Illustrations
The Southeast has long been recognized for its biological richness and diversity. Illustrations for this publication were taken from the works of early naturalists and illustrators exploring the Southeast and scientific illustrators, based in Europe. Below are seven naturalists who spent time in the Southeast and the years they spent here documenting plants and animals of this region. Most of the illustrations in this book are from their works. All of the plants depicted are native to the Southern Coastal Plain.

John White: 1585-1586 & 1590
Mark Catesby: 1712-1719 & 1722-1726
William Bartram: 1773-1776
John Abbott: 1773-1841
Andre Michaux: 1785-1796
John James Audubon: 1803-1842
Philip Henry Gosse: 1838

Legacy of Abundance
We have in our keeping a legacy of abundant, beautiful and healthy natural communities, many of which were shaped by fire. Plant your garden to support this biologically rich region, let native habitats inspire your landscape, and design with Firewise Principles in mind.

Fire Adaptive Landscaping
For Native Habitats and Wildlife in the Southern Coastal Plain
2013

Christa Frangiamore Hayes
Georgia Forestry Commission
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Coastal WildScapes
Acknowledgments:

This slender volume evolved from a previous publication, *Landscaping in Coastal Habitats (with a Firewise Approach)* that was sponsored by the Georgia Forestry Commission. Two wonderful interns, Meghan Injaychock and Brett Walker, from the University of Georgia’s School of Environment and Design were integral to the success of that first publication. To my delight, Meghan agreed to revive aging files and helped bring this book to fruition. Thank you, Meghan.

By happy circumstance, Linda Lamb, with Coastal WildScapes, and Eric Mosely, with the Georgia Forestry Commission, crossed paths some years after the first book was published. From that happy meeting, and the addition of Terri Jenkins, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, came the energy and vision to create another book with a larger geographic scope, a fresher look, and more informed content. The following people joined in at various times, providing knowledge and insight. I could not ask for a better team.

Thomas Angell
M. Forbes Boyle
Scott Coleman
Cecil Frost
Agustina Hein
Terri Jenkins
Linda Lamb
Eamonn Leonard
Eric Mosley
The Southern Coastal Plain of the southeastern United States is a region that has been shaped by fire from people and nature for thousands and millions of years. Many residents of this region live in or near areas of wildland-urban interface where natural fire and hydrologic systems have been altered. These alterations, in concert with climate change, can increase the risk of damaging fires. It requires forward thinking people to incorporate fire management and fire safety into their landscaping decisions.

Every resident and business owner has the opportunity to enhance wildlife habitat and natural ecological systems by maintaining, or where necessary, restoring connectivity to the surrounding forests and other natural communities through landscaping and gardening activities. They can also address the very important issues of water conservation and loss of habitat from invasive species by using native plants and avoiding exotic plants when deciding what to plant. We invite all coastal plain individuals and communities to emphasize creative solutions to protect native habitats and wildlife while connecting with nature and achieving Firewise principals. This publication was created to give everyday people and everyday businesses guidelines to landscaping with these goals in mind.

Introduction

The Southern Coastal Plain ecoregion extends from South Carolina and Georgia through much of central Florida, and along the Gulf Coast Lowlands of the Florida Panhandle, Alabama, and Mississippi. This book covers the areas of South Carolina, Georgia and North Florida adjacent to the Atlantic coast. We believe it will also be helpful to people along the Gulf Coast and North Carolina shores, although some of the plants in this publication may not be found beyond the three targeted states.

The entire ecoregion is typically low in elevation with wet soils and high water tables. Once covered by a variety of forest communities that included longleaf pine, slash pine, pond pine, beech-magnolia, and mixed upland hardwoods, land cover in the region is now predominantly slash and loblolly pine plantations with cypress-gum, bay swamp, and bottomland hardwoods in low lying areas.

Ecoregional subdivisions of the Southern Coastal Plain include the Okefenokee Plains, Sea Island Flatwoods, Okefenokee Swamp, Bacon Terraces, Floodplains and Low Terraces, and Sea Islands/Coastal Marsh.

Map graphic and text adapted from The Southern Coastal Plain Ecoregion: http://www1.gadnr.org/cwcsPDF/13SouthernCoastalPlain.pdf
The direct application of fire was arguably Homo sapiens’ first and most powerful tool in shaping the landscape of what is today the Southeastern United States. Early explorers and colonists consistently reported the use of fire by American Indians. They depicted fire being used to manage everything from clearing for cultivation, encouraging healthy and abundant crops from mast producing species, managing pest populations, hunting and boat building. Some mentioned the build-up of fuel after two or three years, implying that the American Indians did not return to the same place each year but would leave an area alone for periods of time, perhaps to allow game and fuel to regenerate. As time passed, a wide-ranging area would have been impacted by their fire strategies as they rotated seasonal migrations throughout the region over a span of time. The extent to which humans applied fire in the Pre-Contact era is supported by numerous historical, archaeological and anthropological studies.

The most telling proof, however, is the existence of extensive Longleaf and Flatwoods pine systems that covered most of the Coastal Plain until they were largely deforested between 1870 and 1930. Pine forests in the Southern Coastal Plain may well be remnants of dry grasslands and prairies formed during the Late Pleistocene and sustained by fire. Today, natural fires do not occur often enough to support the maintenance of such a system. Natural fire frequency ranges from 3 to 15 or even 20 years. As human populations increased around 10,000 years ago, so did pine species in this region. Crowdry, in This Land This South, An Environmental History noted: “Where the longleafs maintain themselves as the dominant tree, plant scientists adjudge them a “fire climax” – the product of an incomplete succession interrupted by fire...The supposition that millennia of Indian burning halted the forest succession over large areas is rational.” Thomas Nairne, while traveling to the Mississippi River in 1708, reported: “Of all hunting diversions, I took most pleasure in firing rings...This sport is the more certain the longer the ground has been unburned. If it has not for 2 or 3 years there are so many dry leaves grass and Trash, that few Creatures within escape...” Such reports of Southeastern Indians burning at 2-3 year intervals supports the maintenance of a “fire climax” system by early inhabitants of the coastal plain, a system we greatly value for its biological diversity.

The Historical & Natural Role of Fire in the Landscape of the Southern Coastal Plain

Design With Fire In Mind

The Landscape is among the first elements of a home that people notice. It helps to establish a home’s personality and it should also reflect the natural beauty and charm people look for when they visit the Southern Coastal Plain. This chapter will help you to maintain the traditional feel of southern landscapes while incorporating ideas that could also protect your home in the event of a wildfire.

“Tis then they burn the Woods, by setting Fire to the Leaves and with’er’d Bunt and Grass, which they do with a Match made from the black Moss that hangs on the Trees in Carolina, and is sometimes above six Foot long. Thus they go and fire the Woods for many Miles...”

John Lawson (1701)
Coastal Wildfires

Our landscape and many of the native habitats within it evolved as fire driven systems. The Long-leaf Pine and Pine Flatwood forests are largely gone but pine plantations are abundant in the coastal plain. Many neighborhoods have been built in or adjacent to these fire prone plant communities. Typically, maritime and hardwood forests have not been as likely to burn as pine forests but man made changes, such as lower groundwater tables, ditching and draining, and rainwater runoff, have altered the hydrology of the Southern Coastal Plain making the soils drier than normal and fires more intense. Together with warmer temperatures and droughts, these factors lead to more destructive forest fires in all habitats, making fire a real force with which to contend. Your landscaping decisions become all the more important if you live in a fire prone plant community. Design your landscape with fire in mind.

Prescribed fire management is widely accepted and practiced today as a means of reducing fuel build-up and to replicate historical and natural fire regimes. This publication can help you to manage and design landscapes as buffers from potential fire.

The Home Ignition Zone

A home’s ignition risk is determined by its immediate surroundings or its “home ignition zone” and the home’s construction materials. According to fire science research and case studies, it’s not where a home is located that necessarily determines ignition risk, but the landscape around it, often referred to as the “home ignition zone.” The ignition zone is defined as the home and its immediate surroundings up to 200 feet (60 m). In the following page it is broken down into Firewise Home Zones.

Three important factors that contribute to home fires.

Weather
Weather plays an important factor in the development of wildfire conditions. High temperatures, low humidity, and swift winds increase the probability of ignitions. Short and long-term droughts further exacerbate the problem.

Fuel
In its natural form, fuel consists of living and dead trees, bushes, vines and grasses. Too much fuel creates fires that are destructive. Under ideal conditions, there is only enough fuel for a forest to burn without serious damage to the canopy and midstory.

Hydrology
Water tables become lower as groundwater is depleted by withdrawals for industry, housing and agriculture. Rainfall is not able to replenish seasonal moisture levels of soils if the water table is too low causing fires to burn hotter.

Two important factors that contribute to home protection.

Community Effort
Your home ignition zone extends up to 200 feet and it is quite common to have neighbors whose home ignition zone overlaps yours. Buildings closer than 100 feet apart can ignite one another if they are in flames. In addition, many communities have commonly owned property, including natural or wooded areas that can pose fire risks to all. This means that to be most effective, neighbors need to work together and with their local fire service to achieve greater wildfire safety.

Prescribed Burning
Meadows and pine woods can be managed through annual prescribed burns. Prescribed burns mimic natural fires to reduce fuel loads. They can also help promote species diversity in meadows. If controlled burning is now allowed in your area, mowing annually is another management option.

Firewise Home Zones

Zone 1
This area encircles the structure for at least 30 feet on all sides including decks and fences, and provides space for fire suppression equipment in the event of an emergency. It should be well-irrigated with the capacity to leave sprinklers running if the case of evacuation. Lawns should be well maintained and mowed. Plantings should be limited to carefully spaced low flammability species. In particularly fire prone areas, non-flammable mulch should be considered.

Zone 2
This ideally irrigated area enircles the structure from 30 to 100 feet on all sides, including decks and fences. It provides space for fire suppression equipment in the event of an emergency. Lawns should be well maintained and mowed. Plantings should be limited to carefully spaced low flammability species.

Zone 3
This area encompasses 100 – 200 feet from the home. Place low-growing plants and well-spaced trees in this area, remembering to keep the volume of vegetation (fuel) low.

Zone 4
This furthest zone from the structure is a natural area. Selectively prune and thin all plants and remove highly flammable vegetation.
Prevention

Fire prevention techniques are vital to your Firewise landscape. Individuals and communities whose residents take steps to reduce their vulnerability have a greater chance of their property surviving wildfire events. Homeowners can and must take primary responsibility for wildfire safety precautions around the home. There are not enough fire fighting resources to protect every home during severe wildfires. Firefighters are trained to safely and efficiently suppress wildland fires, but their effectiveness is reduced when they must sweep decks, move wood piles and patio furniture while trying to fight a fire. According to fire science research, individual efforts do make a difference, even in the face of a catastrophic wildfire.

The following steps are outlined by the Firewise program to reduce home ignition risk, based on this principle that you can make a difference:

✓ Move woody debris from the home, keeping small amounts handy during winter months
✓ Screen or box in areas below patios and decks with wire screening no larger than 1/8 inch thick
✓ Keep flammable plants and mulches at least 5 feet away from your home’s perimeter
✓ Sweep decks and porches clear of fallen leaves
✓ Bring doormats and furniture cushions inside when absent or an area is threatened by wildfire
✓ Prune low hanging limbs to reduce ladder fuels
✓ Use low-growing, well pruned and fire resistant plants around the home
✓ Clean roofs and gutters of pine needles and dead leaves
✓ Prune trees and shrubs that are higher than 18 inches if they are beneath the canopy of taller trees.

Mark it!

Make sure your house and mailbox numbers are clearly marked and non-flammable. This ensures that the Fire Department can easily identify your property and potentially save your house. Numbers on your home and mailbox should be made of resistant materials, like brass or iron. Wooden and plastic numbers and mailboxes are prone to burning.

Types of Fuels

Ladder Fuels are any type of vegetation or structure that bridges the gap between fuel on the ground and fuel in the treetops. They turn ground fires into crown fires.

Trees and shrubs that are higher than 18 inches are considered to be ladder fuels if they are beneath the canopy of taller trees.

Man made structures made of flammable materials can also act as ladder fuels. Trellises, walkways, awnings, and decks are a few examples.

Rain Gardens

Function and beauty can coexist when controlling rainwater runoff. Don’t settle for gravel and a jumble of boulders. Create a rain garden. Use water loving ferns, grasses, hibiscus, iris, reeds and sedges to evoke a natural wetland. Consider tabby or bricks instead of rock when structure is needed to channel water flow or for ornamental detail, but adorn them with native plants.

Rain Barrels

Capture your roof runoff and use it to water your garden, container plants or fill bird baths. Rain barrels come in different styles from basic utilitarian units to attractive solutions for visible locations.

