

Landscaping with Florida's native wildflowers and plants provides refuge for birds, bees and butterflies while creating "habitat highways" through urban settings.

Many Florida landscapes have sandy soils that are naturally dry and well-drained, even after heavy rain. Instead of mulching or amending these soils, embrace them and create a unique landscape by planting native wildflowers and grasses suited to dry conditions.

Plan for Success

Your palette of native plants should be made up of species naturally found in your Florida locale. Look for small- to medium-size shrubs, perennial wildflowers and grasses found in sandhills, flatwoods, dune systems and other xeric ecosystems. Consider bloom season and mature plant size when choosing and placing plants. Plan to use wildflowers in groups of five to seven for visual impact and pollinator attraction.

Care

Prune ground-covering plants such as vines or low-branching wildflowers as needed to keep them contained to the bed. After a season of growth, vines can become thin, bearing only sparse leaves and flowers. Trim stems to 2 to 3 feet to encourage new growth.

Some perennials go dormant in winter as part of their natural cycle. Dead stems can be trimmed to ground level or left as habitat for wildlife. Leaves will emerge at the plant's base when conditions are right.

Many wildflowers spread from seed, so time pruning until after seeds mature and scatter.



LANTANA INVOLUCRATA / BOB PETERSON (CC BY 2.0)

Planting and Establishment

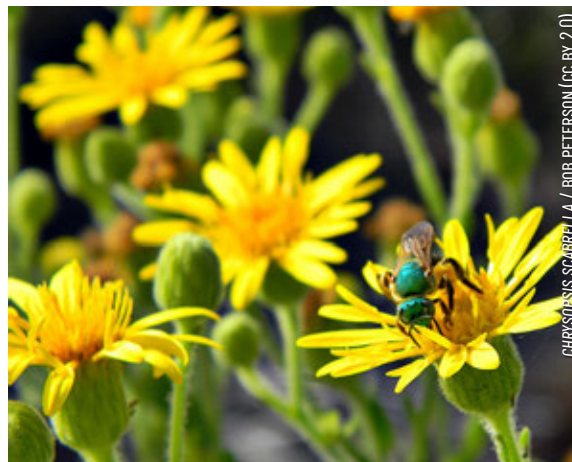
Many of Florida's native plants and wildflowers do well in dry conditions. However, they must be established properly to get off to a good start. Dig a hole twice the circumference as the pot. Loosen the plant's roots and install it even with the ground. Water liberally and keep soil moist for two to three weeks. Gradually taper off watering to weekly for four to six weeks if there is no substantial rainfall. A light mulching with pine straw can help reduce evapotranspiration and wilting.

Although full sun is preferred by many species, most can adapt to two to three hours of shifting shade. It can be challenging to establish wildflowers in sandy, shady areas where plant coverage may be less dense. It helps to go for a natural look in shade rather than a formal, evenly spaced planting.

For more about shade, download our *Great Wildflowers for Shade* handout.



ASCLEPIAS TUBEROSA / MARY KEIM



CHRYSOCHYSIS SCABIRELLA / BOB PETERSON (CC BY 2.0)



Liatris tenuifolia / MARY KEIM

Common name	Scientific name	Light	Color of bloom	Bloom season	Soil moisture	Hardiness zone	Growth habit	Pollinator/Bird use
Wiregrass	<i>Aristida stricta</i>					8A-10B	1-3 ft	
Milkweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>					8A-10B	1-3 ft	
Florida greeneyes	<i>Berlandiera subacaulis</i>					8B-10B	1-2 ft	
Ashe's calamint	<i>Calamintha ashei</i>					8A-9B	1.5 ft	
Scarlet calamint	<i>Calamintha coccinea</i>					8A-9B	1-3 ft	
Florida paintbrush	<i>Carphephorus corymbosus</i>					8A-10B	2-3 ft	
Partridge pea	<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>					8A-10B	3 ft	
Goldenaster	<i>Chrysopsis</i> spp.					8A-9B	1-4 ft	
Thistle	<i>Cirsium</i> spp.					8A-10B	2-3 ft	
False rosemary	<i>Conradina</i> spp.					8A-9B	2-3 ft	
Elliott's lovegrass	<i>Eragrostis elliotii</i>					8A-11	2-3 ft	
Beach creeper	<i>Ernodea littoralis</i>					9A-11	1-2 ft	
Coralbean	<i>Erythrina herbacea</i>					8A-11	3-8 ft	
Pineland heliotrope	<i>Euploca polyphylla</i>					8A-11	6-12 in	
Garberia	<i>Garberia heterophylla</i>					8A-9B	3-5 ft	
Wild geranium	<i>Geranium carolinianum</i>					8A-11	1-2 ft	
Beach verbena	<i>Glandularia maritima</i>					8B-11	6-12 in	
Dune/Beach sunflower	<i>Helianthus debilis</i>					8B-11	1-2 ft	
Woodland sunflower	<i>Helianthus strumosus</i>					8A-9A	3-6 ft	
Beach morning glory	<i>Ipomoea imperati</i>					8A-11	6 in	
Standing cypress	<i>Ipomopsis rubra</i>					8A-9B	3 ft	
Buttonsage	<i>Lantana involucrata</i>					8B-11	3-5 ft	
Shortleaf blazing star	<i>Liatris tenuifolia</i>					8A-10B	24-30 in	
Gopher apple	<i>Licania michauxii</i>					8A-11	1 ft	
Coral honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>					8A-10B	vine	
Snow squarestem	<i>Melanthera nivea</i>					8A-11	2-6 ft	
Sunshine mimosa	<i>Mimosa strigillosa</i>					8A-10B	2-9 in	
Partridgeberry	<i>Mitchella repens</i>					8A-10A	1-3 in	
Spotted beebalm	<i>Monarda punctata</i>					8A-10A	2-4 ft	
Muhlygrass	<i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i>					8A-11	2-3 ft	
Britton's beargrass	<i>Nolina brittoniana</i>					8A-9B	2-4 ft	
Wild pennyroyal	<i>Piblephes rigida</i>					8B-10B	1-2 ft	
Narrowleaf silkgrass	<i>Pityopsis tracyi</i>					8A-11	1-3 ft	
Carolina wild petunia	<i>Ruellia caroliniensis</i>					8A-10B	6-18 in	
Seaside goldenrod	<i>Solidago sempervirens</i>					8A-11	4-6 ft	
Pineywoods dropseed	<i>Sporobolus junceus</i>					8A-10B	2-3 ft	
Rice button aster	<i>Symphyotrichum dumosum</i>					8A-11	2-3 ft	
Blue curls	<i>Trichostema dichotomum</i>					8A-11	24-30 in	
Sea oats	<i>Uniola paniculata</i>					8A-11	3-6 ft	
Bloodberry	<i>Varronia globosa</i>					10A-11	4-6 ft	
Giant ironweed	<i>Vernonia gigantea</i>					8A-10B	3-5 ft	
Adam's needle	<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>					8A-10B	2-3 ft / 6 ft	

For a more extensive list of drought-tolerant plants, visit www.FlaWildflowers.org/dry-landscapes.

To identify which **hardiness zone** you live in, go to PlantHardiness.ars.usda.gov.

Light Full sun Partial sun/shade Full shade
Bloom season Winter Spring Summer Fall
Soil moisture Dry Moist Wet

Pollinator/Bird use Larval host Butterflies Bees, other pollinators Birds Hummingbirds
Bloom color keys are meant as general guides; exact colors will vary.