat brown capsules containing seeds that are easily propagated.	
<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>	Adam's needle	Slow	2–3 ft tall 2–3 ft wide Flower panicle can reach up to 12 feet but usually under 7 feet	The leafy basal rosette of leathery grass-like leaves of this stout perennial make a great foundation plant; annual, showy panicles of white flowers that can soar to 12 feet should be considered; adds a southwestern desert-like look to the garden; salt- and drought-tolerant.	
<i>Zamia pumila</i>	Coontie	Slow	2–3 feet tall 2–4 feet wide	Dark green, stiff, fern-like leaves; this cycad resembles a trunk-less palm; salt- and drought-tolerant; when used as a foundation planting will not need hedging.	



Table 2. Florida Native Landscape Plants for the Treasure Coast: Accent.
















Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	Beautyberry	Moderate	4–6 ft tall 3–5 ft wide	Deciduous or semi-deciduous shrub with pink to lavender flowers followed by persistent purple fruit.	
<i>Rhapidophyllum hystrix</i>	Needle palm	Slow	4–6 ft tall 4–6 ft wide	Single-stemmed evergreen fan palm having spiny stems; inconspicuous flowers are followed by reddish brown fruit; prefers moist conditions.	
<i>Serenoa repens</i>	Saw palmetto	Slow	Height and width vary with form, but usually less than 8 ft	Recumbent, spiny, clumping palm producing white flower clusters followed by dark purple fruit; silver and green forms available; drought and salt tolerant.	
<i>Tripsacum dactyloides</i>	Fakahatchee grass	Fast	4–8 ft tall 3–4 ft wide	Clumping perennial grass producing brownish flower spikes above the foliage.	
<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>	Adam's needle	Slow	3 ft tall 3 ft wide	Basal, somewhat twisted foliage with erect, large, cream-colored flower panicles protruding several ft. above foliage.	

Table 3. Florida Native Landscape Plants for the Treasure Coast: Privacy.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ width	Description/Comments	
<i>Ardisia escallonioides</i>	Marlberry, Marbleberry	Moderate	20 ft tall in sun 10 ft in shade	Large evergreen shrub suitable for a hedge in shady locations; can be trimmed to desired height; dark green, glossy, large leaves with light mid vein; clusters of small, white fragrant flowers followed by fruit turning purple to black when ripened.	
<i>Capparis cynophallophora</i>	Jamaican caper	Slow	Up to 18 ft tall	Small, densely branched evergreen tree with glossy, dark green leaves that can be clipped in to a hedge; fragrant, white spider-like flowers that open in the evening and wither by noon the next day.	
<i>Chrysobalanus icaco</i>	Cocoplum	Moderate	5–15 ft tall 3–10 ft wide	Salt- and drought-tolerant shrub with dense foliage that makes an excellent plant for screening.	

Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/width	Description/Comments	
<i>Coccoloba uvifera</i>	Sea grape	Moderate	3–35 ft	Very large round leaves with prominent and attractive venation; can be sheered to form a hedge or trained and trimmed to tree form; leaves have some fall-like foliage color; large grape-like fruit attract wildlife; salt and drought tolerant.	
<i>Conocarpus erectus</i>	Green buttonwood	Moderate	40–50 ft tall 5–10 ft wide	Upright tree that branches outward with age and can be trimmed to form a thick dense hedge; dark green, shiny leaves with contrasting lighter venation; strong dense wood; salt and drought tolerant; also tolerant of wet conditions.	
<i>Conocarpus erectus</i> var. <i>sericeus</i>	Silver buttonwood	Moderate	20 ft tall 4–20 ft wide	Low-branched shrub or small tree can be clipped into a hedge and used as an attractive screen; leaves high pubescent, appearing gray; highly tolerant of full sun, salt, and dry and wet conditions; plant in seaside or well-ventilated conditions to avoid sooty mold.	
<i>Cordia globosa</i>	Bloodberry, Butterfly sage	Fast	4–9 ft tall 4–6 ft wide	Dense branching to the ground makes this an ideal plant for privacy; can be trimmed into almost any shape or height; leaves have rough texture; small white flowers produce abundant nectar attracting numerous bees and butterflies; small red berries attract birds.	
<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i>	Varnish leaf	Fast	8–12 ft tall 6 ft wide	Multi-trunked and naturally open habit with a denser look when trimmed for a screen or hedge; attractive, glossy leaves are coated with a natural resin which protects the plant from salt spray and drought; Winged fruit are very showy and change color from light green to creamy yellow to pink as they mature; seeds are eaten by songbirds.	
<i>Eugenia foetida</i>	Spanish stopper	Slow	15–20 ft tall 3–4 ft wide	Small evergreen tree or tall shrub with oval leaves, small white inconspicuous flowers and small berries turning from reddish orange to black.	
<i>Forestiera segregata</i>	Wild olive, Florida privet	Fast	4–15 ft tall 3–5 ft wide	Large shrub or small tree, dense foliage that can be hedged; female plants produce copious amounts of blue-black fruit relished by songbirds.	
















Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/width	Description/Comments	
<i>Illicium parviflorum</i>	Yellow anise	Slow to moderate	6–15 ft tall 3–4 ft wide	Evergreen shrub with dark green licorice-scented, aromatic leathery leaves; prefers moist acidic soils; small, pale yellow flower followed by an interesting star-shaped fruit.	
<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Southern juniper, southern red cedar	Moderate	20–60 ft tall 10–30 ft wide	This large, coniferous tree makes an excellent tall thick hedge along a property border; small, scale-like leaves; male and female cones borne on separate trees, female cones are attractively bluish and berrylike and eaten by birds.	
<i>Myrcianthes fragrans</i>	Simpson's stopper	Slow to moderate	5–12 ft tall 3–5 ft wide	Evergreen, densely branched, variable in habit and leaf shape; small delicate, fragrant white flowers followed by orange to red fruit, which is enjoyed by birds. Note: compact/dwarf cultivars are available; choose the proper selection for your intended use.	
<i>Randia aculeata</i>	White indigo berry	Slow	3–10 ft tall 3–5 ft wide	Oval to round leathery dark green leaves, small white, tubular, fragrant flowers; when ripe, fruit is white with dark purple to black pulp; salt tolerant with stems having varying presence of spines.	
<i>Myrsine cubana</i>	Myrsine	Slow to moderate	8–20 ft tall 3–5 ft wide	Large shiny, thick leaves clustering at the ends of branches; female plants bear small dark blue to black fruit along the leafless portions of the stems; fruit attracts songbirds; highly versatile, tolerates dry or wet conditions	
<i>Viburnum obovatum</i>	Walter's viburnum	Slow	6–30 ft tall 6–12 ft wide	Densely branched and vegetated shrub that can tolerate shearing. Forms a dense thicket of underground suckers; flowering is profuse in spring with tiny white flowers borne in clusters; small berries red to black in autumn; provides cover and food for birds and wildlife. Note: compact/dwarf cultivars are available; choose the proper selection for your intended use.	



Table 4. Florida Native Landscape Plants for the Treasure Coast: Color.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Borrichia frutescens</i>	Sea ox-eye daisy	Fast	2–3 ft tall Colony forming	Large evergreen shrub suitable for a hedge in shady locations; can be trimmed to desired height; dark green, glossy, large leaves with light mid vein; clusters of small, white fragrant flowers followed by fruit turning purple to black Herbaceous, stoloniferous perennial; leaves have silvery grey pubescence; solitary flowers have attractive ray and disk petals; salt spray tolerant.	
<i>Coreopsis leavenworthii</i>	Tickseed coreopsis	Fast, reseeding	1-2 ft tall	Herbaceous annual or short- lived perennial with glabrous basal leaves, yellow ray flowers and a dark center disk.	
<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i>	Varnish leaf	Fast	8–12 ft tall 6 ft wide	Evergreen shrub having elliptic to spatulate, resinous leaves; inconspicuous flowers are followed by clusters of winged fruit that change color from light green to creamy yellow to pink as they mature.	
<i>Flaveria linearis</i>	Yellowtop	Fast	2–3 ft and spreading	Herbaceous perennial having linear leaves, reddish stems and showy yellow corymbs.	
<i>Gaillardia pulchella</i>	Blanketflower	Fast, reseeding	1–2 ft tall	Herbaceous, short-lived perennial with brilliant flower rays in shades of orange, red and yellow; drought and salt tolerant.	
<i>Glandularia tampensis</i>	Tampa verbena	Fast	1–2 ft tall 3–4 ft wide	Sprawling, short-lived perennial having pink/purple flowers borne in terminal corymbs.	
<i>Hamelia patens</i>	Firebush	Fast	6–12 ft tall (compact forms available)	Small tree or large shrub having glabrous green leaves turning to shades of red; tubular showy red to orange flowers are followed by red fruit turning purple in time.	
<i>Helianthus angustifolius</i>	Swamp sunflower	Fast, self sowing	3–5 ft tall	Herbaceous perennial with narrow long leaves and yellow daisy-like flowers; tolerant of wet conditions.	
<i>Lantana depressa</i>	Pineland lantana	Moderate	3–6 ft tall 4 ft wide	Evergreen shrub with aromatic leaves and yellow flowers appearing in bracteate heads.	























