

Pictures

Acacia farnesiana
Sweet acacia



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Acrostichum danaeifolium
Giant leather fern



© Shirley Denton

Andropogon virginicus
Broomsedge, bluestem



© Shirley Denton

Aralia spinosa
Devil's-walkingstick



Descriptions

Acrostichum danaeifolium

Leatherfern inhabits a wide variety of freshwater or brackish wetlands, from marshes to swamps.

Description

Large shrub-like herbaceous fern with ascending or arching fronds. Typically 6-12 ft in height. As broad or broader than tall. Fronds to about 10 ft long or more.

Leaves

Distinguished by crowded pinnae (leaflets), which are distant to closely spaced, usually overlapping, tapering toward apex, abruptly acute at tip. Most pinnae of fertile leaves bear sporangia.

Flowers

There are no flowers; the plants reproduce by spores.

Acacia farnesiana

Sweet acacia is a beautiful tree that casts a soft filtered light, but be careful when handling, because it has sharp thorns on the trunk and branches.

Description

A 15-20 ft, multi-trunked tree or shrub.

Leaves

Branchlets spiny and bearing finely divided leaves, each of the many leaflets less than ¼ inch long. The bipinnately compound foliage is light-green and ferny.

Flowers

Small, fragrant, orange-yellow flowers ½ inch in diameter cluster in globose heads with many protruding stamens per flower.

Fruit

A reddish brown to black woody pod 1½ to 3 inches long, rounded, not flat, and tapered at both ends.

Interesting Facts

The common name, Huisache, is derived from Nahuatl and means many thorns. In southern Europe, this species is extensively planted for the flowers, which are a perfume ingredient.

Aralia spinosa

Devil's walking stick is more like a giant perennial than a tree or shrub, and is one of the most viciously spiny things in the vegetable kingdom.

Description

A large, few-stemmed shrub, 12-15 ft, can reach 20 ft. It produces a loose colony of spiny ash gray stems from a rhizomatous root system. Each spring it shoots up a tall stem covered with orange prickles.

Leaves

Enormous, divided, spiny leaves at the top of the stem can be 3-4 ft long and just as wide. The 2-4 inch oval leaflets have pointed tips and toothed edges, and are dark green on top and whitish underneath, turning burgundy in the fall.

Flowers

Huge clusters of little white flowers appear at the ends of the branches in mid to late summer.

Fruit

In early to mid fall, they are followed by showy masses of ¼ inch purple black berries on burgundy stems.

Interesting Facts

The sinister spines set all along the unbranched stems inspired the common name devil's walking stick.

Andropogon virginicus

Broomsedge bluestem is found on the edges of forests and disturbed areas throughout the eastern United States and is a member of the Grass Family (Poaceae).

Description

A warm-season, herbaceous, perennial bunch grass (2-4 ft tall) that begins its growth when the average daytime temperature is between 60° to 65° F. The flattened sheaths are overlapping and with a few scattered hairs. The upper part of the plant is rounded and the lower part is slightly flattened and keeled. Turns tawny brown in fall.

Leaves/Flowers

The blade is ⅛ to ¼ inch wide, 10 to 16 inches long and rough to the touch above. The inflorescence has a panicle of two to four racemes about 1 inch long. The bases of the panicle branches are enclosed in an inflated, tawny spathe as long or longer than the spikelet.

Fruit/Seed

Seeds mature in 6 weeks to 2 months.

Pictures

Ardisia escallonioides
Marlberry, marbleberry



Argusia gnaphalodes
Sea-Lavender, Sea Rosemary



Aster carolinianus
Climbing Aster



Avicennia germinas
Black mangrove



Descriptions

Argusia gnaphalodes

also known as Sea Rosemary is an endangered Florida native perennial shrub to 2 - 5 feet tall with an equal or greater spread and rounded crown.

Leaves

Silvery gray pubescent leaves, cluster around branch tips; linear and slightly spooned shaped, 1 ½ -4" long and ¼ - ⅜" wide at tip.

