Native Trees for South Florida[1]

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In recent years, the subject of native plants has taken on new significance in Florida horticulture. Reasons for this include the loss of natural areas to development, coastal deterioration due to disturbance of native vegetation, and the naturalization of exotic plants that in some cases may out-compete native species. Fortunately, relatively few of the hundreds of exotic ornamentals that have been introduced into the state fall into the latter category. Two in particular, Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolious*) and punk tree (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) 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 *(Coccoloba uvifera)*, cabbage palm *(Sabal palmetto)*, mahogany *(Swietenia mahagoni)*, bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), southern red cedar *(Juniperus silicicola)*, live oak (*Quercusvirginiana*), southern magnolia *(Magnolia grandiflora)*, gumbo limbo *(Bursera simaruba)*, and buttonwood *(Conocarpus erectus)* 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:

1. **Energy efficiency:** Because native plants are adapted to our soils, temperatures, and rainfall patterns, they are believed to require less irrigation and fertilization than exotics. However, recent research does not support this contention. Just because a tree is native to south Florida does not mean that it is native or adapted to all soil types and hydrological conditions found in south Florida. For example, a wetland species like pond apple, *Annona glabra*, 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.

2. **Low maintenance:** Native plants are considered to be resistant to pests and diseases in Florida because they have evolved under constant exposure to these organisms.

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While this is generally true for native pests, exotic pests, to which native plants have no evolved resistance, are regularly introduced, often with catastrophic outcomes. Thus, plant diversity in the landscape is an important means of minimizing the risks from such pest or disease outbreaks. Of course, any newly planted tree, whether native or exotic, will require regular irrigation until it becomes established.

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 increase in population places 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 (*Myrica cerifera*). 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 70 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 and are required for restoration of disturbed areas within nature preserves.

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 and fertilization 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?

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

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

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

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 at the same depth at which it grew in the field or the container. Circling roots in container stock should be cut just behind the point of their deflection to more firmly anchor the tree and prevent future root girdling. 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, rainfall, 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.

Nutritional requirements (Table 1) should be interpreted as: *High:* the species will typically suffer from moderate to severe deficiencies of one or more elements and plant growth and quality will be strongly affected. Regular fertilization may be required to keep these plants alive. *Medium:* Most plants will show mild to moderate deficiency symptoms of one or more elements. Regular fertilization will be required to completely eliminate deficiency symptoms. *Low:* Nutrient deficiencies are rarely encountered and fertilization is unnecessary.

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 slightly saline conditions; and *Low***:** sensitive to salt on the foliage and in the root zone.

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).

Figure 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 Require-ment**
Acacia farnesiana	Sweet acacia	10-12	Medium	Wide	C,ST,T	Medium	High	High	Medium
Acer rubrum	Red maple	35-50	Fast	Wide	C,N,ST	Low	High	Low	Low
Acoelorrhaphe wrightii	Paurotis palm, everglades palm	15-25	Slow	Acid to neutral	C,ST,T	Medium	Medium, high	Medium	Medium to high
Amphitecna (Enallagma) latifolia	Black calabash	20-30	Medium	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Annona glabra	Pond apple, alligator apple	25-40	Medium	Wide	C,ST,T	Medium	High	Low	Low
Ardisia escallonioides	Marlberry, marbleberry	15-25	Medium	Wide	ST,T	High	Medium, high, low	Medium	Low
Avicennia germinans	Black mangrove	20-30	Medium	Wide	T	High	High	Low	Low
Bourreria suculenta var. *revoluta*	Strongbark	20	Medium	Wide	ST, T	Medium	High	High	Low
Bumelia spp.	Buckthorn, saffron plum, bumelia	20-40	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST,T	Medium, low	Medium	Medium, high	Medium
Bursera simaruba	Gumbo limbo, tourist tree	40-60	Medium	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Canella alba	Wild cinnamon	20-35	Slow	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Chyrsophyllum oliviforme	Satin leaf	30-40	Slow	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Citharexylum fruticosum	Fiddlewood	25-30	Slow	Wide	C,ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Clusia rosea	Pitch apple, autograph tree	25-30	Slow	Wide	T	High	High	High	Low
Coccoloba diversifolia	Pigeon plum	25-30	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Coccoloba uvifera	Sea grape	15-30	Medium	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Coccothrinax argentata	Silver palm	10-20	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	Medium, high	High	Low
Conocarpus erectus	Buttonwood	30-50	Medium	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Cordia sebestena	Geiger tree	20-25	Medium	Wide	T	High	High	High	Low
Dipholis salicifolia	Willow-leaved bustic	30-50	Medium	Wide	ST,T	Low	High	Medium	Low
Eugenia spp.	Stoppers	15-20	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	Medium, high	High	Low
Exostema caribaeum	Princewood	20-25	Slow	Wide	ST,T	Low	High	Medium	Medium
Ficus aurea	Strangler fig	40-50	Fast	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Ficus citrifolia	Shortleaf fig	40-50	Fast	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Gordonia lasianthus	Loblolly bay	30-40	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST	Low	High	Low	Medium
Guaiacum sanctum	Lignum vitae	10-20	Slow	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Guapira discolor	Blolly	35-50	Medium	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Guettarda elliptica	Everglades velvetseed	10-20	Medium	Alkaline	T	Low	Medium	Low	Medium
Guettarda scabra	Rough velvetseed	15-30	Medium	Alkaline	T	High	High	High	Low
Gymnanthes lucida	Crabwood	15-30	Slow	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low