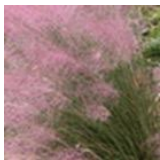


Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Monarda punctata</i>	Monarda, horsemint	Fast, self sowing	3 ft tall 3 ft wide	Herbaceous perennial with pubescent, aromatic leaves and purple spotted flower petals offset by showy purple bracts.	
<i>Pityopsis graminifolia</i>	Silkgrass	Fast	1–2 ft tall	Clump-forming, herbaceous perennial with linear, silvery pubescent leaves and yellow daisy-like flowers borne on elongated stems.	
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	Fast, self sowing	2–3 ft tall	Herbaceous perennial with hirsute leaves and having yellow/orange/red ray petals surrounding a dark brown, raised central disk.	
<i>Ruellia caroliniensis</i>	Wild petunia	Moderate, self sowing	1 ft tall	Herbaceous perennial with strigose leaves and stems and 5-petaled purple flowers.	
<i>Salvia coccinea</i>	Tropical sage	Fast, self sowing	2–4 ft tall	Herbaceous perennial with bilabiate red flowers produced on determinate spikes.	
<i>Senna mexicana</i> var. <i>chapmanii</i>	Chapman's senna	Fast	6–8 ft tall 5–6 ft wide	Multi-trunked evergreen shrub having pinnately compound leaves and abundant yellow flowers in axillary clusters of 4 to 9 blooms.	
<i>Solidago sempervirens</i>	Goldenrod	Fast	4–5 ft tall 2–3 ft wide	Herbaceous perennial with smooth strap-like leaves and attractive golden yellow flowers occurring well above the foliage on spike-like racemes.	
<i>Sophora tomentosa</i>	Necklace pod	Moderate	4–10 ft tall 2–3 ft wide	Evergreen shrub having pinnately compound, tomentose leaves; yellow inflorescences occur above foliage in long spikes; fruit is pronouncedly constricted between seeds; salt, drought and wind tolerant.	
<i>Stachytarpheta jamaicensis</i>	Porterweed	Fast, reseeding	3–4 ft tall 3 ft wide	Evergreen, sprawling shrub becoming woody with age; having serrated leaf margins and purple flowers borne on long spikes.	
<i>Stokesia laevis</i>	Stokes' aster, stokesia	Moderate	1–2 ft tall 1 ft wide	Herbaceous perennial having basal, glabrous leaves and large solitary, purple flowers with fringed petals.	