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Water

Water Wise Practices

Conserving water is already important and will be even more so as limited water resources are stretched to meet the demands of growing populations. Do what you can to target, and thus minimize watering. Create rain gardens to capture and slow down runoff. Utilize rain barrels and irrigation systems. Design with containers. They are not only attractive but are easily equipped with watering systems. Containers use considerably less water than large flower beds. Potted plants in Firewise Zone 1 can safely green up that bare space between the house and Zone 2.

Managing Stormwater

Several ways to slow down rainwater to keep appropriate moisture on site:

• Use pervious pavements where possible to allow water to infiltrate into the ground.
• Capture water with rain barrels.
• Create attractively planted and designed swales that guide stormwater runoff to bogs or rain gardens where the water can soak into the soil.
• Use ground covers, natural leaf litter as mulch on exposed ground to keep soil moist and keep out invasive weeds.

Watershed

by William Bartram

Create water features for wildlife throughout your property. Bird baths, mister, small ponds and rainwater gardens achieve multiple goals for Firewise protection and wildlife diversity.
**Design for Defense**

Create spaces for wildlife viewing by pushing shrubs away from the windows, adding a bird bath and utilizing containers to frame a space. Replace foundation plantings with decorative containers. They can be moved if necessary and are easily equipped with watering systems. They allow you to target, and thus minimize watering. This will become more important as limited water resources are stretched to meet the demands of growing populations. Containers use considerably less water than large flower beds. Potted plants in Zone 1 can safely green up that bare space between the house and Zone 2 plantings.

**Paving and Decking**

If you are thinking about adding a patio, porch, or deck always consider the flammability of the material before making a decision. For patios, stone, tabby concrete, or brick are all good choices as they are less likely to spread fire to your home. For decks, a good choice would be a composite decking that has low flammability ratings. Before you purchase the material make sure to check the class ratings of the material as some can be highly flammable.

**Live Oaks**

Live oaks do not readily burn but you can do the following to reduce the risk of them carrying fire to your home structures.
- Trim dead twigs and branches on a regular basis
- Prune limbs that touch structures or are diseased

As it is difficult to prune live oak without damaging the trees, we recommend you use a certified arborist with knowledge of coastal species.

**Firebreaks & Fuelbreaks**

- A firebreak is a strip of land, 20 feet or more wide, in which all vegetation is removed each year prior to fire season. Your driveway, if properly designed, can act as a firebreak, as can water features like streams and ponds.
- A fuelbreak is a strip of land in which fuel density is reduced by controlling plant material that can carry fire. Firewise Zones 1, 2 and 3 should function as fuelbreaks.

**Design with Containers**

Replace foundation plantings with decorative containers. They can be moved away from the house and easily equipped with watering systems. Potted plants in Zone 1 can safely green up that bare space between the house and Zone 2 plantings while luring birds and butterflies to window views.

**Plant Selection**

Plant selection is key to a successful container garden. Always evaluate the amount of sunlight your chosen area receives before you decide what you are going to plant. Make sure the varieties you choose are compatible in the amount of sunlight and water they need. The right combination can lessen the amount of maintenance and lead to a more satisfying end result.

**Colors that Compliment**

Choosing complementary colors in plants will bring your container garden to life. Try blues and yellows, pinks and bright greens, or go for a subtle effect with silvery greens, mauve and a bit of purple. Use only 2 – 3 colors per pot depending on the size of the container.

**Fillers**

A filler plant is always needed to provide a neutral backdrop to the flowering varieties. These can be evergreens, ferns, grasses or any plant that has a neutral texture and color.

**Spillers**

Use native plants that spill over the edge of containers for added depth and softness. Try Climbing Aster, Butterfly Pea, Parrtridge Berry or Lady Fern and Creeping Verbena. Experiment with native morning-glories, vetches and sages, such as Scarlet Sage.
Planting Zones and Landscaping Ideas

Coastal Plain Landscaping Ideas

Plant your hedges and ornamental shrubs away from walls and foundations. Use paving materials, shell or gravel between the hedges and the house to create outdoor living spaces. Soften walls with irrigated planters and add water and wildlife feeders. From inside, you will have a better vantage point for viewing wildlife while enhancing fire protection for your home.

Design Notes
- Maintain an irrigation system and retain stormwater on site.
- Keep Zone 2 mown with limited ground plane vegetation.
- Driveways and trails can function as firebreaks and fuelbreaks.
- Special landscape areas are maintained with annual prescribed burns.
- Understory vegetation increases in density as you move further from homes and structures.

Defensible Space

Zone 1:
- Select less flammable native shrubs for within the defensible space.
  - Azalea
  - Beautyberry
  - Blueberry
  - Hydrangea
  - Sweetshrub

Create a defensible space in Zone 1 by using inert materials, such as gravel, near structures, reducing flammable species, and keeping the ground plane generally clear of fuel.

Zones 2, 3, & 4

Less flammable large trees are good choices for zones near the home.
- Bald Cypress
- Blackgum
- Longleaf Pine
- Red Maple
- Hickory
- Southern Red Oak
- Sycamore
- White Oak
Plants and animals depend on healthy habitats to complete their life cycles. They also need the ability to shift to suitable locations if outside pressures force them to move. We tend to think of plants as sedentary species, and indeed, an individual plant cannot move its roots on its own accord beyond the means of a creeping root or rhizome. However, populations of plants do move. Seeds and nuts disperse at a landscape level by wind and water, birds and mammals, but they must land in a congenial place to survive. Landscape fragmentation breaks habitats and natural communities into smaller pieces that are no longer connected to one another. Your garden, landscape, or managed piece of property can become a vital link from one natural community to another and reweave habitats, even if it is in a developed area.

Since habitats cannot quickly shift, fragmentation is a serious ecological issue that will only become more critical as human populations continue to grow. Preventing the further loss of native habitats is something everyone can do. It does not matter if you rent or own the land surrounding your home, if you have twenty acres to landscape or only a container garden, you can participate in a positive way by planting native species. Our goal is to help you maintain the integrity and continuity of Southern Coastal Plain habitats and natural communities. Plants native to the Southern Coastal Plain are, by and large, fire adaptive. They naturally help reduce fire intensity while providing necessary habitat structure.
Beach & Dunes

Beach and dune systems are among the most dynamic landscapes on earth. Houses can no longer be placed in these coastal environments in the Southeast, but many homes were built before such regulations were enacted. If your property lies within these systems or is poised at the edge, you have the rare opportunity to maintain or restore an important natural habitat. You are also faced with gardening in a tough environment. The beach and dune system has many beautiful plants, but it is by definition a sparsely elegant landscape. Instead of planting exotics, take an unexpected approach and see what you can do with the celadon green arches of Sea Oats, ephemeral mauve clouds of Sweet Grass or silvery clusters of the fragrant Wax Myrtle. For unparalleled stature and a sense of the exotic, use our native Moundlily (Yucca gloriosa). Plants that can survive the beach and dune habitats must be salt tolerant and wind resistant.

Protect Your Landscaping Investment
Native coastal plants evolved in this environment. They are more likely to survive storms and climatic conditions typical of the region.

Protect Your Property
Intact native habitats provide a natural defense against storms. After hurricanes Katrina and Sandy a number of studies found that native vegetation mitigates the negative impact of storm damage on human property. They found that healthy salt marshes, oyster beds and maritime forest protected homes by acting as:
- Buffers from storm surges
- Sediment traps
- Windbreaks

American Olive
The American Olive grows as a midstory tree or shrub in the Maritime Forest. This wild olive may not taste good to us but birds appreciate the dark blue drupes that happen to ripen in time for fall migration. On a sunny late winter day, you will love the fragrance of its early blooming flowers drifting through the garden or forest.

Maritime Forests
Maritime Forests run in a narrow band along the eastern edge of the Southern Coastal Plain. They boarder the expanse of marshes on the mainland and cover the upland parts of barrier islands and hammocks. Mainland maritime forests and barrier islands have sometimes been part of a contiguous land mass and sometimes isolated by water through the millennia. Over time, dunes and swales became inland ridges and wetlands. Today, Maritime Forests are one of the fastest disappearing yet most valued habitats in the Southeast.

At a fine scale, Maritime Forests are not just live oaks and palmettos, but a mosaic of dry upland, marsh, hammock and freshwater wetland vegetation types. The native plant guide section highlights species from each of these habitats, many of which adapt well to garden sites. Some will need the wet or dry soils to which they are accustomed but others will thrive under various conditions.
Pine Flatwoods Communities
Pineland ecosystems are climatic forests given by frequent fire regimes and high water tables. The counter intuitive combination of fire and water creates large open forests, known as savannas, with a third of the fresh water entering the Georgia. This grand river contributes a third of the fresh water entering the Atlantic Ocean on the east coast from fresh water entering the estuaries south of Savannah. The expansive pine forests today are planted on soils drained by ditching. Still, remnants of Pine Flatwoods remain, harboring plant species from Longleaf and Pond Pines to Flecky Milkweed and Hooded Pitcherplant.

Carolina Flatwoods
Carolina Flatwoods occupy a broad stretch of pine flatwoods, pine savannas, freshwater marshes, pocosins, pond pine woodlands, and some sandhill communities. They support a richly diverse flora and fauna, notably Carolina bays and pocosins that derive their sustenance by dissolving insects. Longleaf Pine, you understand how the distinctive soil. Deposits of shell not only sweeten the highly acid soils typical of the Southern Coastal Plain, but also increase the moisture holding capacity of the soil. Others appreciate the extra moisture. Forests bordering saline environments often transition into Sawtooth Palmetto fringes and fresh-water sloughs, adding to the complexity to the Maritime Forest. These sites create a fabric of vegetation supports plants such as: Cherry Laurel, Southern Red Cedar, Red Buckeye, Tuffly Dogwood, Yaupon Holly, Pitcher plants and the diminutive Sundews grow in the highly acidic soils of bogs and wetlands. In such environments, their roots cannot process nutrients as they derive their sustenance by dissolving insects.
Salt Marsh
South Carolina and Georgia hold almost two-thirds (over to 800,000 acres) of the Atlantic coast’s remaining tidal salt marshes, one of the most biologically productive natural systems on Earth. They produce nearly twenty tons of biomass to the acre and support primary nursery areas for blue crabs, oysters, shrimp, and other economically important fish and shellfish. They filter pollutants from the water and act as buffers against offshore storms. An abundance of otters, minks, raccoons and birds, from the secretive Clapper Rail to the tiny Marsh Wren, rely on our salt marshes for sustenance year round.

Salt Marsh & its hammocks also provide critical recharge and breeding habitat for many species of migratory birds and a multitude of local creatures. Sea Lavender, Blue-eyed grass, Bartram’s Hibiscus, and Water Lilies are a few species native to our freshwater wetlands and perfect for sunny rain gardens and watery landscape features. Orchids, Climbing Aster, Blue-eyed grass and Water Lilies are a few species native to our freshwater wetlands and perfect for sunny rain gardens and watery landscape features.

Brackish Wetlands
Many homes are built along tidally influenced creeks. A healthy marsh edge is gone, rebuild with natives. Crabs, oysters, shrimp, and other economically important fish and shellfish. They filter pollutants from the water and act as buffers against offshore storms. An abundance of otters, minks, raccoons and birds, from the secretive Clapper Rail to the tiny Marsh Wren, rely on our salt marshes for sustenance year round.

Brackish Wetlands are an eco-friendly solution for the maintenance of coastal marshes. They are made up of a blend of saltwater and freshwater, ranging from 30 to 0.5 parts per thousand (ppt) of dissolved salts in it. Brackish water, then, has less salt than seawater and more than freshwater has, ranging from 0.5 to 0ppt of dissolved salts in it.

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Invasive Plants

Exotic invasive plants are most threatening in ecosystems such as wetlands, sand dunes, fire adapted areas, and barrens where rare native plants are often found. They thrive where the continuity of a natural ecosystem is breached, such as disturbed sites like construction areas, spoil piles and road cuts. Even foot traffic can create a temporary void that is quickly invaded. Some national parks have restricted the areas where visitors are allowed to walk in an effort to protect sensitive ecological systems.

The Southern Coastal Plain, like any other region, possesses an inherent and dynamic balance of plants and animals. This is what keeps nature in check. Most of the plants that fall in the category of exotic invasive are species that have been transplanted from their native habitats, usually to fill an aesthetic or agricultural need in another place. In general, many introduced species are nothing to worry about. Gardenia, Crape Myrtle, camellias, figs and citrus are plants we rightfully associate with Coastal Plain Gardens. Other exotics, however, are aggressive species that endanger our native natural communities and the flora and fauna that depend on them. Play it safe and plant natives, using only exotic species that are proven to be well behaved garden favorites.

Why Should We Care?