Flowers

Flower spikes as long as leaves; two rows of white, 5 lobed, fragrant ⅛" flowers. Turns pink as ages

Fruit

Rounded black drupe; about 5mm long

Interesting Fact

Fishermen use the leaves for "black tea". It has been used elsewhere to induce abortions in women and to treat venereal diseases in men.

Ardisia escallonioides

The marlberry is a common woodland plant in pinelands, coastal hammocks, and scrub habitats, and ranges from central and south Florida through the Bahamas, Belize, Cuba and Hispaniola.

Description:

An evergreen shrub or small tree, can grow to 12-15 ft.

Leaves

Leathery texture and oval and elongate, measuring 2 to 5 inches in length. Alternate on branches, turning somewhat upward from their central axes.

Flowers

White and fragrant, appearing throughout the year in clusters at branch ends.

Fruit

Appears in spring, shiny, reddish-green and measuring ½ inch in diameter. Mature fruits are dark purple in color.

Bark

Gray to gray-brown on generally thin trunk.

Interesting Facts

Can be confused with Myrsine (*Myrsine floridana*). They are distinguished easily by young stem tips, which are green in Myrsine, but brown in the marlberry.

Avicennia germinas

Description:

Often grows to be 15 - 30 ft in height and 4 to 8 inches in diameter. Has an irregular, conical-shaped crown. They are characterized by their pneumatophores, small, pencil-like tubes that grow upward from around the base of the tree, providing oxygen to the roots below.

Leaves

Opposite, 2 to 4 inches in length and oblong in shape. The upper surfaces are shiny, while the undersides are duller and covered in fine hairs. Leaves may have a salt crust, and leaf margins often roll under slightly.

Flowers

Creamy white, blooming June and July.

Fruit

An egg-shaped propagule, containing a single seed.

Interesting Facts

Mangroves utilize a highly specialized method of propagation: their seeds germinate into seedlings while still on the parent tree. After an initial period of development, the seedlings drop off the parent tree to the soft sands below. They may then either sprout, or be carried on tides to other locations. Seedlings remain viable for extended periods of time, possibly up to a year or more.

Aster carolinianus

Description

Described by Thomas Walter on the coastal plain of South Carolina in 1788. Climbing Aster is a much branched sprawling shrub to 4 meters long, climbing up through and over vegetation, rarely with erect stems.

Leaves

simple, alternate with an auriculate base, often clasping and a pointed tip

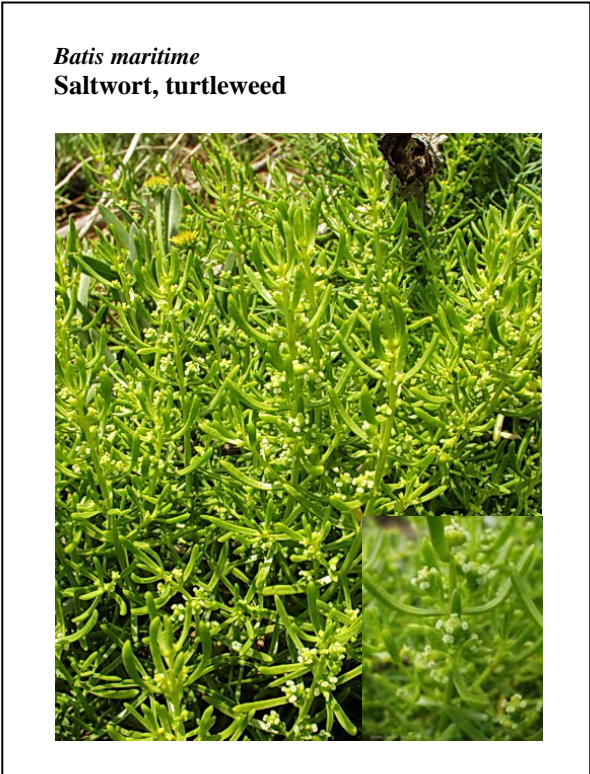
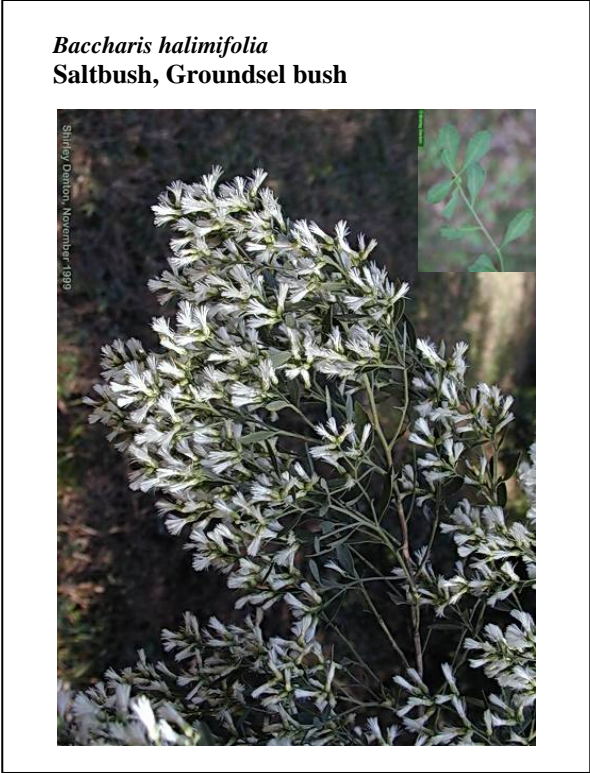
Flowers