Scientific Name	**Common Name**	**Natural Height (in feet)**	**Growth Rate**	**Soil pH**	**Hardiness Zone***	**Salt Tolerance**	**Light Requirement**	**Drought Tolerance**	**Nutritional Require-ment**
Hibiscus tiliaceus	Mahoe, sea hibiscus	30-45	Fast	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Hypelate trifoliata	White ironwood	30-40	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Ilex cassine	Dahoon holly	25-40	Medium	Acid	C,N,ST	Medium	High	Medium	Low
Ilex krugiana	Tawnyberry holly	25-40	Medium	Wide	T	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
Ilex vomitoria	Yaupon holly	20-25	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST	High	Medium, high	High	Low
Juniperus silicicola	Southern juniper	25-30	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST	High	High	High	Low
Krugiodendron ferreum	Black ironwood	20-30	Slow	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Languncularia racemosa	White mangrove, white buttonwood	40-60	Medium	Wide	ST,T	High	High	Low	Low
Leucothrinax morrisii	Key thatch palm	15-30	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	Medium, High	High	Low
Lysiloma latisiliqua	Wild tamarind	40-50	Fast	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Magnolia grandiflora	Southern magnolia	60-100	Medium	Acid	C,N,ST	High	High	High	Low
Magnolia virginiana	Sweetbay	40-60	Medium	Acid	C,N,ST,T	Low	High	Low	Low
Mastichodendron foetidissimum	False mastic	45-70	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Myrcianthes fragrans	Simpson's stopper, twinberry	20-30	Medium	Wide	ST,T	High	Medium, high	High	Low
Myrica cerifera	Wax myrtle	15-25	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST	High	High	High	Low
Nectandra coriacea	Lancewood	30-40	Medium	Wide	C,ST,T	Low	High	Medium	Medium
Persea borbonia	Red bay	50-60	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Pinus clausa	Sand pine	60-80	Slow	Wide	C,N,ST	High	High	High	Low
Pinus elliottii var. *densa*	South Florida slash	80-100	Fast	Wide	C,ST,T	Medium	High	High	Low
Piscidia piscipula	Jamaican dogwood, fish-poison tree	35-50	Fast	Wide	T	High	High	High	Low
Plantanus occidentalis	Sycamore	70-110	Fast	Wide	C,N,ST	Low	High	Low	Medium
Prunus myrtifolia	West Indian cherry	15-40	Medium	Wide	T	Low	High	Medium	Medium
Psuedophoenix sargentii	Buccaneer palm, cherry palm	10-15	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	Medium, high	High	Medium
Quercus laurifolia	Laurel oak	60-100	Fast	Wide	C,N,ST	Low	High	High	Low
Quercus virginiana	Live oak	50-80	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST	High	High	High	Low
Reynosia septentrionalis	Darling plum	20-30	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Rhizophora mangle	Red mangrove	30-80	Medium	Wide	ST,T	High	High	Low	Low
Roystonea regia	Royal palm	60-125	Medium	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	Medium	Medium to high
Sabal palmetto	Cabbage palmetto, sabal palm	45-70	Slow	Wide	C,N,ST,T	High	High	High	Medium to high
Salix caroliniana	Coastal plain willow	20-30	Fast	Wide	C,N,ST	Low	High	Low	Low
Sapindus saponaria	Soapberry	35-45	Medium	Wide	C,ST,T	High	High	High	Low