Table 5. Florida Native Landscape Plants for the Treasure Coast: Vines and Groundcovers.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Canavalia maritima</i>	Beach bean, bay bean	Fast	Low climbing vine and/or ground cover	Large trifoliate leaves with pink, pea-like flowers; produce large seed pods, can be used as ground cover and will climb structures; wind, drought, heat and salt tolerant.	
<i>Dyschoriste oblongifolia</i>	Twin flower	Slow	Ground cover 6 to 12 in tall	Delicate small plants with pale lavender flowers spreading by underground rhizomes; semi-dormant in winter.	
<i>Eragrostis elliottii</i>	Elliott's love grass	Fast	Ground cover 1-2 ft tall 1-2 ft wide	A bunch grass with fine bluish or silvery green leaves and delicate masses of flower spikes that can be produced at any time of year but with the most abundance in the autumn.	
<i>Ernodea littoralis</i>	Golden creeper	Moderate	Ground cover 1-2 ft tall, spreading from 2 to 6 ft wide	Glossy green, fleshy leaves becoming tinged with yellow as leaves age; small tubular white to pinkish flowers; salt, drought and heat tolerant; good for erosion control	
<i>Gelsemium sempervirens</i>	Carolina yellow jessamine	Moderate	High climbing and/or ground cover	Twining vine with shiny leaves and bright yellow flowers that attract hummingbirds and butterflies; blooms late winter/early spring.	
<i>Helianthus debilis</i>	Beach sunflower, dune sunflower	Fast	Ground cover 1-2 ft tall spreading up to 6 ft wide	Drought- and salt-tolerant perennial with triangular leaves and 2-inch yellow ray flowers with brown disks that attract insects.	
<i>Hymenocallis latifolia</i>	Spider lily	Fast	Ground cover 2-3 ft tall 2-3 ft wide	Clumping, herbaceous, low-maintenance perennial forming dark green linear leaves from a central bulb base; large white flowers with golden anthers are elevated above the foliage.	
<i>Ipomoea pescaprae</i>	Railroad vine	Fast	Ground cover 6-8 in tall	Salt- and drought-tolerant, non-climbing perennial with large leaves and showy purple flowers; good for stabilization of dry, sandy areas.	

Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Geobalanus oblongifolius</i>	Gopher apple	Slow	Ground cover 1-2 ft tall	Salt- and drought-tolerant woody ground cover forming dense populations from underground stems; not tolerant of moisture; does best in full sun; 1-2 inch white to brown fruit is attractive to wildlife, hence the common name "gopher apple."	
<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>	Coral honeysuckle	Slow to establish but grows quickly thereafter	Vine up to 15 ft	Woody twining vine; oval to oblong dark green leaves with silvery undersurface; trumpet-shaped, bright pink flowers with protruding yellow stamens attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies; produces small red berries attractive to wildlife.	
<i>Melanthera nivea</i>	Squarestem; nonpareil	Moderate to Fast	Ground cover 1-3 ft tall 1-4 ft wide	Two forms of Squarestem are found in cultivation: An open, loosely coarse form that grows to about 3 feet tall, and a low-growing compact form that grows to about 12-18 inches and spreads in a dense clump. Flowering most of the year, this later form makes an excellent ground cover that is tough, and attractive to insects and people.	
<i>Mimosa strigillosa</i>	Sunshine mimosa; sensitive plant	Moderate to Fast	Ground cover 6-9 in tall	Beautiful pink flowers that are shaped like puff balls and delicate leaflets that fold when touched give this plant its common names; can be mowed and is drought tolerant once established; stems creep and root when they touch the ground.	
<i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i>	Muhly grass	Fast	Ground cover 1-4 ft tall 1-3 ft wide	Clumping grass with tightly rolled, thread-like leaves producing tall panicles of pink to purplish flowers in late summer or early fall.	
<i>Nephrolepis exaltata</i>	Boston fern	Fast	Ground cover 2-4 ft tall	Long, tapering fronds with numerous leaflets arranged pinnately possessing kidney-shaped clusters of spore cases; an excellent groundcover for shady areas; not to be confused with several species of non-native invasive sword ferns.	
<i>Pentalinon luteum</i>	Wild allamanda	Moderate	Vine 3-12 ft	Twining, salt-tolerant vine with glossy leaves and large, showy yellow flowers; plants are deciduous or semi-deciduous in winter.	