appear in panicles in fall, September-October. Flowers in "heads" of ray and disc flowers. The narrow ray flowers are lavender to pale lavender, 1.0-2.5 cm long. The disc flowers are yellow. The involucre bracts are pubescent and overlapping, with recurved tips. The base of the "head" is urn-shaped.

Fruit

achene with a tan pappus made up of bristles, 5-7 mm long.

Pictures



Descriptions

Baccharis halimifolia

Saltbush, also known as the groundsel tree, is an evergreen shrub or small tree.

Description:

Grows to a height of approximately 12 ft and appears in coastal areas, near swales, margins of upland marshes, sandy areas, and in disturbed areas.

Leaves

Alternate and thick in texture; color is grayish green to medium green. Somewhat oblong in shape (often toothed nearest the ends), measuring approximately 3 inches in length. Has a number of tiny, amber-colored punctations (pinprick-like pores) in the leaf surface.

Flowers

Small and fragrant, appearing on stalks in the early fall. Color is greenish-white to yellowish.

Fruit

Small, but has numerous soft, hair-like bristles that become conspicuous as the fruit matures.

Interesting Facts

Saltbush provides forage for deer and nesting sites for birds such as grackles, redwing blackbirds, and green herons.

Baccharis angustifolia

The Saltwater False Willow is a dicot perennial shrub. Its growth range covers the southeast of the United States.

Leaves

Present at flowering; sessile ; blades (1-nerved) 20–60 × 1–2(–5) mm, ± succulent, bases narrowly attenuate , margins mostly entire, apices acute, faces glabrous , not gland-dotted. Heads (in groups of 3–5 near branch tips) in broad paniculiform arrays (of 100+).

Flowers

White conspicuous flowers. Staminate florets 15–20; corollas 2.5 mm. Pistillate florets 15–20; corollas ca. 3 mm.

Fruit

Inconspicuous, brown nut-like seed

Batis maritime

Saltwort, also known as turtleweed, is a salt-tolerant plant that is one of comparatively few plants that grows on sand dunes and in salt marshes.

Description:

A low-growing, shrubby plant that has a spreading, sometimes prostrate habit.

Leaves

Stems are brittle and bear fleshy, succulent leaves that measure 1 – 2 inches in length and curve upwards. Color is generally pale to medium green.

Flowers

Small, pale green or yellow to nearly white, arising from the leaf axils May through July.

Interesting Facts

Saltwort is able to grow in highly salty areas such as sand dunes because it is able to store salt within its tissues. All plant cells have a large storage area called the central vacuole that is sequestered from the rest of the cell. In most plants, the central vacuole stores water, sugars and starches, but saltwort also stores salts. With salts safely locked away in each cell, the plants can remain healthy and will thrive even in the saltiest areas of a dune or saltmarsh. The salts are permanently removed from saltwort when leaves fall from the stem.