Scientific Name	**Common Name**	**Natural Height (in feet)**	**Growth Rate**	**Soil pH**	**Hardiness Zone***	**Salt Tolerance**	**Light Requirement**	**Drought Tolerance**	**Nutritional Require-ment**
Schaefferia frutescens	Florida boxwood	20-40	Slow	Alkaline	T	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Simarouba glauca	Paradise tree	35-50	Slow	Wide	T	Medium	High	High	Medium
Swietenia mahogani	Mahogany	35-60	Fast	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Taxodium ascendens	Pond cypress	60	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST	Medium	High	High	Low
Taxodium distichum	Bald cypress	60-100	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST	Medium	High	High	Low
Tecoma stans	Yellow elder	10-20	Fast	Wide	ST,T	Medium	High	High	Medium
Thrinax morrisii	Key thatch palm	15-30	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	Medium, high	High	Low
Thrinax parviflora	Florida thatch palm	20-25	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Thrinax radiata	Thatch palm	15-25	Slow	Wide	ST,T	High	Medium, high	High	Low
Tilia floridana	Florida basswood	30-60	Fast	Acid	C,N,ST,	Low	Medium	Low	High
Ximenia americana	Tallowwood plum	20-25	Medium	Wide	ST,T	High	High	High	Low
Zanthoxylum clava-herculis	Hercules club, toothache tree	25-50	Medium	Wide	C,N,ST	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
Zanthoxylum fagara	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
Acacia farnesiana	Sweet acacia	Evergreen	Oval, round	Yellow	Showy, fragrant	Year-round	Parks; medians	Small, thorny, bushy tree. Flowers used for perfume.
Acer rubrum	Red maple	Deciduous	Oval	Red	Showy	Winter, spring	Shade; perimeters; parking lots; medians; boulevards; residences; buffers	Variable red fall color. Good for wet sites.
Acoelorrhaphe wrightii	Paurotis palm, everglades palm	Palm	Upright, clumping	White	Insignificant	Spring	Medians; residences; buffers	Susceptible to potassium and manganese deficiencies.
Amphitecna (Enallagma) latifolia	Black calabash	Evergreen	Round	Yellow	Insignificant	Spring	Parks; residences	Not particularly wind resistant.
Annona glabra	Pond apple, alligator apple	Evergreen	Oval	Whitish-yellow	Insignificant	Year-round	Buffers	Good for swampy sites.
Ardisia escallonioides	Marlberry, marbleberry	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant, fragrant	Fall	Residences; buffers	Often shrubby. Attracts wildlife.
Avicennia germinans	Black mangrove	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant, fragrant	Spring	Parks; residences (along estuaries); perimeters	Grows in brackish water sites.
Bourreria suculenta var. *revoluta*	Strongbark	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant	Year-round	Residences	Can be a large shrub. Native to the Keys.
Bumelia 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.
Bursera simaruba	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 reddish bark.
Canella alba	Wild cinnamon	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant	Spring, summer	Residences	An attractive native flowering tree. Not readily available.
Chrysophyllum oliviforme	Satin leaf	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant	Fall	Shade; parking lots; medians; boulevards; residences; parks	Leaves glossy on top and bronzy satin below.
Citharexylum fruticosum	Fiddlewood	Evergreen	Round	White	Insignificant, fragrant	Year-round	Parks; boulevards; residences	Forms with hairy leaves also occur.
Clusia rosea	Pitch apple, autograph tree	Evergreen	Round	Pink and white	Showy	Summer	Parks; residences	Has stilt roots. Leaves very tough and leathery.
Coccoloba diversifolia	Pigeon plum	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant	Spring	Residences; parks; parking lots; medians; boulevards	Attractive bark. Variable leaf shape and size. Good small native tree.
Coccoloba uvifera	Sea grape	Evergreen	Round, spreading	White	Insignificant	Summer	Edible fruit; buffers; parks	Edible fruit used for jelly. Good seaside plant. Broad spreading.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Type	Shape	Flower Color	Flower Characteristics	Flowering Season	Uses	Notes
Coccothrinax argentata	Silver palm	Palm	Single-trunked	White	Showy	Summer	Residences; medians; parks; parking lots	Excellent slow-growing native palm.
Conocarpus erectus	Buttonwood	Evergreen	Round	Orange, purplish-green	Insignificant	Summer	Residences; parks; boulevards; medians; parking lots	Good seaside plant. A silver-leafed variety is widely grown.
Cordia sebestena	Geiger tree	Evergreen	Oval	Orange	Showy	Year-round	Residences; parks; boulevards	Frequently defoliated by geiger beetles.
Dipholis salicifolia	Willow-leaved bustic	Evergreen	Round	White	Insignificant	Year-round	Residences; parks	
Eugenia spp.	Stoppers	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant	Spring, summer	Residences; parks	Many species, some with edible fruits.
Exostema caribaeum	Princewood	Evergreen	Oval	White	Showy, fragrant	Spring, summer	Parks; residences	Hard wood used for cabinetwork.
Ficus aurea	Strangler fig	Evergreen	Spreading	Orange	Insignificant	Summer	Parks; shade	This native ficus often begins its life as an epiphyte.
Ficus citrifolia	Shortleaf fig	Evergreen	Round	Yellow	Insignificant	Year-round	Residences; parks; boulevards	A native fig without aerial roots. Well-adapted for south Florida.
Gordonia lasianthus	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.
Guaiacum sanctum	Lignum vitae	Evergreen	Round	Blue	Showy	Year-round	Residences; parks	A small, slow-growing tree.
Guapira discolor	Blolly	Evergreen	Round	Greenish-yellow	Insignificant	Spring, summer	Residences; shade; boulevards; parks	A drought-tolerant native tree.
Guettarda elliptica	Everglades velvetseed	Evergreen	Oval	Yellow	Showy	Spring	Parks; residences; shade	A small, tropical hammock tree with some shade tolerance.
Guettarda scabra	Rough velvetseed	Evergreen	Oval	White	Showy	Winter, spring	Parks; parking lots; residences	An attractive, salt-tolerant coastal native for south Florida.