When invasive plants are taken out of their original environments, they are liberated of native pests and plant competitors. Without these natural controls, invasive plants are free to seed, grow, and spread virtually unchecked. Their numbers increase rapidly, taking over less aggressive native plants and eventually dominating a once diverse landscape. Birds, Insects, and other wildlife, which are dependent on the native plant communities for food and habitat suffer great losses. Invasives are economic pests as well. People spend millions of dollars a year eradicating invasive species from their yards, road sides, and farms. The agricultural industry is especially hard hit by invasive species that infest and contaminate crops.

Fire Hazards

Some exotic invasive plants, Cogon Grass being a good example, increase the intensity and the spread of wildfires.

Exotic Invasive Plants

Exotic invasive plants are most threatening in ecosystems such as wetlands, sand dunes, fire adapted areas, and barrens where rare native plants are often found. They thrive where the continuity of a natural ecosystem is breached, such as disturbed sites like construction areas, spoil piles and road cuts. Even foot traffic can create a temporary void that is quickly invaded. Some national parks have restricted the areas where visitors are allowed to walk in an effort to protect sensitive ecological systems.

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Native Substitutes

Trees

- For evergreen specimens use Red Cedar or Bald Cypress instead of Desdor Cedar, Atlas Cedar, Cryptomeria, Leyland Cypress or French Tamarisk.
- Replace Mimoa, Chraisberry and Tree of Heaven with Redbud, Fringe Tree or Hercules Club. Many exotic invasive species have been widely planted in gardens for years and are readily available at local garden centers. Since most of these plants were brought over for their ornamental value they have become quite common place in our landscape. Plants like Japanese Honeysuckle, Chinese Wisteria, and Bamboo are sold everywhere despite being highly invasive species that are taking a toll on coastal plain environments. Support nurseries that specialize in native plants. Native Substitutes

Vines & Ferns:

- Use native ferns and prattleidge berry for shady ground cover areas instead of English Ivy and exotic ferns.

Grasses:

- Use native Bushy Bluestem, Giant Plumegrass, Giant Foxtail, River-oats, Sand Cordgrass or Samand Woodoats, and Starrush Whitetop for moist locations.

Shrubs:

- Use Dahoon Holly, Sweatleaf and Sparkleberry instead of Coralberrr, Autumn Olive or Ligustrum.
- Use Devil’s Walkingstick or native hibiscus to replace Nandina.

Ferns

Asparagus-fern (Asparagus aethiopicus) and Climbing Fern (Lygodium japonicum).\n
Japanese Honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica)

More Native Substitutes

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Exotic Invasive Plants of the Coastal Plain

Trees

- Cinnamomum camphora
- Melia azedarach
- Wisteria sinensis
- Vitex rotundifolia
- Tamarix canariensis
- Lygodium japonicum
- Ailanthus altissima
- Ligustrum lucidum
- Hedera helix
- Asclepias curassavica
- Rincus communis
- Ardisia crenata
- Asparagus aethiopicus
- Albizia julibrissin
- Lonicera japonica
- Phyllostachys aurea
- Paulownia tomentosa
- Elaeagnus umbellata
- Triadica sebifera
- Ligustrum vulgare
- Pueraria montana
- Sesbania punicea
- Nandina domestica
- Lespedeza bicolor
- Miscanthus sinensis

Perennials

- Biscut Leavedoeza (Lepeodeza bicolor)
- Castor Bean (Ricinus communiss)
- Lantana (Lantana camara)
- Maximian Melakweed (Asclepias curassavica)
- Rattlebox (Stacharis puniccis)
- Water Hyacinth (Eichhornia crassipes)

Grasslike

- Bamboo (Phyllostachys aurea)
- Cogongrass (Imperata cylindrica)
- Common Reed (Phragmites australis)
- Giant Reed (Arundo donax)
- Pampas Grass (Cortaderia selloana)
- Zebragrass (Miscanthus caninus)

Vines:

- Chinese Wisteria (Wisteria sinensis)
- English Ivy (Hedera helix)
- Japanese Honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica)
- Kudzu (Pueraria montana)

Ferns

Asparagus-fern (Asparagus aethiopicus) and Climbing Fern (Lygodium japonicum).\n
Japanese Honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica)
Characteristics of Fire Tolerant Plants

- High Moisture Content
- Wide, Flat Leaves
- Open & Loose Branches
- Deciduous

Here are a few fire-tolerant favorites of southern gardens that are not native but have proven over time not to pose danger to natural communities.

- Camellias
- Gardenias
- Hydrangeas

Firewise Tip

In the event of evacuation from wildfire, turn on your sprinklers before leaving. Plan in advance and have extra hoses and sprinklers ready to spray structures and foundations.

Less Flammable Native Trees & Shrubs

Any plant that is exposed to enough heat or is already stressed by drought or neglect will burn. Keep the plantings near your house well watered and equipped with a watering system. The trees and shrubs listed below are less likely to burn than others and are attractive landscaping plants.

Trees

- Bald Cypress
- Basswood
- Flowering Dogwood
- Hickory
- Live Oak
- Red Buckeye
- Red Maple
- Southern Magnolia
- Southern Red Oak
- Swamp White Oak
- Sweetbay Magnolia
- Tulip Poplar
- White Oak

Shrubs

- Beautyberry
- Bottlebrush Buckeye
- Elderberry
- Hearts-a-bustin
- Native Azaleas
- Oakleaf Hydrangea
- Summersweet
- Sweetshrub
- Viburnum
- Virginia Sweetspire
- Witchhazel
- Yucca
Salt spray in the air and occasional saltwater flooding are normal conditions on the coast. Whether you live right on the beach or in a wooded inland area this is something all coastal gardeners must deal with. The welcome sea breezes we experience also carry salt spray that settles on vegetation. Salt from the ocean affects a plant’s growth as well as its lifespan. Plants respond with leaf loss, burned foliage, stunted growth, or death. In order to avoid these gardening casualties, use plants that naturally grow in salt-laced environments. The plants listed below also withstand heavy winds and poor, sandy soils, additional challenges to gardening on the coast. One of the beauties of landscaping with native plants is that they are preconditioned to survive the rigors of our coastal habitats.

**Salt Tolerant Natives**

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**Salt spray tolerant species**

- **Swallow-wort**
- **Purple Passionflower**
- **Saltmarsh Morning-glory**
- **Carolina jessamine**
- **Vines**
- **Yaupon Holly**
- **Winged Sumac**
- **Wax Myrtle**
- **Viburnum**
- **Saltbush**
- **Beautyberry**
- **Shrubs**
- **Southern Red Cedar**
- **Southern Magnolia**
- **Sand Live Oak**
- **Cabbage Palm**
- **Black Cherry**
- **Bald Cypress**
- **American Olive**
- **American Holly**
- **Berries**
- **Carolina Jessamine**
- **Vines**
- **Trumpet Creeper**
- **Cross Vine**
- **Purple Passionflower**
- **Saltmarsh Morning-glory**
- **Swallow-wort**

**Where to Plant?**

Make sure the species with the highest salt tolerances are placed closest to the salt source. If your yard borders the beach, plant highly tolerant species such as Sea Oats or Moundlily on the ocean side and less tolerant ones, such as Black Cherry, where they are protected by structures or masses of salt-tolerant species. Leave as many existing trees and shrubs, such as oaks and honeysuckle, in place at marsh edge and shrubs, such as oaks and honeysuckle, in place at marsh edge to protect other plants from prevailing salt-laced winds.

**Firewise Tip**

Site your house far enough away from the marsh edge to allow for a natural border of native shrubs and trees and still have a defensible space around your home. You and the birds will be happy.

**Drought Tolerant Natives**

Seasonally dry conditions and prolonged drought are a part of life for coastal gardeners. Native plants of the region have evolved to handle this hot climate and cyclical dry soil conditions. They are able to survive periods of restricted moisture once established. Usually one full year of deep regular watering will do it. The plants listed below are native to dry conditions and do well in the harsh environments found along the coast. This does not mean that these plants will thrive during droughts but they will survive and rebound when the rains return.

**Drought Survival**

Periods of drought are typically coupled with restrictive outdoor water use. To avoid the loss of your plants here are a few suggestions.

- Use leaf litter to mulch your plant beds to retain moisture.
- Xeriscaping and use more shrubs and native ground covers in your landscape design to reduce lawn space.
- Replace lawns with plants that can survive with strategic placement of perennial beds of native plants.
- Use container gardening for watering plant species.

**Xeriscaping**

Xeriscaping refers to landscaping with plants that do not require supplemental irrigation. It is particularly appropriate in areas that do not have easily accessible supplies of fresh water and experience seasonal drought. It is catching on in other areas as climate patterns shift and as a means of conserving water. The word xeriscaping combines xeris (Greek for “dry”) with landscape.

GDQZ33-10.jpg

- **Goldenrod**
- **Witch hazel**
- **Trumpet creeper**
- **Adam’s Needle**
- **Beebalm**
- **Gayfeather**
- **Purpletop**
- **Spattina**
- **Sple disproportionate broom grass**
- **Cross vine**
- **Purple passionflower**
- **Trumpet creeper**

- **Trees**
  - Bald Cypress
  - Live Oak
  - Longleaf Pine
  - Red buckeye
  - Red cedar
  - River Birch
  - Sand Live Oak
  - Southern Magnolia
  - Southern Red Oak
  - Sugarberry
  - White Oak

- **Shrubs**
  - Bristly Locust
  - Indigo Bush
  - Inkberry
  - Wax Myrtle

- **Perennials**
  - Beach Croton
  - Cucumber-leaf Sunflower
  - Moundlily
  - Salvia
  - Spanish Bayonet
  - Moundlily Yucca
  - Cucumberleaf Sunflower
  - Beach Croton

- **Grasses**
  - Beach Oats
  - Salt Marsh Cordgrass
  - Muhley Grass
  - Salt Meadow Cordgrass
  - Muhley Grass
  - Salt Oats

- **Vines**
  - Carolina jessamine
  - Cross Vine
  - Purple passionflower
  - Trumpet creeper

**Perennials**

- American Holly
- American Olive
- Bald Cypress
- Black Cherry
- Cabbage Palm
- Sand Live Oak
- Southern Magnolia
- Southern Red Cedar

**Shrubs**

- Beautyberry
- Saltbush
- Viburnum
- Yaupon Holly

**Vines**

- Carolina jessamine
- Saltmarsh Morning-glory
- Purple Passionflower
- Swallow-wort

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- **Trumpet creeper**
- **Adam’s Needle**
- **Beebalm**
- **Gayfeather**
- **Lanceleaf Coreopsis**
- **Mint Flower**
- **Rose Verbena**
- **Scarlet Sage**
- **Seaside Goldenrod**
- **Wild Lupine**

**Grasses**

- Longleaf Spike grass
- Muhley Grass
- Purpletop
- Spattina
- Sple disproportionate broom grass

**Vines**

- Cross Vine
- Carolina jessamine
- Purple passionflower
- Trumpet creeper
**Shade Tolerant Natives**

Shady spots on the coast present a distinct challenge to the coastal gardener. Here, they are likely to be dry and sandy with well draining soils or wet with no drainage to speak of. Shade loving plants typically found at the garden center need rich, moist, well drained soils. The opposite of what our landscape has to offer. What to do? Use natives. Our local species are adapted to the dichotomy of coastal soils and hydrology.

**Trees**
- American Holly
- American Hornbeam
- American Silverbells
- American Hornbeam
- American Holly
- Southern Sugar Maple
- Sweetbay Magnolia
- Water Tupelo
- Bald Cypress
- Buckwheat Tree
- Flowering Hawthorns
- Georgia Fervetree
- Loblolly Bay
- Red Maple
- Silverbell
- Southern Sugar Maple
- Sweetbay Magnolia
- Water Tupelo

**Ferns**
- Autumn Fern
- Cinnamon Fern
- Royal Fern
- Virginia Chain fern

**Perennials**
- Atamasco Lily
- Blue-eyed Grass
- Cardinal Flower
- Carolina Spidersley
- Eastern Rose-mallow
- Feverfew Milkweed
- Germander
- Hildibunda
- Large-flowered Hibiscus
- New York Ironweed
- Partridge Berry
- Red Milkweed
- Southern Blueflag Iris
- Swamp Milkweed
- Swamp Sunflower
- Yellow Canna

**Vines**
- American Wisteria
- Climbing Hydrangea
- Coastal Virgin’s Bower
- Morning-glory
- Trumpet Creeper
- Yellow Passionflower

**Ferns**
- Cinnamon Fern
- Maidenhair Fern
- Nestled Chain Fern
- Royal Fern
- Southern Shield Fern

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**Moisture Loving Natives**

The preponderance of wetlands in coastal Georgia has generated a wonderful selection of native plants, many of which adapt well to drier sites. If you have a moist area with dismal drainage, take delight in the abundant native plant species and exciting landscaping potential at hand. Native moisture loving plants span from shade loving to sun worshiping species. There is nothing more beautiful or generous than the Loblolly Bay in bloom from July through October. It thrives in wet soils and at wood’s edge. For full sun, mallows presents spectacular bloom displays. Turn drainage problem areas into rain gardens to catch that runoff from roofs and driveways and lowering the risk for local flooding.