Baccharis glomeruliflora

A common and widespread species in forest edges and in thickets. It can be aggressive when planted, spreading readily from seed, so caution is advisable. The pollen is also an allergen.

Description

Medium erect shrub with a narrow crown typically 6-8 ft in height. Taller than broad.

Leaves

1-2 inches long.

Flowers

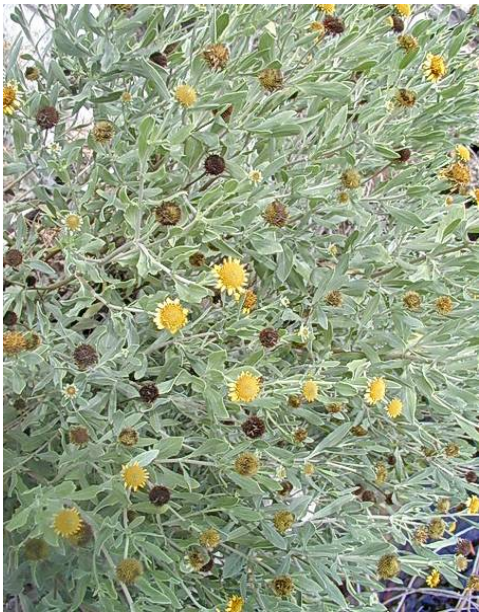
Produces fragrant white flowers with semi-showy heads in the fall. Is dioecious, with male and female flowers on different plants.

Fruit

Inconspicuous achene, but fruiting masses can be semi-showy.

Pictures

Borrichia frutescens
Seaside ox-eye daisy



Callicarpa americana
Beautyberry



Canavalia rosea
Seaside bean, Bay bean



Chrysopsis sp.
Goldenaster



Descriptions

Callicarpa americana

The American beautyberry is a shrub, 6-9 ft in height. Shoot growth occurs throughout much of the season. It is characterized by its attractive foliage and clusters of flowers or fruit around the leaf nodes.

Leaves

Simple, opposite or subopposite, and deciduous. 3-5 inches long, 1-3 inches wide, oval-shaped, with an acute apex. Leaf bases are tapered, margins are serrate. Surfaces are green and usually glabrous above, paler and pubescent below. Petioles are short and slender.

Flowers

Perfect, in sessile clusters around the leaf nodes.

Fruit

A 4-pitted lavender-pink, magenta, or violet drupe, about ¼ inch in diameter. Lasts long into winter and is eaten by a variety of birds.

Trunk

Older stems have a thin protective, light-brown bark.

Borrhchia frutescens

Seaside ox-eye daisy is a relatively common element of coastal areas, especially the ecotones between mangrove swamps and coastal uplands. This is a salt-tolerant member of the aster family.

Description

Small to medium shrub with silvery-green leaves and attractive yellow flowers. Typically 2-3 ft in height, to 5 ft in South Florida. Colonial, and spreading much broader than tall.

Leaves

The fleshy, oval, semi-evergreen leaves are pubescent (hairy) on both sides.

Flowers

Yellow flowers with showy compound heads, about 1 inch wide. Flowers all year; peak spring-summer.

Fruit

Inconspicuous achene.

Interesting Facts

Distinguished from *B. arborescens* by its silver foliage; the two species form a natural hybrid, *B. x cubana*. Nectar plant for great southern white (*Ascia monuste*), gulf fritillary (*Agraulis vanillae*), large orange sulphur (*Phoebis agarithe*), and other butterflies.

Chrysopsis sp.

Goldenaster is a relatively common understory element of scrub, but is also found in open sandy grounds, white sand hills, fields, and roadsides.

Description

Medium herbaceous wildflower, typically 12-18 inches in height. Taller than broad, but stems often falling over and forming open mats.

Leaves

Rough leaves, densely woolly, often matted.

Flowers

Yellow showy flowers, Aug-Nov (rarely spring).