Gymnanthes lucida	Crabwood	Evergreen	Oval	Red	Insignificant	N/A	Residences; parks	A small native tree that is not readily available.
Hibiscus tiliaceus	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.
Hypelate trifoliata	White ironwood	Evergreen	Round	White	Insignificant	Spring, summer	Residences; parks	A small native tree. May not be readily available.
Ilex cassine	Dahoon holly	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant	Spring	Parks; perimeters; residences	Red-berried native holly. Grows in boggy sites.
Ilex krugiana	Tawnyberry holly	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant	Spring	Parks; residences; shade	A native, tropical holly.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Type	Shape	Flower Color	Flower Characteristics	Flowering Season	Uses	Notes
Ilex vomitoria	Yaupon holly	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant	Spring, summer	Residences; parks; buffers	Selected varieties available.
Juniperus silicicola	Southern juniper	Evergreen	Pyramidal	Brown	Cone	Spring	Perimeters; parks; residences; buffers	A tough pyramidal-shaped tree.
Krugiodendron ferreum	Black ironwood	Evergreen	Round	Greenish-yellow, green, yellow	Insignificant	Spring	Residences; parks; boulevards	Slow-growing; dense-wooded.
Laguncularia racemosa	White mangrove, white buttonwood	Evergreen	Oval	Green	Insignificant, fragrant	Spring	Shade; parks; perimeters; residences; buffers	Grows best in warm coastal areas.
Leucothrinax morrisii	Key thatch palm	Palm	Single-trunked	White	Showy	Spring	Residences; parks; medians	Slow-growing fan palm.
Lysiloma latisiliqua	Wild tamarind	Deciduous	Weeping, spreading	White	Insignificant	Spring, summer	Residences; shade; boulevards; parks; parking lots; medians	This tree has a weeping form.
Magnolia grandiflora	Southern magnolia	Evergreen	Oval	White	Showy, fragrant	Spring	Residences; parks; shade; perimeters; buffers; medians	This hardy tree has large, leathery leaves and showy flowers.
Magnolia virginiana	Sweetbay	Deciduous	Oval	White	Showy, fragrant	Summer	Residences; shade; parks; medians; boulevards	Good for wet sites. Attractive silvery leaves.
Mastichodendron foetidissimum	False mastic	Evergreen	Round	Greenish-yellow	Insignificant	Spring, summer, fall	Shade; perimeters; parking lots; medians; residences	Female trees have messy fruit.
Myrcianthes fragrans	Simpson's stopper, twinberry	Evergreen	Round	White	Insignificant, fragrant	Year-round	Residences; parks; medians; boulevards	A native shrub that can be pruned into a small tree.
Myrica cerifera	Wax myrtle	Evergreen	Oval	White	Insignificant	Summer, spring	Residences; parks; buffers; problem tree	Can be weedy. Root suckers profusely and stains masonry.
Nectandra coriacea	Lancewood	Evergreen	Oval, round	White	Insignificant	Year-round	Shade; perimeters; residences; buffers	A small native tree for the Keys.
Persea borbonia	Red bay	Evergreen	Oval, round	Green	Insignifcant	Spring	Residences; parks; shade; boulevards	Good for wet sites. Susceptible to laurel wilt disease.
Pinus clausa	Sand pine	Evergreen	Oval	Brown	Cone	Spring	Parks; shade; residences	Very tolerant of dry, sandy soils.
Pinus elliotti var. *densa*	South Florida slash	Evergreen	Oval	Brown	Cone	Spring	Parks; residences; buffers; boulevards	Intolerant of grade changes, irrigation, and traffic above the root system.
Piscidia piscipula	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.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Type	Shape	Flower Color	Flower Characteristics	Flowering Season	Uses	Notes
Plantanus occidentalis	Sycamore	Deciduous	Oval, round	Green	Insignificant	Spring	Parks; residences; shade; boulevards	Large deciduous tree for moist sites. Exfoliating bark.
Prunus myrtifolia	West Indian cherry	Evergreen	Round	White	Insignificant	Spring	Parks; residences; shade	A tropical substitute for cherry laurel (*P. caroliniana*)
Pseudophoenix sargentii	Buccaneer palm, cherry palm	Palm	Single-trunked	Yellow	Insignificant	Summer	Residences; parks	A very slow-growing, small native palm.
Quercus laurifolia	Laurel oak	Evergreen	Oval	Green	Insignificant	Spring	Shade; residences; parks; boulevards	A fast-growing, but comparatively short-lived tree.
Quercus Virginiana	Live oak	Evergreen	Spreading	Green	Insignificant	Spring	Shade; boulevards; residences; parks	A wind-resistant, long-lived oak.
Reynosia septentrionalis	Darling plum	Evergreen	Round	Greenish-yellow	Insignificant	Spring, summer	Residences; parks; boulevards	Fruits are edible.
Rhizophora mangle	Red mangrove	Evergreen	Round, pyramidal	Yellow	Insignificant	Year-round	Parks	A native stilt-rooted tree or shrub growing in salt or brackish water.
Roystonea gia	Royal palm	Palm	Single-trunked, columnar	Yellow	Insignificant	Spring	Parks; residences; boulevards; perimeters	Susceptible to potassium, manganese, and boron deficiencies
Sabal palmetto	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. Susceptible to potassium deficiency and Texas Phoenix palm decline
Salix caroliniana	Coastal plain willow	Deciduous	Round	Green	Insignificant	Spring	Parks	Grows in wet areas around lakes and ponds.
Sapindus saponaria	Soapberry	Deciduous	Oval, round	White	Insignificant	Winter, spring	Parks; residences; boulevards	Fruit contains a soap-like material used in some tropical countries.
Schaefferia frutescens	Florida boxwood	Evergreen	Oval	Green	Insignificant	Spring	Perimeters; parks	Useful as a large, informal hedge.
Simarouba glauca	Paradise tree	Evergreen	Oval	Yellow	Insignificant	Spring	Residences; parks; boulevards	Does well in exposed locations. New foliage is reddish.
Swietenia mahagoni	Mahogany	Evergreen	Round	Greenish-yellow	Insignificant	Spring	Residences; shade; parks; boulevards; medians; parking lots	Mahogany webworm often defoliates tree briefly.
Taxodium ascendens	Pond cypress	Deciduous	Oval, pyramidal	Green	Cone	Spring	Parks; shade; residences; boulevards	Pyramidal growth habit when young. Has small, juniper-like leaves