**Rain Gardens**

Rain gardens capture runoff from impervious areas such as roofs and driveways and allow it to seep slowly into the ground, preserving nearby streams and marshes by reducing the amount of runoff and filtering pollutants, including fertilizer, pesticides oil, heavy metals and other chemicals. Rain gardens also reduce peak storm flows, helping to prevent erosion and lowering the risk for local flooding.

Rain gardens should be beautiful landscape features. Do not top them off with unsightly gravel but plant them with beauty. All ferns do well in partial to full shade. Ferns just look beautiful landscape features. Do not top them off with unsightly gravel but plant them with beauty. All ferns do well in partial to full shade. Ferns just look

**Classic Shade Lovers**

All ferns do well in partial to full shade. Ferns just look right in the shade, as even if your shady spot is drier than most ferns will tolerate, plant Southern Shield Ferns for drifts of soft foliage. For moister locations plant Royal Fern for height and drama. All ferns need water, especially the first year, but many adapt well to normal garden soils.

**Blooming Rain Garden Perennials**

- Atamasco Lily
- Blue-eyed Grass
- Cardinal Flower
- Carolina Spidersley
- Eastern Rose-mallow
- Feverfew Milkweed
- Germander
- Hildibunda
- Large-flowered Hibiscus
- New York Ironweed
- Partridge Berry
- Red Milkweed
- Southern Blueflag Iris
- Swamp Milkweed
- Swamp Sunflower
- Yellow Canna

**Trees**
- American Holly
- American Hornbeam
- American Silverbells
- Black Gum
- Buckwheat Tree
- Cabbage Palm
- Dahlou Holly
- Dogwood
- Eastern Redbud
- Red Buckeye
- Pawpaw
- Possom-haw
- Swamp Milkweed

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**Trees**
- Bald Cypress
- Buckwheat Tree
- Flowering Hawthorns
- Georgia Fervetree
- Loblolly Bay
- Red Maple
- Silverbell
- Southern Sugar Maple
- Sweetbay Magnolia
- Water Tupelo

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**Shrubs**
- Bottlebrush Buckeye
- Button Bush
- Dahoon Holly
- Elderberry
- Summer Sweet
- Swamp Azalea
- Sweetspire
- Sweetshrub
- Viburnum
- Witchhazel
- Yaupon Holly

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**Ferns**
- Autumn Fern
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**Grasses & Sedges**
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- Georgia Fervetree
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- Red Maple
- Silverbell
- Southern Sugar Maple
- Sweetbay Magnolia
- Water Tupelo
Goldfinches & Sunflowers

Plant native sunflowers near your windows to bring Goldfinches into view. Swamp Sunflower is a great one that, despite its name, performs well in the garden. You will see dozens of fall Goldfinches hanging upside down and every which way as they tear into the small but nutritious seeds.

Flowers for Hummingbirds

Hummingbirds follow the bloom of spring flowering species as they migrate north. Red Buckeye, Silver-bell, Tulip Poplar, Cross Vine, Carolina Jessamine and Indian Pink are a few spring favorites. Hummingbirds add insects to their diet while rearing young but still depend on nectar for a large portion of their energy. Coralbean, Hibiscus, Trumpetvine, Morning-glories, Lobelia, Coral Honeysuckle, Monardas and Salvias bloom during the breeding season.

Flowers for Nectar

Host Plant Butterfly

Butterfly plant resources fall broadly into two categories, host plants on which butterfly larvae feed and plants from which adults procure nectar, pollen, sap or juice. Reality, however, is not so concise or clearly delineated. Butterflies are most successful at reproducing when host plants and nectar plants are integrated into a healthy habitat structure that allows for butterfly resiliency as larvae, pupae (chrysalides), and adult. A habitat is most effective when it provides three general and very basic needs in close proximity to one another-food for larvae, protection for pupae and food for newly emerging adults. Below are a few host plants found in the Southern Coastal Plain with ornamental value and butterfly species that use them.

Trees

Black Cherry
Blackgum
Flowering Dogwood
Persimmon
Red Buckeye
Red Cedar
Red Mulberry
Sassafras
Serviceberry
Southern Magnolia
Sugarberry
Sweetgum

Shrubs

Beautyberry
Blackberries
Blueberries
Devil’s Walkingstick
Elderberry
Flowering Hawthorns
Hollies
Spicebush
Sumac
Virburnums
Waxmyrtle

Perennials

Asters
Yellow Thistle
Nuttall’s Thistle
Coreopsis
Purple Conflower
Swamp Sunflower
Black-eyed Susan

Flowers

Carolina Coralbeads
Poison Ivy
Muscadine
Silmix
Summer Grape
Trumpet Honeysuckle
Virginia Creeper

Vines

Carolina Coralbeads
Poison Ivy
Muscadine
Silmix
Summer Grape
Trumpet Honeysuckle
Virginia Creeper

Purple Conflower by William Barham

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Importance of Leaf Litter

Some butterfly species spend a portion of their life cycle (as egg, larvae or pupae) in leaf litter. Heat the temptation to blow away all the litter. Use low growing ground covers at the base of trees instead to protect butterflies.

Gardening for Birds

An abundance of birds breed, winter or migrate throughout the Southern Coastal Plain. Our gardens can bring them into our lives and save their lives. Provide clean water and trees, snags and shrubs for nesting and shelter. Leaf litter should be left or raked beneath shrubs and trees. It contains insects birds need for protein when raising young and snail shells that provide calcium for eggs. Many birds count on late ripening berries, drupes and seeds to fatten up on their fall migration routes. Hummingbirds follow the bloom of Buckeyes and other spring blooming plants northward in the spring. Plant as many bird-food bearing plants as you can. Below are attractive native plants used by birds for food.

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Native Plant Guide

Native Index: Trees

Trees create the overarching structure of forests. They provide an infrastructure of limbs and roots, shady canopy and fallen organic matter that supports a host of Southern Coastal Plain species. The selection of trees below is by no means comprehensive. It does have an assortment of evergreen and deciduous species, tall and short varieties, those that delight us with extravagant blooms and others that lace the air with fragrance. Most of them, if not all, are important food sources for wildlife or host plants for winged insects, mammals and birds.

The framework of trees in your landscape will shape all your other choices. Take the time to learn about the native trees in your area. Identify the species on your property or those in natural areas nearby. Use that information with this manual to help you choose the best trees for your ideal landscape.

Tree Tips

• When placing trees, keep the attributes of a mature specimen in mind. Trees take longer to reach a good size, but they eventually make more of an impact on the landscape.
• Consider canopy, mid-story and understory plants collectively to create a complimentary vertical structure of layers in the landscape.
• Visualize the winter effect of trees in the landscape as well as spring and summer displays. It is then the structure of your design will become most apparent.
• Consider eventual height and spread in relation to existing structures such as roofs, pools and power lines.
• Hardiness, heat tolerance, soil type and moisture are factors that influence survivability. Choose plants native to the habitat in which you live.
• Foliage scale, color and texture are important design elements that can bring detail to the overall aesthetics of your landscape.
• Flowering time and color should always be taken into consideration. A large massing of Eastern Redbuds might clash with your house color or gracefully pick up the warm tones of a tile roof.
• Design with wildlife habitat, food and shelter in mind.
• Design with Firewise Principles in mind, using low flammable trees for areas near structures.
Acer barbatum (Southern Sugar Maple)
Light Requirements: Full sun to part shade
Habitat: Naturally found in wetland areas and along rivers and streams.
Information: Can grow 40-60 ft tall. It has yellow fall color.

Betula nigra (River Birch)
Light Requirements: Full sun to heavy shade
Habitat: Naturally found in wetland areas and along rivers and streams.
Information: Fast growth occurs in the first few years and can reach a mature height of 60-80 ft. Noted for its papery bark that ranges from a cinnamon brown to pinkish color. The trunk tends to fork close to the ground, but it can grow into a single base. Leaves are glossy dark green with a silver under side.

Chionanthus virginicus (Fringe Tree)
Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Grows naturally in dry sandy soils. Likes well drained soil.
Information: Can grow from 35-40 feet tall. The flowers bloom in late winter and is followed by large blue berries. Growth can range from a shrubby to open form. Reaches a mature height of 30 feet. Named for its narrow fringe like flowers that appear in pale, creamy green, lacy clusters. Blooms are slightly fragrant. Small olive-like fruit is favored by birds.

Celtis laevigata (Sugarberry)
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in variety of habitats.
Information: Can grow up to 80 ft tall with rounded, fountain like branching. Trunk has corky nodules. Berry like fruit appears in the fall and is attractive to many birds.

Cercis canadensis (Eastern Redbud)
Light Requirements: Full sun to light shade
Habitat: Found in upland areas, hammocks, and midden sites.
Information: Can grow from 35-40 ft tall. The flowers bloom in late winter and is followed by large blue berries. Growth can range from a shrubby to open form. Reaches a mature height of 30 feet. Named for its narrow fringe like flowers that appear in pale, creamy green, lacy clusters. Blooms are slightly fragrant. Small olive-like fruit is favored by birds.

Carpinus caroliniana (American Hornbeam)
Light Requirements: Full sun to heavy shade
Habitat: Naturally found in wetland areas and along rivers and streams. Often found with Ironwood, Ostrya virginiana.
Information: Can grow up to 35 ft tall. Named for its blue grey trunk that is essentially flawless and smooth. It is long lived but a slow grower. Is noted for its attractive drooping seed pods that appear in late summer or early fall.

Castanea pumila (Chinkapin)
Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Found in upright areas and hammocks.
Information: Can grow from 35-40 ft tall. The flowers bloom in late winter and is followed by large blue berries. Growth can range from a shrubby to open form. Reaches a mature height of 30 feet. Named for its narrow fringe like flowers that appear in pale, creamy green, lacy clusters. Blooms are slightly fragrant. Small olive-like fruit is favored by birds.

Chionanthus virginicus (Fringe Tree)
Cliftonia monophylla [Buckwheat Tree]

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Natural setting or as a medium sized specimen tree. Its low and drooping habit adds color and vitality to any landscape. It has a spiny leather underside. Upright sprays of white to light pink blossoms provide dimension to small areas. Flowers are abundant and attractive. If you have a wet site, try planting C. acutiloba, sourced of the famed Mayhaw jelly.

Juniperus virginiana [Eastern Red Cedar]

Light Requirements: Full sun to light shade
Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitats. Is often found at the edge of agricultural fields where fertilizer amends the region's typically acidic soil.

Information: Wonderfull evergreen for the Southern Coastal Plain. Blue-green berries have an attractive frosted look.

Landscape Uses: Very striking upright form when mature. Grows a formal feasting to a landscaped garden or lawn and can be pruned. Also used as a screen or windbreak. Avoid planting near irrigation heads or consistently wet areas. Roots will not rot good drainage. Berries are sought out by migrating Cedar Waxwings.

Juniperus silicicola [Southern Red Cedar]

Light Requirements: Full sun to light shade
Habitat: Grows on hammocks, middens, and spoil piles in maritime systems. Information: The dark green, and sometimes blue-green, foliage and scaling bark is slightly fragrant. Blue berries have an attractive frosted look.

Landscape Uses: This potentially large evergreen tree may be shaped by salt exposure and sand to resemble a yellow berried make a foil to bare branches of deciduous species in the winter garden. wonderful evergreen for the Southern Coastal Plain. Blue-green berries have an attractive frosted look.

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Magnolia pyramidal [Pyramid Magnolia]

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: A rare coastal species found on bluffs and ravines. Information: It is named for its pyramidal shape. Generally reaches 50 feet in height with a pyramidal form. Blossoms are fragrant and turn a bright magenta red in the late summer. Landscape Uses: Requires an open position to reach its full height. panicked in the lower south. Can grow as tall as 60 feet, but is often much smaller. Foliage is rich green on top with silvery underside. Creamy white blooms appear in late spring through early summer. Flowers are 2-3 inches in diameter and have a citrus fragrance. Landscape Uses: Makes a wonderful ornamental plant that should be used more often. Planted as a small tree or large shrub. Creates a great hedge or screen. Adapted well to shaping, can be espaliered against a wall or pruned. Ideal for coastal areas with good drainage.