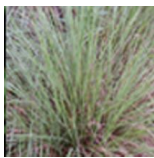








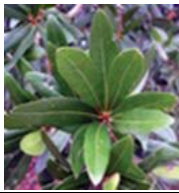


Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Pityopsis graminifolia</i>	Silkgrass, silver-leaved aster, golden aster	Fast	Ground cover 1-2 ft tall	Attractive silvery green grass-like foliage; yellow, daisy-like flowers bloom heaviest in spring and fall; varying habit with some forming a single clump while others spread and form several colonies from underground rhizomes.	
<i>Salvia lyrata</i>	Lyre-leaf sage	Fast	Ground cover 6-12 in wide with 1-2 ft flower spikes	Colorful, green- and red-tinged, usually lobed leaves forming basal rosettes; blue or purple flowers borne on spikes; variable habit, may act as either annual or perennial, seeding abundantly.	
<i>Symphyotrichum carolinianum</i>	Climbing aster	Fast	Vine 3-10 ft	Woody perennial with a vine-like habit but climbs without tendrils. Light pink, dainty flowers with yellow centers form abundantly at the ends of each branch; flowers attract butterflies, bees and numerous other insects.	
<i>Tripsacum floridanum</i>	Florida gamagrass	Fast	Ground cover 2-3 ft tall 2-3 ft wide	Clumping grass with dense, dark green leaves and insignificant flowers.	
<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>	Adam's needle	Slow	Ground cover 3 ft tall 3 ft wide Space 3-4 ft on center	Leaves have spiny apices; in summer, showy flower spikes (to 15 feet tall) emerge for several weeks; requires sandy, well drained soils.	
<i>Zamia integrifolia</i>	Coontie	Slow	1-3 ft tall 1-3 ft wide	Stiff, fern-like leaves that mound from a center stalk; new leaves are lime green while older leaves are a dark green creating a particularly pleasing color contrast.	

Table 6. Florida Native Landscape Plants for the Treasure Coast: Specimen Trees.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height and Canopy Spread	Description/Comments	
<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red maple	moderate	45 ft tall 25-30 ft canopy	Large, singled-trunked, deciduous tree preferring open moist areas but will tolerate shade and drought conditions.	



Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height and Canopy Spread	Description/Comments	
<i>Acoelorrhaphe wrightii</i>	Paurotis palm	slow	20–30 ft tall 15–20 ft canopy	Tall, multi-trunked palm, preferring moist conditions; makes a magnificent specimen tree as long as it's not confined to a small area.	
<i>Bursera simaruba</i>	Gumbo limbo	fast	60 ft tall, but usually found 25–40 ft tall with a 25–30 ft canopy in the urban landscape	Semi-evergreen, salt-tolerant tree that is resistant to high winds and drought; exfoliating, coppery bark makes for interesting appearance and contrast in the landscape.	
<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	Southern magnolia	moderate	80 ft tall 30–40 ft canopy	Evergreen tree with large, beautiful, saucer-shaped, fragrant flowers; does not do well in highly alkaline soils and prefers occasionally wet, well-drained soils.	
<i>Persea borbonia</i>	Sweet bay	moderate	3–50 ft tall; 30–50 ft canopy; somewhat shorter and wider in urban landscapes	Evergreen tree with glossy, leathery leaves that emit a spicy fragrance when crushed; inconspicuous flowers followed by dark blue, globose fruit; thrives with little care in full sun or partial shade and can tolerate a wide range of soils; allow ample area for growth.	
<i>Pinus elliotii</i> var. <i>densa</i>	Southern slash pine	fast	75–100 ft tall 35–50 ft canopy	Evergreen, heavily branched gymnosperm that can be planted in groups to provide a natural setting; adapted to most soils as long as they are occasionally wet and well drained.	
<i>Quercus laurifolia</i>	Laurel oak	fast	60–70 ft tall 35–45 ft canopy	Semi-evergreen, dense-growing shade tree with an upright growth and tolerance to wet sites.	
<i>Quercus virginiana</i>	Live oak	moderate	60–80 ft tall 80–100 ft canopy	Mostly evergreen tree growing under variable conditions in moist to dry soils in full sun or light shade; majestic horizontal branching habit with cupped leaves.	
<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	Bald cypress	moderate	30–60 feet tall 25–30 ft canopy	Deciduous gymnosperm ideal for wet locations; however, will grow remarkably well on almost any soil and is also drought tolerant.	










