

## SOME SHRUBS FOR THE LANDSCAPE IN NORTH FLORIDA

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For the purpose of this paper the area of Florida to be considered is that of Gainesville northward and westward. Here will be found a variety of soils, from light sands to clays, and some muck and various mixtures of these. Some of these locations are wet, due to poor water drainage, and some are cold where the air drainage is not adequate. Home sites, however, are generally located on sandy and sandy-clay soils. In some of the large and spacious home grounds and parks the area in the landscape may include some of all the soils. Average temperatures during the winter months are colder than those experienced in the area from Gainesville southward, and this factor must be considered in selecting plant materials.

Due to these climatic conditions, it is possible to grow many plants that cannot be grown in the warmer areas of the State. On the other hand, tropical materials will not survive the average temperatures that prevail during the winter months. With judicious selection there are many plants that can be used successfully in all types of landscape requirements, but only a few will be discussed.

Such a list will include both flowering and foliage plants, large and small. In attempting such a list, it is realized that the desires of individuals vary considerably. It must be kept in mind also that the areas to be planted will be of many shapes and sizes. Some will comprise only a city lot, while others are spacious and may cover several acres. On some of these flowering shrubs may predominate while, in others, foliage materials may be most extensively used. In general, however, the most acceptable landscape designs maintain a balance between flowering and foliage shrubs, utilizing certain definite arrangements for specific purposes.

Any list of landscape materials for North Florida would almost invariably include the well-known Azaleas, Camellias, Spiraeas, Pyra-

canthas, hollies, Viburnums, Ligustrums, Pittosporums, Abelias, and several others. Roses certainly should be mentioned, as they can be used satisfactorily in the landscape when properly arranged and situated. Hardy varieties that produce a profusion of bloom, such as Louis Philippe, can be employed to provide added color in strategical locations.

The Azaleas are among the most popular of all shrubs. They are available in numerous varieties, giving a considerable range in size of plants and color of flowers. Groups can be arranged in banks with the small-growing Kurumes to the front, with others grading into the large-growing Indicas in the background. These can also be banked against still taller foliage shrubs as a background for the full setting to achieve the desired effect.

The show of large masses of flowers borne by the Azalea plants early in the spring is of great value to North Florida. It is something that always brings pleasure to any lover of flowers. They are adaptable in one way or another to all landscapes with suitable soils and conditions. They can be selected in the nursery while in bloom when in doubt as to the exact color of flowers produced by the different varieties. Plants can be balled and planted safely when in bloom. The Formosas can be used very advantageously with *Spiraea cantoniensis* for a beautiful display of white and colored flowers.

Camellias are very popular with plant lovers. It would be difficult to say whether Camellias or Azaleas are the more important in popularity. They do well in North Florida on suitable soils. They can be obtained in a great variety of color, with some difference in plant sizes. They should be used to a greater extent for certain types of landscapes than they are, in situations where foliage plants are necessary. There are many of the less expensive varieties which grow sufficiently large to permit their use as foliage plants that produce flowers also. They are especially adapted to foundation and group plantings where the size of the plant is an important consideration. Camellias, like Azaleas, can be selected in bloom, balled and planted successfully.

Many Camellias are grown as specimen plants. There are many people who prize

them above all other plants. Many of these people secure all of the rare and unusual varieties, strains and variations possible. However, it is not intended to enter into a discussion of this phase of Camellia culture, as the growing of special and rare specimens is a subject that could fill many pages.

The Spiraeas are popular in most of North Florida and can be grown successfully. The white varieties are the most important. The old Bridal Wreath (*Spiraea vanhouttei*) does not bloom so satisfactorily. The best all-round variety is *Spiraea cantoniensis*. The habit of plant growth is similar to that of the Bridal Wreath but the small white double flowers are produced in great abundance each spring. The Bridal Wreath produces small, single flowers, but the plants of this variety require more cold for adequate chilling than the *C. cantoniensis* and thus do not bloom so satisfactorily.

Pyracanthas are successfully grown in the area and can be used as specimen plants, also in proper groupings. The berries are showy and are quite attractive during the fall and winter when fully colored.

Hollies should be used where they fit into the landscape. The American Holly is an important medium-sized tree where the area is of suitable proportions to accommodate it. The Yaupon is one of the finest plants for both formal and informal hedges. In addition to the native species, there are several introduced species that produce berries in abundance and these are available from many nurseries, along with the native types.

Viburnums are useful as foundation plantings and in groups. Sometimes they may be grown as specimen plants but, in general, they are more satisfactory for other purposes.

Ligustrums are among the most over-worked plants. They are nice foliage plants for a while, but they will grow out of proportion in many locations and, if they are not pruned judiciously they frequently become unsightly. However, they give quick results as foliage plants and therefore are extensively employed.

Pittosporum is still planted to some extent but not so much as formerly. It is fairly satisfactory for a few years but will grow out of proportion, and then presents an unattractive appearance.

Abelias are popular with many people. They are successful over most of the area. They do best on the clay loam soils but can be grown on the lighter sands, if proper preparations are made. They are good foliage material and are also showy during the summer months while in bloom. They are especially valuable in groupings and in certain types of foundation plantings. When properly located as to soils, they are quite satisfactory.

Many conifers are seen throughout the area, where they should never have been planted. Under suitable conditions and in suitable situations certain types can and should be utilized. The prostrate forms can be used satisfactorily to accentuate certain low points in the landscape but thought should be given to prevent placing them incorrectly.

The Lawson cypress produces a beautiful small tree but it must be planted in landscapes of sufficient area to justify its use. There is hardly room on the average city lot to accommodate it, except possibly as a street planting.

Roses of adapted varieties can be utilized to advantage over all of the area. Hybrid Teas should be grown in a garden of acceptable dimensions and shape to meet the requirements of the landscape. These may be of any shape and design to avoid clashing with the remainder of the planting. However, Louis Philippe may be used in many locations. It produces red flowers in abundance in suitable locations and can also be planted in groups.

There are many who will say that this list is far from complete. This is true, but it was not the purpose to try to make a list that would cover everything. There are many native plants that could and should be utilized where the native materials are available. Many of the plants suggested can be successfully used as hedges, both formal and informal. Some of these are growing on the Horticultural grounds at Gainesville.