Nyssa sylvatica [Black Gum]

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Naturally found in watertop areas and along rivers and streams. Information: Large tree that can grow 60-100 feet tall. It is usually the first to change color. The bark is light grey and with age acquires an attractive shaggy texture. The pale underside of the leaves creates a silver shimmer in the wind. Landscape Uses: Useful for beach side landscapes because of its salt tolerance. Is one of the few deciduous trees that can withstand the rigors of dune habitats. Particularly useful for dune landscapes as a windbreak. Often used as a natural barrier between swimming areas and residential areas. Acorns are an excellent source of food for songbirds and wild turkeys.

Pinus palustris [Long Leaf Pine]

Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Grows naturally in dry sandy soils. Information: Is a slow grower for the first five to ten years, but can reach 80-100 feet. Mature trees have a flat open crown with horizontal branching and needles averaging 10-18 inches in length. Landscape Uses: Excellent choice for a shade or lawn tree. Growth is slow, making this a tree better suited for natural settings. Grows well in a variety of soils. Does well in coastal locations from April to May. Canes have a velvety texture and turn a bright magenta red in the late summer. Landscape Uses: The overall form makes it a great choice for a specimen tree in a yard or garden. Used ornamentally for its large creamy flowers. Is a rare deciduous magnolia that has adapted to our coastal landscape. Closely Related to Magnolia frasen which is endemic to South Carolina and appears in the same genus. Magnolia frasen is used more often to M.pyramidata as a variety of it. Fruit is eaten by wildlife.

Nyssa sylvatica [Black Gum]

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Naturally found in damns and freshwater wetlands. Information: Is an evergreen in the lower south. Can grow as tall as 60 feet, but is often much smaller. Foliage is rich green on top with silvery underside. Creamy white blooms appear in late spring through early summer. Flowers are 2-3 inches in diameter and have a citrus fragrance. Landscape Uses: Makes a wonderful ornamental plant that should be used more often. Planted as a small tree or large shrub. Creates a great hedge or screen. Adapted well to shaping, can be espaliered against a wall or pruned. Ideal for coastal areas with good drainage.

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Quercus phellos  
{Willow Oak}  
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade  
Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitats. 
Information: A member of the Red Oak family. Grows to reach 90-100 feet in height with a straight trunk. Dense oval shaped crown when grown in full sun. Long, fine-textured, narrow willow-like leaves that are bright green in summer and turn yellow to russet in the fall. 
Landscape Uses: Raro on the coast, but has great ornamental potential. Elegant, narrow leaves make this an oak with a delicate character and high ornamental quality. Grows well in moist soils. Fast growing and easy to transplant. Acorns are an important wildlife food.  

Quercus virginiana  
{Live Oak}  
Light Requirements: Full sun  
Habitat: Grows naturally in most coastal habitats. 
Information: Ranges in height from 40-80 feet. Leaves are simple with a short point at the tip. Like may evergreens, sheds its leaves in the late spring. Often seen draped with Spanish moss. 
Landscape Uses: One of the trademark trees of the coastal south, it is the state tree of Georgia. Creates a picturesque form with its stately size and low, spreading limbs. Highly adaptive to a variety of sites, the Live Oak is both salt and drought tolerant. Excellent specimen tree for a yard or garden. Use as a shade tree in any coastal landscape. Use as a allee along a driveway or street. Is a relatively fast grower but long lived, making it a satisfying tree for new sites and near houses. When grown in an open area, lower limbs spread to touch the ground. Limbs are often coated with Resurrection Ferns and on occasion, with the rare Green Fly Orchid. Was widely sought after for ship building because of its naturally bent shape and resistance to water rot. In dry, sandy maritime areas use Sand Live Oak (Q. geminata). Very similar but with leaf edges that roll under.  

Sabal palmetto  
{Cabbage Palm}  
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade  
Habitat: Naturally found along marsh edges and in maritime forests. 
Information: Ranges in height from 6-60 feet. Trunk is upright and columnar when mature. Palmate fronds form a “V” at the stem. Grown as a moderate but can grow up to 1 when full. 
Landscape Uses: Adds a tropical feel to any garden or yard. Often seen as a street tree. It is highly valued as an ornamental. One of the best trees to add height to a beach landscape. Grows in a variety of soil types and light conditions. The arching fronds make this equally attractive as a shrub when cut back on a regular basis. Transplant in spring or summer months and water well until established. If fallen seeds are not removed, unwanted seedlings can be a problem.  

Sassafras albidum  
{Sassafras}  
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade  
Habitat: Found in woodland edges and in maritime forests. 
Information: Ranges in height from 30-80 feet with a spread of 25 to 30 feet. It may develop multiple trunks creating a shrub like appearance. It is one of a few tree species that produces leaves of variable shapes, from single to lobed. 
Landscape Uses: Grows in a variety of soil types and light conditions but prefers an extremely acid condition with partial shade. Use as an understory tree at the edge of open areas. The pale underside of the leaves creates a pleasing effect with the slightest breeze.  

Taxodium distichum  
{Bald Cypress}  
Light Requirements: Full sun  
Habitat: Naturally found in freshwater wetland areas and along rivers and streams. 
Information: Generally a fast grower that reaches 50-140 feet tall. Has a narrow conical crown that flattens out in very old specimens. Foliage is made up of flat narrow green leaves that are feathery in appearance. Attractive rich bronze color in fall. Grown in extremely wet soils, it forms knobby growths on its trunk called knees. 

Landscape Uses: Can grow in both extremely wet or dry soils and is drought and salt tolerant. Perfect to plant along pond banks, stream beds, or in many back yards but equally useful on dryer sites. Zanthoxylum clava-herculis  
{Toothache-tree}  
Light Requirements: Full to partial sun  
Habitat: Grows naturally in dry sandy soils. 
Information: Grows 20-30 feet tall but can be considered a shrub in some cases. Most noted for its large thorns and gummy coverings the trunk. Leaves are thin and have a citrus scent when crushed. When eaten, leaves create a numbing sensation to the mouth. Native host plant for the Giant Swallowtail Butterfly. 
Landscape Uses: In the fall, leaves have attractive red to yellow foliage. Great tree for shade in the harsh beach terrain. Interesting bark paired with an open oval crown give this tree a tropical appearance. Fine display of creamy flower clusters in late spring.  

Sassafras & Tiger Swallowtail  
by Mark Catesby  
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**Bottlebrush Buckeye**

- **Habitat:** This understory species grows in moist, well-drained soils of open woodlands. Most of its natural range is in Alabama.
- **Information:** Reaching 8 to 10 feet, it goes into a wide, highly ornamental shrub.
- **Landscape Uses:** This great summer bloomer has the added value of compound leaves that turn bright yellow in the fall. The profuse blooms start at the bottom of each flowering spike, giving the appearance of tapers or bottle brushes. Native to the western part of the Southern Coastal Plain, it does well in gardens throughout the region. Plant in moist, well-drained areas. This is a wonderful specimen plant and stunning when massed. Attractive to many pollinators and hummingbirds.

**Callicarpa americana** (American Beautyberry)

- **Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade
- **Habitat:** Grows in a variety of forest habitats
- **Information:** A coarse, open shrub that can grow up to 6 feet in height and have a 5 foot spread. Small pink or lilac flowers in the summer, followed by small round purple fruits that last into the winter.
- **Landscape Uses:** The primary landscape appeal is the long lasting bright purple fruit. Ideal shrub for massing in the light shade. Bears bright purple fruit well in most soils. The fruit’s high water content makes it popular amongst wildlife. Reputed to be an insect repellent when rubbed on your clothing. Readily reproduces by seed, providing new plants that in a small setting may need to be relocated.

**Cephalanthus occidentalis** (Button Bunch)

- **Light Requirements:** Full sun to light shade
- **Habitat:** Found along streams and rich forest soils.
- **Information:** Bears enormous clusters of purple berries anywhere from 3-15 feet in height with the same spread. Produces bright purple fruit. Ideal shrub for massing in the light shade. Grows well in most soils. The fruit’s high water content makes it popular amongst wildlife. Reputed to be an insect repellent when rubbed on your clothing. Readily reproduces by seed, providing new plants that in a small setting may need to be relocated.

**Devil’s Walkingstick**

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**Sweetshrub**

- **Habitat:** Found in a wide range of upland forest areas
- **Information:** Can grow up to 10 feet tall. Purple-brown, sweet scented flowers bloom in the spring. These are followed by leathery pendant shaped fruits with brown seeds.
- **Landscape Uses:** Makes a long lived specimen shrub or masses well for larger areas. Bears attractive, fragrant flowers. Small mammals tend to relish the seeds. Sweetshrub can be easily transplanted.

**Shrub Tips**

- If you have native shrubs on your property use them as a point of departure for your midcanopy planting scheme.
- If you have a lawn and would rather bird watch than mow, plant clusters of shrubs and small trees away from foundations to define outdoor living spaces and animal viewing areas.
- Planting shrubs away from fire reaching your home.
- Edges of group plantings and borders can be used as a backdrop for perennials, ferns or grasses.
- Dense natural plant communities close to a house might be thoughtfully cleared to create a wildlife-viewing area visible from a patio or window.
- Plant shrubs at the same time as large trees to allow the smaller plants a chance to get established before tree roots out compete them.
- Match shrub selections to natural soil and moisture conditions.

Native Index: Shrubs

For many wildlife species, the midstory matrix of shrubs and small trees provides a life line between tree canopies and forest floors. Typically we use shrubs to block unwanted views, create privacy, reduce noise, and provide a satisfying background for flowering plants.

Shrubs can also be used to enhance wildlife habitats in your garden or landscape. Brown Thrashers and Towhees are only a couple of the bird species that rely on shrubs for cover, food and nesting opportunities. Wax Myrtles and Yaupon Hollies are signature plants for the Painted Bunting, providing nesting spots and important cover as they forage in the marsh for insects.

*Calycanthus floridus* (Sweetshrub)

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Clethra alnifolia [Summer Sweet]

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Naturally found in swamps and freshwater wetlands.
Information: Many branched form with exfoliating bark. The oval leaves may not appear until late spring, but achieve a rich yellow color in the fall. Blooms from April into early summer. Can grow up to 15 feet tall. Works well in natural plantings, but is great as a trimmed hedge, screen, or windbreak in more formal settings. Note that it does not function as a shrub. Has small leathery leaves with a distinctive serrated oval shape. Tiny white flowers appear in the spring and are followed by red berries that last through the fall and winter. Female berries are a beautiful translucent red. A favorite of Cedar Waxwings and many song bird species.

Wax Myrtle

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows along stream banks and in swamps.
Information: An deciduous shrub that grows 6-10 feet in height. Has dark, maroon-red flowers along single 4 inch racemes. The fragrant blooms appear in early summer and dangle throughout the next season. Deer do not browse the leaves. Birds are attracted to this shrub. Works well in the bare landscape. Plant away from walkways and outdoor seating areas. Summer Sweet is moderately salt tolerant and can grow in moist soils. Great shrub for a naturalized garden. If possible, plant near house or walkway to enjoy the fragrance. Attracts butterflies and birds.

Ilex decidua

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitats. Information: An evergreen shrub that can reach 6-10 feet in height. Has purplish or bright red leaves in the fall. Small sweet-scented white or pink flowers bloom in the mid to late summer.

Hamamelis virginiana [Witchhazel]

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitats. Information: A coarse-textured round shrub that can grow up to 30 feet tall. Typically evergreen in the lower and coastal south. Titi is most noted for its gnarly branching pattern. Fragrant white flowers appear in early summer and dangles in 4-6 inch sprays of minute blossoms. Landscape Uses: Excellent tree for a winter color, red fruit looks great in the bare landscape. Plant away from walkways and outdoor living spaces to avoid messes left by birds. Berries are shiny and can be used in holiday decorations. Deer may not appear until late spring, but achieve a rich yellow color in the fall. Blooms from October through December. Use in shrub borders, forest edge plantings, and spread. Oval leaves are aromatic when crushed. Produces a small, grayish white fruit that is coated with wax. Male flowers are followed by red berries that last through the fall and winter.

Spicebush

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Naturally found along rivers and streams. Information: An deciduous shrub that grows 6-12 feet in height. Naturally found along rivers and streams. An evergreen tree that can reach 25 feet tall but often persists as a shrub. Has small, grayish white fruit that is coated with wax. Male flowers are followed by red berries that last through the fall and winter.

Red Anise

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Information: A deciduous shrub that can reach 6-10 feet in height. Typically evergreen in the lower and coastal south. Titi is most noted for its gnarly branching pattern. Fragrant white flowers appear in early summer and dangles in 4-6 inch sprays of minute blossoms. Landscape Uses: Excellent tree for a winter color, red fruit looks great in the bare landscape. Plant away from walkways and outdoor seating areas. Summer Sweet is moderately salt tolerant and can grow in moist soils. Great shrub for a naturalized garden. If possible, plant near house or walkway to enjoy the fragrance. Attracts butterflies and birds.