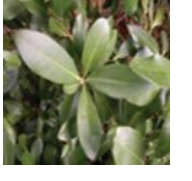




Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height and Canopy Spread	Description/Comments	
<i>Sabal palmetto</i>	Cabbage palm	slow	40–60 ft tall 15 ft canopy	Tall, single-trunked palm which when grouped in threes or fives can provide shade and depth to a landscape.	
<i>Ulmus alata</i>	Winged elm	fast	40–50 ft tall 30–40 ft canopy	Deciduous tree found growing in wet sites as well as dry; very adaptable tree for urban planting.	

Table 7. Florida Native Landscape Plants for the Treasure Coast: Trees for Small Places.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	Sweet acacia	Fast	20 ft tall 20 ft canopy	Long, cascading, zig-zagging branches of soft bi-pinnately compound leaves flow from a straight trunk of furrowed bark; fragrant, yellow, globose flowers often occur throughout the year and are followed by cylindrical seed pods.	
<i>Ardisia escallonioides</i>	Marlberry, marbleberry	Moderate	20 ft tall in sun 10 ft tall in shade 3–8 ft canopy	Large, glossy dark green leaves; prefers light to considerable shade; thick and compact in sun with a more open habit in shade; panicles of fragrant white tinged with purple flowers throughout the year followed by clusters of small, marble-sized blue-black fruits; tolerant of alkaline "marl" soils.	
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	Buttonbush	Moderate	15–25 ft tall 8–12 ft canopy	Requires moist or wet conditions. Sputnik-shaped, 1½-inch-wide, fragrant, nectar-bearing white flowers displayed throughout the summer.	
<i>Citharexylum spinosum</i>	Fiddlewood	Fast	25 ft tall 18–10 ft canopy	Glossy leaved and very drought tolerant with long drooping spikes of fragrant white flowers throughout the year; fruits change color from pale green to orange to dark blue-black; prefers sun or light shade.	
<i>Guaiacum sanctum</i>	Lignum vitae	Slow	25 ft tall 15–20 ft canopy	Characteristic gnarled, stout trunks with slender, drooping branches; small but striking truly blue flowers in late spring on new growth; wood so heavy that it sinks in water.	

Scientific Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Height/ Width	Description/Comments	
<i>Ilex cassine</i>	Dahoon holly	Moderate to fast	25–35 ft tall 8–20 ft canopy	Evergreen tree with glabrous leaves and red berries forming on female plants.	
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Sweet bay magnolia	Fast	25–40 ft tall 15–20 ft canopy	Grayish bark, erect branches, and leaves with silvery undersides; fragrant white flowers primarily during spring and early summer; wide native range from Massachusetts to Texas; prefers moist, fresh conditions.	
<i>Rapanea punctata</i>	Myrsine	Moderate	6–20 ft tall 4–6 ft canopy	Evergreen shrub or small tree that maintains pyramidal shape if not pruned; thick and compact in sun with a more open habit in shade; small black fruits borne directly on branches are attractive to birds.	
<i>Myrcianthes fragrans</i>	Simpson's stopper	Slow to moderate	12–20 ft tall 6–8 ft canopy	Evergreen shrub or multi-trunked small tree with fragrant leaves, reddish new foliage, attractive bark, fragrant white flowers and showy red fruit.	
<i>Quercus myrtifolia</i>	Myrtle oak	Slow to moderate	20–40 ft tall 20 ft canopy	Evergreen shrub or small tree; salt and drought tolerant; small, obovate and folding leaves and shallow cupped acorns.	
<i>Suriana maritima</i>	Bay cedar	Slow to moderate	15 ft tall 6–10 ft canopy	Clusters of downy, fleshy grey-green leaves along slender, flexible branches; very salt tolerant; small yellow flowers produced throughout the year.	
<i>Zanthoxylum fagara</i>	Wild lime	Moderate to fast	15–25 ft tall 10–20 ft canopy	Evergreen tree with glabrous compound leaves, winged petioles, curved spines, and attractive yellow, globose flowers; larval food source for swallowtail butterflies.	

<sup>1</sup> This document is ENH1082, one of a series of the Department of Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date February 2013. Revised September 2014 and January 2025. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for the currently supported version of this publication.

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