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Taxodium distichum	Bald cypress	Deciduous	Oval, pyramidal	Green	Cone	Spring	Parks; shade; residences; boulevards	Pyramidal growth habit when young. Has soft, feathery leaves.
Tecoma stans	Yellow elder	Evergreen	Round	Yellow	Showy	Year-round	Residences; parks; boulevards	Must be trained and shaped into a tree.
Thrinax morrisii	Key thatch palm	Palm	Single-trunked	White	Showy	Spring	Residences; parks; medians	A slow-growing native palm
Thrinax parviflora	Florida thatch palm	Palm	Single-trunked	White	Showy	Spring, summer, fall	Residences; parks; medians	A slow-growing native palm. Rarely cultivated.
Thrinax radiata	Thatch palm	Palm	Single-trunked	White	Showy	Spring	Residences; parks; medians	An excellent slow-growing native palm. Not widely available.
Tilia floridana	Florida basswood	Deciduous	Round	Yellow	Insignificant	Spring, summer	Buffers; parks; residences; shade	Sprouts vigorously from base. Good nectar source for bees.
Ximenia americana	Tallowwood plum	Evergreen	Oval	Yellow	Insignificant	Year-round	Parks; residences	Spiny stems, edible fruits.
Zanthoxylum clava-herculis	Hercules club, toothache tree	Deciduous	Round	White	Insignificant	Spring	Buffers; perimeters; parks	Thorny.
Zanthoxylum fagara	Wild lime	Evergreen	Round, spreading	Green	Insignificant	Year-round	Parks; residences	Has recurved prickles. Foliage has lime aroma when bruised.