Ilex decidua

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitats. Information: An evergreen shrub that can reach 6-10 feet in height. Has purplish or bright red leaves in the fall. Small sweet-scented white or pink flowers bloom in the mid to late summer.

Spicebush

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Naturally found along rivers and streams. Information: An evergreen tree that can reach 25 feet tall but often persists as a shrub. Has small, grayish white fruit that is coated with wax. Male flowers are followed by red berries that last through the fall and winter.

Red Anise

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Osmanthus americanus [American Olive]
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in a variety of soil types.

Prunus caroliniana [Carolana Laurel Cherry]
Light Requirements: Partial sun to shade
Habitat: Naturally found in woodland and on sandy hammocks

Rhododendron canescens [Sweet Azalea]
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Naturally found in woodland and along rivers and streams.

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Serenoa repens [Saw Palmetto]
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitat.

Styrax americanus {American Silverbells}
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Naturally found in wetland areas and along rivers and streams.

Vaccinium corymbosum
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitat.

Vaccinium rhododendron
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitat.

Yucca gloriosa [Moundily]
Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Naturally found in dune systems

Viburnum dentatum [Southern Arrowwood]
Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Found in woodland areas and along rivers and streams.

Yucca gloriosa [Moundily]
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Information:
Ageratina juncunda [Hammock Snakeroot]
Information: Can grow to 1 3/4-2 feet tall. Leaves are heart shaped and serrated. Prefers a slightly basic soil. Flat clusters of white blooms occur from early fall into winter. Flowers during fall butterfly migration.
Landscape Uses: Attractive long lasting flowers can be massed in slightly shady locations. A prolific fall bloomer that can tolerate drought but thrive in garden conditions.

Amaranthus muscitoxicum [Fly Poison]
Information: Can grow to 1-3 feet tall. Single white flower spikes emerge from rosettes of narrow leaves. Blooms in the spring. All parts of the plant are poisonous.
Landscape Uses: Makes a very attractive display when massed. It does very well in wild garden soil but can tolerate wet soils that have haphazardly dry out. An under used ornamental.

Arisaema dragonium
Information: Grows naturally in rosettes of narrow leaves. Blooms in the spring. All parts of the plant are poisonous.
Landscape Uses: Similar to that of Jack in the Pulpit. It has brilliant red seeds in the fall.

Asclepias incarnata
Habitat: Naturally found in swamps and freshwater wetlands.
Information: Can grow 2-4 feet tall with branching stems. Opposite leaves and pink and cream veins. Clusters of flashy pink and cream flowers appear from early April to mid May.
Landscape Uses: Fleshy Milkweed is used by spring migrating Monarch Butterflies along the inland coast. Although it does not last long, this plant also provides much needed early nectar for many species of butterflies and native bees. Excellent for dry sites.

Asclepias humistrata
Habitat: Grows naturally in seasonally wet areas of Flatwood Pine forests. Similar to that of Jack in the Pulpit. It has brilliant red seeds in the fall.

Asclepias rubra
Habitat: Grows naturally in swamps and freshwater wetlands.
Information: Can grow to 3 feet tall. Foliage is an attractive blue green with abundant white spikes of flowers. Blooms occur in early summer and can be pinched to encourage repeat blooming.
Landscape Uses: Has a deep tap root which makes transplanting difficult but allows it to survive harsh conditions. Plant for a mounding form with elegant sprays of flowers. Cut and use in an arrangement.

Asclepias tuberosa [Butterfly Weed]
Habitat: Naturally found in swamps and freshwater wetlands.
Information: Bright green foliage will rise to 3-5 feet tall. Tropical yellow orange and pink flowers appear from May to July. Cutting stalks to the ground after flowering will allow for repeat bloom.
Landscape Uses: Large flowers adds drama and dimension to the landscape. Is useful as a backdrop for other plants. Most effective when grouped or massed. Prefers full sun and wet feet but is adaptable to dryer conditions. Host to the Brazilian Skipper.

Amaranthus rubrum [Swamp Milkweed]
Habitat: Grows naturally in swamps and freshwater wetlands.
Information: Can grow 2-4 feet tall with branching stems. Opposite leaves and pink and cream veins. Clusters of flashy pink and cream flowers appear from early April to mid May.
Landscape Uses: Fleshy Milkweed is used by spring migrating Monarch Butterflies along the inland coast. Although it does not last long, this plant also provides much needed early nectar for many species of butterflies and native bees. Excellent for dry sites.

Butterfly Weed
Landscape Requirements: Full sun to light shade
Habitat: Grows naturally in dry upland forests.
Information: For extremely dry sites consider planting this early flowering milkweed. Folage is thick and waxy with greyish green leaves and pink and cream veins. Clusters of flashy pink and cream flowers appear from early April to mid May.
Landscape Uses: Fleshy Milkweed is used by spring migrating Monarch Butterflies along the inland coast. Although it does not last long, this plant also provides much needed early nectar for many species of butterflies and native bees. Excellent for dry sites.

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Carpephorus odoratissimus (Vanillaleaf)

Light Requirements: Full sun

Habitat: Naturally found in Pine Flatwoods near wet areas.

Information: Rosettes of fragrant leaves support tall stalks, 12-44 inches, terminating in loose clusters of brilliant purple flowers. This lovely plant is quite hardy. The fragrant leaves were gathered to flavor pipe tobacco. The flowers appear in September and bloom into October. It is one of two host plants for this area for the Little Metalmark butterfly.

Landscape Uses: Beautiful color and hugely attractive to butterflies. It is useful in groups behind other plants. Prefers full sun, dam soil but dry soil. Condition to survive periods of drought.

Circium nutallii (Nuttall’s Thistle)

Light Requirements: Full sun to light shade

Habitat: Naturally found forest gaps and meadows.

Information: This plant may be armed with prickly leaves but its color is lovely and the fragrance is lovely. It blooms in June and may do so all summer. It provides early summer color and nectar for many butterfly species—especially swallowtails and skippers. It needs a full sun—light shade to thrive. It reaches up to 4 feet.

Landscape Uses: Not recommended for a small garden but a wonderful addition to the edges of larger gardens. If you have it already, treasure it from a distance. The earlier blooming Yellow Thistle is another native worth protecting on your property but at arm’s length. Finches love thistle seeds.

Chrysogonum virginianum [Green and Gold]

Light Requirements: shade

Habitat: Native to woods and woodlands.

Information: Mounds of bright green leaves grow up to 5-8 inches with stems of cheerful yellow flowers reaching up to a foot tall. C. grandiflora is a natural look. Similar to the commonly known Large-flowered Hibiscus, it already, treasure it from a distance. The earlier blooming Yellow Thistle is another native worth protecting on your property but at arm’s length. Finches love thistle seeds.

Croton punctatus

Light Requirements: Full sun to light shade

Habitat: Grows in sandy dry soils of beach dunes and thin woods.

Information: Reaches 1-2 foot in height. It is biennial in this region. Blyths yellow petals become purplish-brown near the center. Landscape Uses: Valuable for its sunny, sunny spots, even sandy beach zones. Wonderful for sunny wildflower meadows and roadsides.

Helenium flexuosum (Southern Sneezeweed)

Light Requirements: Full sun

Habitat: Grows in moist pastures, savannas and forest.

Information: Grows 1-3 feet tall. Bright yellow petals surround a purple brown dome. Divide clumps periodically. Landscape Uses: Use in perennial borders, wildflower meadows in moist rich areas, and sunny rain gardens. Blooms all summer. Sun and water and be used by the edge of a pond but performs equally well in the shade. For pinks and white use Eastern Rose-mallow, Hibiscus moscheutos.

Conoclinium costatum (Blue Mist Flower)

Light Requirements: Full sun

Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitats.

Information: Hardy perennial that can reach 2 feet in height. Flowers are grouped in flat, dense clusters of bright blue to light purple. A very showy species for sunny sites. Will form clumps creating an impressive display of color. Can tolerate standing water and be used by the edge of a pond but performs equally well in the shade. For pinks and white use Eastern Rose-mallow, Hibiscus moscheutos.

Eupatoriadelphus dubius [Coastal Joe Pye Weed]

Light Requirements: Full sun to light shade

Habitat: Grows naturally found in wetlands and along rivers and streams.

Information: This perennial giant is best known for its profuse pink flowers blooming and towering form. Ranges in height from 3-10 feet. Fall color is shaped and arranged in a whorled pattern around the stem. Leaves have a vanilla scent when crushed. Large clusters of rounded flower heads debut from July through October. They will show in color from mauve to pink to yellow.

Landscape Uses: Flowers are more abundant if planted in moist, sun soils. Plant as a pond for fall color or in a wild garden for a whimsical form. Can hold its own in a perennial bed and is a top choice for its burst of pink autumn hues.

Gaillardia pulchella [Blanket Flower]

Light Requirements: Full sun

Habitat: Grows in dry sandy soils of beach dunes and thin woods.

Information: Reaches 1-2 foot in height. It is biennial in this region. Blyths yellow petals become purplish-brown near the center. Landscape Uses: Valuable for its sunny, sunny spots, even sandy beach zones. Wonderful for sunny wildflower meadows and roadsides.

Helianthus angustifolius (Swamp Sunflower)

Light Requirements: Full sun

Habitat: Grows in a variety of habitats.

Information: Tall, upright multi-branched perennial. Can grow to 12 foot tall with shiny needle like foliage. Prune back the top third of the stalk in early summer to encourage a denser form. The golden flower display begins in midsummer and persists into fall.

Landscape Uses: Does well in the back of a perennial border, adding height and mounding color bursts. Is tolerant of salt and dry sites. Blooms in time for fall butterfly migrations. For beach front property or a sunny dry site plant Cucumber-leaf Sunflower, H. decipiens.

Hibiscus coccineus [Scarlet Hibiscus]

Light Requirements: Full sun

Habitat: Naturally found in swamps and wetlands.

Information: Can grow 4-7 foot tall. Upright to oval form. Deep purple petals with prominent veins provide interesting detail. Deep scarlet flowers over 6 inches wide have an open star-like form. Blooms July through October. Great nectar plant for butterflies and hummingbirds.

Landscape Uses: A very showy species for sunny sites. Will form clumps creating an impressive display of color. Can tolerate standing water and be used by the edge of a pond but performs equally well in the shade. For pinks and white use Eastern Rose-mallow, Hibiscus moscheutos.

Hibiscus grandiflorus [Large-flowered Hibiscus]

Light Requirements: Full sun

Habitat: Naturally found in usual dune swales, tidal marshes and wet meadows.

Information: Can grow over 10 foot tall and forms clumps. Landscape Uses: For the large garden, rain gardens and even complete gardens. Valuable for its burst of color. Blooms with an 8-10 inch spread appear in the late summer. The leaves are soft and silver-grey green. This is a magnificent ornamental. Visited by butterflies and hummingbirds alike.
Hymenocallis caroliniana  
**Carolina Spider Lily**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun

**Habitat:** Naturally found in wetland areas and along rivers and streams.

**Information:** Stems reach 2 feet tall. It needs well-drained soil to thrive. Known for distinct white blooms that appear from April to June. Each blossom has whisper-like spikes emerging from each petal, giving the plant a “spider-like” appearance.

**Landscape Uses:** These unique blooms do wonders for the coastal garden. Easy to maintain once established, but regular watering is recommended to encourage flowering. In dry sites, foliage can become coarse and unsightly and is best planted with something in the foreground. Best grown in wet soil or moist tightly shaded spots.

Iris virginica  
**Southern Blueflag Iris**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun

**Habitat:** Naturally found in swamps and freshwater wetlands.

**Information:** Grows 1-3 feet tall with bright green sword shaped leaves. Flowers range in color from blue to purple and appear in late spring. Blossoms are showy.

**Landscape Uses:** Grow in clumps near the pond edges. Is highly deer resistant. Can withstand periodic flooding so this is a great choice for an area that experiences constant moisture. Try it in rain gardens and at pond edges. Is highly deer resistant.

Kosteletzkya virginica  
**Seashore Mallow**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to afternoon shade

**Habitat:** A variety of wetlands, from brackish to fresh.

**Information:** Grows from 4-5 feet tall and requires moist soil to grow. Lush blooms are full of purple and are perfect perk of golden yellow centers. Flowers bloom all summer.

**Landscape Uses:** Attractive to hummingbirds. Should be used more in coastal gardens. Its multi-branched stems fill out the backdrop of a perennial border or an open spot in a natural wetland. Enjoyed by a variety of butterflies.

Liatris spicata  
**Gayfeather**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun

**Habitat:** Grows naturally in dry sandy soils.

**Information:** Grows 3-4 feet tall and is most noted for its spikes of lavender flowers that appear from June through August. Spikes of blue and purple are dense and long lasting on a showy 6-inch stem.

**Landscape Uses:** One of the better known Liatris species. Attracts butterflies and hummingbirds. Useful to plant in a sunny perennial border or for a container arrangement. Can be somewhat drought tolerant and easily maintained after establishment. To extend seasonal bloom, plant elegant Blazing Star, *L. elegans*, behind it. This 1 foot tall relation blooms September through October.

Lobelia cardinalis  
**Cardinal Flower**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to part shade

**Habitat:** Grows naturally along streams and moist wooded areas.

**Information:** Grows 2-4 feet tall and produces showy spikes of brilliant scarlet blooms in late summer. Can spread from roots.

**Landscape Uses:** Plant is partial shade unless plenty of water is available for sunny locations. Divide clumps in the spring after new growth appears. Very attractive to butterflies and hummingbirds.

For a brilliant blue under similar conditions, plant Gladis Lobelia, *L. glauca*.

Lilium catesbaei  
**Pine Lily**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun

**Habitat:** Grows naturally in sunny, wet locations.

**Information:** Stems reach 2 feet tall. It needs well drained soil to grow. A long bloom season with clusters of pink blooms from late spring into the summer. The petals are a mix of pink and yellow with the underside of the petals being pink. Sometimes interlaced with lingering blossoms. Useful to plant in a sunny moist garden or container arrangement. This is ideal for a sunny wet spot with good drainage.

Lupinus perennis  
**Wild Lupine, Sundial Lupine**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to shade light

**Habitat:** Grows naturally in dry sandy soils.

**Information:** Erect form with pinnately compound leaves can reach 2-8 inches tall. Stalks are densely covered with deep blue and purple pea-like blooms from March to May.

**Landscape Uses:** Thrives in loose sandy soils. Brilliant sky blue flowers brighten up early spring gardens. Usually established from seed, and can be picky about its soil. Does well when paired with the Crested Iris and coreopsis.

Mitchella repens  
**Partridge Berry**

**Light Requirements:** Does best in partial shade

**Habitat:** Grows naturally in moist upland areas.

**Information:** Insect form low to the ground in a vinelike manner. Reaches only about 2 inches in height but one plant can spread up to a foot wide. While turned shaped blooms arrive in the summer and are fragrant. Bright red berries stand out among the dark green foliage and are sometimes interlaced with lingering blossoms.

**Landscape Uses:** Great choice for a flowering ground cover under the shade of trees or shrubs. Try adding it to a container for a low growing plant to weave over the edge. Thrives in rich soil high in organic matter. The berries are attractive to birds.

Monarda punctata  
**Spotted Beebalm**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade

**Habitat:** Grows naturally in dry sandy soils.

**Information:** Grows between 3-4 feet tall. Leaves and stems are light green and hairy. Flower heads are showy spikes of pink to lavender and are distributed in the tips of the upper stems. Blooms from late summer until fall. Nectar plant for hummingbirds and butterflies.

**Landscape Uses:** It is drought tolerant and useful for sandy coastal sites, which can easily be invaded by small beach lilies. Blooms from late summer until fall. Nectar plant for hummingbirds and butterflies.

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Nelumbia lutea  
**American Lotus**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun

**Habitat:** Grow in fresh water ponds.

**Information:** Grows in water to the depth of 3-4 feet. Pale yellow flowers reach 8-12 inches in diameter and rise above the water surface. Large lily wavy leaves can be 2 feet across and even emerge above the waterline.

**Landscape Uses:** This unusual plant is the only true lutea native to North America. It provides a large scale presence in water features from ponds to garden pools. Beautiful fragrant flowers, massive green leaves and attractive seed pods make for a stunning landscape addition. Blooms June through September.

Nymphea odorata  
**American Waterlily**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun

**Habitat:** Fresh water ponds sluggish waters.

**Information:** Grows in water to the depth of 3-6 feet. Fragrant white flowers rise slightly above bright green, floating leaves. Saturated in water.

**Landscape Uses:** Beautiful flowers reach to 6 inches across and are wonderfully fragrant. Perfect for the naturalized pond but can be enjoyed for many years. Very beautiful bodies of water. Plant in flower baskets to contain in garden pools.

Phlox carolina  
**Carolina Phlox**

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to little shade

**Habitat:** Grows naturally in wet sunny areas

**Information:** Upright stems grow to 3 feet in height. Produces showy clusters of pink blooms from late spring into the summer.

**Landscape Uses:** Adds drama when planted in masses. Color varies from white to pink. The petals are pink and the red stamens are a great nectar plant for areas with seasonal flooding. Incorporate *L. glandulosa* for a brilliant blue under similar conditions. For sunny moist sites, try Wild Bergamot, *Monarda fistulosa*.
**Rhexia virginica** [Handsome Harry]

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in wet meadows and savannahs.
Information: Grows 1-2 feet. Bright pink flowers with four petals.

**Solidago sempervirens** (Seaside Goldenrod)

Light Requirements: Full sun to partial shade
Habitat: Grows in an open field near salt marsh.
Information: Grows to be 4-6 feet tall once mature. A statuesque plant with floral spikes clustering into an elongated pyramid. Blooms begin in late fall and are a rich golden yellow.

**Spigelia marilandica** (Indian Pink)

Light Requirements: Light shade
Habitat: Found in upland habitats, from beaches to open fields
Information: Grows between 1-2 feet tall and thrives in rich moist soil. Wide, spear shaped leaves give way for the unique red tubular flowers. Blooms appear from late spring into the summer.

**Sisyrinchium angustifolium**

Light Requirements: Light shade
Habitat: Grows naturally in dry sandy soils.
Information: Grows 1-3 feet in height and has stiff upright stems and profuse golden blooms. Daisy like petals surround a prominent dark cone.

**Trandescantia ohiensis**

Light Requirements: Light shade
Habitat: Grows naturally in meadows and open forests.
Information: Grows 1-3 feet tall with spikes of pale lavender flowers that open in the back of a bed or in a mass planting. These fast growers do well in a variety of habitats. The unique red tubular flowers that open in early summer remain attractive until mid summer.

**Verbena canadensis**

Light Requirements: Light shade
Habitat: Grows naturally in dry sandy soils.
Information: Erect form grows from 24-28 inches. Wherever branches touch the ground, they will not create large patches. Stiff purple leaves are topped by bright clusters of rosy purple flowers from March into June.

**Vernonia noveboracensis** (New York Ironweed)

Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Found in upland habitats, from beaches to open fields
Information: Grows between 1-2 feet tall and thrives in rich moist soil. Wide, spear shaped leaves give way for the unique red tubular flowers. Blooms appear from late spring into the summer.

**Yucca filamentosa**

Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Grows naturally in dry sandy soils.
Information: Sport like foliage creates large rosettes that frame the leaves. Blooms in the spring.

**Zephyranthes atamasca**

Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Grows naturally in meadows and open forests.
Information: Erect forms grow from 3-6 feet. Slender stems are adorned with white single flowers that touch the ground, they will root to create large patches. Stiff pubescent leaves are topped by bright clusters of rosy purple flowers from March into June.

**Z. rehderiana**

Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Grows naturally in meadows and open forests.
Information: Erect forms grow from 3-6 feet. Stiff pubescent leaves are topped by bright clusters of rosy purple flowers from March into June.

**Z. nelsonii**

Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Grows naturally in meadows and open forests.
Information: Erect forms grow from 3-6 feet. Stiff pubescent leaves are topped by bright clusters of rosy purple flowers from March into June.
Vines bloom almost every season on the coast. Carolina Jessamine brightens up the winter woods. Crossvine draws hummingbirds north in the spring, morning-glories blossom throughout the summer and Muscadines weave golden threads into the autumn landscape. Like shrubs, they link the forest floor with the forest canopy. Most produce beautiful flowers and fruits that are important to wildlife. Before you plant know the personality of your vines. Is it a fast or slow grower, tidy or rampant? In the right location they are all wonderful. In the wrong place they can be unsightly, demanding, or a danger from fire.

**Native Index:** Vines

**Campsis radicans** {Trumpet Creeper}

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade

**Habitat:** Grows in a variety of habitats.

**Information:** Can climb up to 40 feet in height. Has clusters of flowers that look like red trumpets with orange centers that begin blooming in June, a hummingbird favorite. It has right green leaves and produces attractive long, flat pods.

**Landscape Uses:** Generally a fast growing plant, this vine can be quite vigorous. Usually found in upland woodlands and along fence rows. Ideal for fences or arbors and works well in dry sites.

**Clematis virginiana** {Virginia’s Bower}

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade

**Habitat:** Grows in a variety of habitats.

**Information:** Can grow up to 12-20 feet in height or by length. Offers a profuse show of sepia fragrant white blossoms in the late summer, early into the fall.

**Landscape Uses:** Best in a native garden where it can be allowed to scramble over the ground, through shrubs, or along a sturdy fence. Another close relative is the Leatherflower, C. crispa. Unlike Virginia’s Bower, it is not very aggressive and does well in moist garden settings. Leatherflower has pendant, bell shaped, lavender flowers.

**Cocculus carolinus** {Carolina Coralbeads}

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade

**Habitat:** Grows in a variety of habitats.

**Information:** An evergreen vine that climbs by tendrils and needs some support of system can. Can grow up to 10-12 feet. Blooms in the spring with greenish-white flowers followed by a pea size, green red fruit that appears in the late summer and fall.

**Landscape Uses:** Bright green leaves and brilliant berries. Use for wooded areas and lightly shady habitats. Can tolerate wet areas.

**Gelsemium sempervirens** {Carolina Jessamine}

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade

**Habitat:** Grows in a variety of habitats.

**Information:** An evergreen climbing vine that can grow up to 20 feet in height. Produces fragrant yellow flowers that bloom in the late winter and early spring. Is persistently evergreen in this region.

**Landscape Uses:** Great choice to cover everything from mailboxes to large arbors. Can also be used as a ground cover. Very rapid growth. Annual pruning can be necessary. Once established, Carolina Jessamine is drought tolerant. This vine needs a well drained soil. This is a beautiful and dependable antislipper. Gelsemium is warm. The funnel shaped blooms are 2 inches across and invite Heliconian butterflies. Use Yellow Passionflower, P. lutea, for a delicate version and shady locations.

**Ipomoea pres-caprae** {Beach Morning-glory}

**Light Requirements:** Full sun

**Habitat:** Grows well in any dune system.

**Information:** Leaves are shiny and shaped like goat’s hoof, hence the Latin name. Bright pink to purple flowers, bloom as long as it is warm. The flowers can be 2 inches across and invite butterflies to crash in and drink.

**Landscape Uses:** Easy to grow from seed or cuttings. A vigorous vine for dry, difficult locations and beach side property. Pair with Sea Oats along a fence. Crushed leaves used for jellyfish stings.

**Loniceria sempervirens** {Coral Honeysuckle}

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade

**Habitat:** Found in woodlands, hammocks, and midden sites.

**Information:** Tasting vine can grow to 10-20 feet. Produces delcici orange-yellow to scarlet tubular flowers from late spring into the summer. Also produces red berries that are enjoyed by wildlife. Use this an old climbing vine in and woody areas. An excellent choice for a mailbox. When grown in a garden, the plant flowers abundantly if it is grown in full sun. Pollens slightly alkaline soils. To achieve heavy blooms, fertilize sparingly and do not over water. Watch for nectaring Cloudless Sulphur butterflies.

**Passiflora incarnata** {Passion Flower}

**Light Requirements:** Full sun to light shade

**Habitat:** Grows in a variety of habitats.

**Information:** Tendril bearing vine that can grow up to 15-20 feet, but is often much smaller. Has deepy cut three-lobed leaves and stunning, pale lavender flowers. The petals are covered by a finely fringed crown. The striking flower begins blooming in May and will bloom throughout the summer.

**Landscape Uses:** Grows well on fences and trellises. Once established can withstand salt spray. Does well in maritime soils. The Flower is the host flower for a number Gulf Fritillary and Zebra Heliconian butterflies. Use Yellow Passionflower, P. lutea, for a delicate version and shady locations.
**Ferns of the coast are woodland plants so it is not surprising they are the perfect solution for shady sites. They are typically found in wet or moist conditions surrounded by many species of frogs, salamanders and lizards. Some are evergreen while others die back in the fall. Ferns give the gardener freedom to create both satisfying lines and large areas of mass plantings. Use them alone as unique specimens, for ground covers or as a part of a container arrangement.**

- **Osmunda regalis** *{Royal Fern}*
  - **Habitat:** Naturally found in swamps and freshwater wetlands.
  - **Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade
  - **Landscape Uses:** A large fern that likes light shade but with thrive in full sun if kept moist. Great choice for a massed ground cover.

- **Polystichum acrostichoides** *{Christmas Fern}*
  - **Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade
  - **Habitat:** Naturally found along rivers and streams.
  - **Light Requirements:** Partial sun to full shade
  - **Landscape Uses:** Perfect for stunning fall display. Information: Can grow up to 3 feet tall. Clump forming. Flowers in late summer and are incased in salmon orange sheaths. Seed heads turn into billowing clouds of pale gold that last through the winter. Likes moisture but does well in normal soils. Landscape Uses: Plant in masses for erosion control. Blooms at the same time as sunflowers and goldrods. Seed dried stems to the base in late winter before new growth appears. Reseeds freely. Seeds are attractive to wildlife. For a grass with a blue hue and drought tolerance, try White Bluestem, A. capillipes, a native to dry prairie forests.

- **Grasses**
  - **Information:** Ornamental grasses, with their narrow upright foliage and delicate flowering heads, create a satisfying contrast to surrounding broad-leaved plants. As a group, they are easy to grow, tough, free from pests, low maintenance, and simple to maintain. They can add a dramatic structural element or brush strokes of wild nature to your manicured landscape.

- **Native Index: Grasses**
  - **Ledum groenlandicum** *{Spithead Bluetsym}*
    - **Light Requirements:** Full sun to light shade
    - **Habitat:** Found in a variety of moist habitats.
    - **Information:** Information: Grow up to 4 feet in height. Forms clumps. Leaves are soft green, turning copper in the fall. Feathery, white flowers appear in late summer and are incased in salmon orange sheaths. Seed heads turn into billowing clouds of pale gold that last through the winter. Likes moisture but does well in normal soils. Landscape Uses: Plant in masses for erosion control. Blooms at the same time as sunflowers and goldrods. Seed dried stems to the base in late winter before new growth appears. Reseeds freely. Seeds are attractive to wildlife. For a grass with a blue hue and drought tolerance, try White Bluestem, A. capillipes, a native to dry prairie forests.

**Ophiogon japonicus** *{Gray's Sedge}*
- **Habitat:** Found in bottomland forests.
- **Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade
- **Landscape Uses:** These regal ferns can grow up to 6 feet in height with a 3 foot spread. Ornamental grasses, with their narrow upright foliage and delicate flowering heads, create a satisfying contrast to surrounding broad-leaved plants. As a group, they are easy to grow, tough, free from pests, low maintenance, and simple to maintain. They can add a dramatic structural element or brush strokes of wild nature to your manicured landscape.

**Carex grayi** *{Gray's Sedge}*
- **Habitat:** Grows in dry places, thin woods, stable dunes and old fields.
- **Light Requirements:** Full sun to partial shade
- **Landscape Uses:** A. capillipes, a native to dry prairie forests.

**Grasses & Wildflowers by John James Audubon**
- **Grasses:** Andropogon glomeratus
  - **Habitat:** Found in a variety of moist habitats.
  - **Information:** Information: Can grow up to 4 feet in height. Forms clumps. Leaves are soft green, turning copper in the fall. Feathery, white flowers appear in late summer and are incased in salmon orange sheaths. Seed heads turn into billowing clouds of pale gold that last through the winter. Likes moisture but does well in normal soils. Landscape Uses: Plant in masses for erosion control. Blooms at the same time as sunflowers and goldrods. Seed dried stems to the base in late winter before new growth appears. Reseeds freely. Seeds are attractive to wildlife. For a grass with a blue hue and drought tolerance, try White Bluestem, A. capillipes, a native to dry prairie forests.

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Carex Jupulina [Hop Sedge]
Light Requirements: Full sun to shade
Habitat: Found in wet areas
Information: Grows to 2.5 feet tall. Clump-forming. Flowers late spring into summer.

Chasmantium latifolium [River Oats]
Light Requirements: Full sun or light shade
Habitat: Found in flowing woodlands, rivers and streams.
Information: Can grow 2-5 feet in height with 2 foot spread. Showy oat like flowers and seeds. Blooms in August with persistent seed heads.

Chasmantium sessiliflorum [Longleaf Spikegrass]
Light Requirements: Light to deep shade
Information: Leaves grow to 2 feet in height with flowering stems reaching up to 3 feet. Often called Woodoats in the trade.

Eragrostis spectabilis [Muhley Lovegrass]
Light Requirements: Full sun or light shade with well drained soil.
Habitat: Found in coastal sands and dune systems.
Information: Can grow up to 3-4 feet in height and spread. Silvery green mounding foliage, slender yet eye catching, appears in late summer and fall. Snowy pale mauve flower plumes rise 2-3 feet above the foliage in early fall and persist through winter.

Eragrostis lelliottii [Elliott’s Lovegrass]
Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Naturally found in open forests, old fields and right-of-ways.
Information: Loosey-tufted perennial grass with clouds of purple panicles in late summer and fall. Seeds consumed by game birds and some song birds.

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Setaria magna [Giant Foxtail]
Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Naturalized in agricultural and wetland areas.
Information: Can grow up to 6-10 feet in height. Large arching seed heads make a striking appearance from summer into winter. The milky-like seeds attract birds. Landscape Uses: Does best at the edge of ponds, streams, or water gardens. Attractive, large bristles of soft green make a strong visual statement. Good companion for Sugar cane Fuzzy Grass.

Sorghastrum nutans [Indian Grass]
Light Requirements: Full sun to full shade
Habitat: Found in open forests, forest margins, upland sites and sandhills.
Information: Attractive prairie native with blue-green foliage and narrow, golden-brown panicles in fall. Grows from 3 to 4 feet in height. Landscape Uses: Graceful appearance and fine texture makes this grass work well in a mixed meadow or massed in borders. May be managed with mowing or controlled burning in late winter.

Spartina patens [Saltmeadow Cordgrass]
Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Found in brackish marshes and dune swales.
Information: Forms large, coarse, semi-evergreen clumps. Has slender wire-like leaves that can grow up to 6-10 feet in height. Large arching seed rise up to 6 feet, terminating in long flat spikelets. The flat seed heads are a soft celadon green in mid-summer and ripen to yellow gold. Will remain attractive through most of the winter.

Ulina paniculata [Sea Oats]
Light Requirements: Full sun
Habitat: Found in coastal dune systems.
Information: Large clusters of thin leaves reach up to 2 feet. Graceful arching stems rise up to 6 feet, terminating in long flat spikelets. The flat seed heads are a soft celadon green in mid-summer and ripen to yellow gold. Will remain attractive through most of the winter.

Landscape Uses: Tolerant of salt spray and saline soils. Propagating by runners. It is planted to stabilize sandy dunes and erosion.

Tritidos flavus [Purple Top]
Light Requirements: Full sun to light shade
Habitat: Found in meadows and open woodlands.
Information: Clump forming and grows to 4 feet. Blooms August and September. Host plant for various grass skipper. Landscape Uses: Massed together, the panicles create a lovely metallic, purple mist in the early fall garden or forest edge. Leaves are a medium green that get bronze and purple highlights in the fall.

Glossary
Annual: a plant that completes its life cycle in one growing season.
Autumn foliage: the colorful display of reds, oranges and yellows associated with cooler autumn temperatures; on the coast it may be in December and January.
Biennial: Plants that grow and die within 2 seasons. Typically biennial root and produce leaves in their first year, then flower and seed in their second.
Brush Fire: A fire burning in vegetation that is predominantly shrubs, brush, and scrub growth.
Burning ban: a declared ban on open air burning within a specified area, usually due to sustained high fire danger.
Canopy: the stratum containing the crowns of the tallest vegetation present (living or dead), usually above 20 feet.
Deciduous: any plant whose leaves die or fall off to mark the end of its growing season. Fallen foliage is replaced at the beginning of the new season.
Defensible space: an area, typically a width of 30 feet or more, between an improved property and a potential wildfire where the combustibles have been removed or modified.
Deadhead: cutting off spent flowers. In some plants this can result in a repeat bloom or just tidy up your garden. This also discourages the plant from seeding.
Deadrise: burn in fire suppression, a fire spreading from an fire originally ignited to clear land or burn rubbish, garbage, crop, stable, or meadows (excluding incendiary fires).
Deciduous: any plant whose leaves die or fall off to mark the end of its growing season. Fallen foliage is replaced at the beginning of the new season.
Denitrification: a process driven by bacteria that removes nitrogen from the soil.
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Debris burn: in fire suppression, a fire spreading from an fire originally ignited to clear land or burn rubbish, garbage, crop, stable, or meadows (excluding incendiary fires).
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Defensible space: an area, typically a width of 30 feet or more, between an improved property and a potential wildfire where the combustibles have been removed or modified.
Detail: a design term referring to a plant's visual characteristics.
Container planting: growing a plant in a pot. This can mean growing potted herbs, annuals, fruit trees, or ornamental gardens. Containers can be anything from a window box to a wheelbarrow. Contain a fire: to complete control line around a fire, any spot fire thereupon, and any interior island to be saved.
Climate zones: another name for plant hardiness zones.
Crown fire: a fire that advances from top to top of trees or shrubs more or less independent of a surface fire.
Cultivar: a man made or cultivated form of a plant. Often this process is done by horticulturists to produce a plant with certain characteristics like bloom color or disease resistance.
Cultivation: done in preparation for planting. Usually consists of breaking up the topsoil (allowing water and air to seep through) and removing weeds.
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Dieback occurs when the stems of a plant recede or die due to temperature extremes, lack of nutrients, chemical reactions, or pest infestation.

Drought tolerant: an inherent ability for a plant to survive extended periods of little to no moisture.

Firebreak: a natural or constructed barrier used to stop or check the spread of fire. Firebreaks are typically made of mowed vegetation, bare earth, or a water ditch. They can be constructed by hand or with heavy equipment.

Firebrand: any source of heat, natural or human made, capable of igniting wildland fuel. Firebrands can be carried naturally by wind, convection currents, or by gravity into unburned fuels. Examples include leaves, pine cones, glowing charcoal, and sparks.

Fire resistant: roofing materials that vary in their ability to resist fire. Those made of composite shingles, slate, terra cotta, and metal are more resistant than wood. Check fire ratings of composite shingles and all roofing materials as defined by the Uniform Building Code (UBC) Standard 32.7, such as the classification of roof assemblies A, B, or C.

Fire resistant tree: a species with compact, resin free, thick bark and low flammability. Fire resistant trees are less likely to ignite readily and are consumed rapidly by fire when dry.

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Herbaceous: a plant with stems that yearly die back to the ground.

Invasive species: a non-native species that spreads rapidly and disrupts naturally occurring environments. These plants can devastate local ecosystems.

Leaf scorch: a condition that affects leaves, turning ends and margins brown and dry. This occurs as a result of intense sunlight, lack of water, high winds or chemical burns. Often seen in Dogwoods (Cornus florida).

Mass: to plant 4 or more of the same species together.

Middens: refuse piles from Indian activities. On the coast, many are composed of discarded oyster shells. The calcium in the shells modifies our typically acidic soils, promoting a distinctive suite of native plants.

Native: any plant that is indigenous to the region in which it grows. Naturalize: a plant that has become established in a region to which it is not native.

Organic matter: materials that originate from a living organism. Examples are peat moss, manure, or compost. Adding this to sandy soil improves water and nutrient retention.

Ornamental: this term is used in gardening to refer to a plant that has a decorative characteristic. This can be in the form of leaf color, bark texture, unique shape, or flowers.

Partial shade: indicates a plant requiring shade for half of the day. This can also mean that a plant needs to be in the shade during the sunniest 3 hours of the day.

Perennial: a non-woody plant that has a life span of 2 years or more. Prune: to trim or cut branches and limbs of a plant. This is done to remove dead or damaged wood, direct growth, increase flowering or foliage, enhance structural strength, and to lessen the risk of frost damage.

Raceme: arrangement of flowers in a cluster on a central stem. Each stem has its own small stalk.

Root ball: the network of roots and attached soil of a plant.

Salt-spray tolerant: species that is inherently equipped for surviving salt drift and high winds.

Semi-evergreen: when leaves are “persistent” or retained by a plant year round in warm climates but are dropped in colder ones.

Shade tolerant: a plant that thrives with little to no direct sunlight. This can mean placing a species under a tree canopy or on the north side of your home to shield it from the sun.

Species: A group of plants exhibiting common characteristics, capable of interbreeding and producing fertile offspring. The species names often describe a defining attribute such as color or location.

Specimen: refers to a single large plant or tree planted in a space that highlights its features. Can also be a tree or shrub that is unique enough to make a visual impact in a planting bed or container.

Spike: a long and narrow cluster of flowers.

Tap root: a thick, central root growing under a plant. Not all plants have a tap root, but they can create difficulties if you are thinking to transplant.

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