Fruit

Inconspicuous achene.

Canavalia rosea

Description

Bay bean is a mostly herbaceous vine that trails along beach dunes and coastal strand. The thick, fleshy stem can grow to 20 ft or more in length and more than 1 inch in diameter. The stem is rather woody near the base and several branches radiate outward, forming mats of light green semisucculent foliage.

Leaves

Compound leaves with three thick, more or less rounded, fleshy leaflets, each about 2-3 inches long. The leaflets fold up under the hot sun at midday.

Flowers

The flowers are typical pea flowers, purplish pink, about 2 inches long and borne in erect spikes on long stalks. Beach bean blooms most of the summer and sporadically the rest of the year.

Fruit

The pods are flat and 4-6 inches long. They are prominently ridged and woody when mature.

Interesting Facts

Beach bean became an important food for the British explorer, Captain James Cook and his crew during their voyage around the world from 1768 to 1771.

Pictures

Cladium jamaicense
Saw-grass



Shirley Denton, April 2008

Coccoloba uvifera
Seagrape



© Shirley Denton

Conocarpus erectus
Buttonwood



(c) Shirley Denton, 2009

Conradina grandiflora
Large-flowered Conradina



© Shirley Denton

Descriptions

Coccoloba uvifera

Sea grapes are common in coastal dunes, backdunes, and hammocks. They are also heavily utilized as landscaping plants.

Description

Grown as both spreading, evergreen shrubs and trees that reach approximately 30 ft in height.

Leaves

Round, alternate, and measure as much as 6 inches in diameter. Leaf texture is leathery, and color is bright green to reddish nearest the petioles. Older leaves are often rust colored before they drop.

Flowers

Small and white, blooming nearly year round.

Fruit

Fleshy, hanging in grape-like clusters. Individual fruits typically measure under 1 inch in diameter. Immature fruit is green in color, while mature fruits are reddish or purple.

Interesting Facts

The reddish fruits of the sea grape may be eaten raw, cooked into jellies and jams, or fermented into sea grape wine.

Cladium jamaicense

Sawgrass is aptly named as the edges of the leaves are armed with tiny, sawlike prickles. It is the dominant species of much of the Everglades. Is also present in a number of other wetland ecosystems, including wet pinelands.

Description

Large herbaceous sedge typically 3-6 ft in height, to 10 ft when in flower. Clonal and sometimes spreading and forming large patches.

Leaves

Saw-toothed leaf margins. Prickly.

Flowers

Brown inflorescence is semi-showy. Flowers summer to fall.

Fruit

Inconspicuous achene.

Interesting Facts

This is the dominant species of the Everglades marsh, especially in the Shark River Slough. Larval host plant for Palatka skipper (*Euphyes pilatka*) butterflies. Technically it is not a grass, but a sedge.

Conradina grandiflora

Large-flowered Conradina, which is also known as small largeflower false rosemary, is endemic to eastern peninsular Florida from Volusia County south to Miami-Dade County; very rare or perhaps extirpated in Miami-Dade County.

Description

Small shrub, typically 2-3 ft in height. As broad as tall.

Leaves

Needle-like, about ½ -1½ inches long, aromatic.

Flowers

Showy, fragrant flowers about a ½ inch long are bluish to pale purple and spotted.

Fruit

Inconspicuous nutlet.

Interesting Facts

This plant is listed as threatened by the state of Florida.

Conocarpus erectus

Buttonwood is a key element of coastal forests along the upland margin of mangrove swamps.

Description

Medium tree or large shrub with an open crown, branches mostly erect or ascending. Trunks leaning, 6-18 inches or more in diameter, often branching near the ground. Typically 20-40 ft in height to 51 ft in South Florida. Can be as broad as tall or broader.

Leaves

Leaves 2-4 inches long, leathery, green or covered with silvery hairs.

Flowers

Whitish and inconspicuous. Essentially dioecious, with male and female flowers on separate plants; some male flowers contain a single ovule. Flowers all year, peaks in summer.

Fruit

Scaly cone-like heads turning purple-brown, shattering when ripe. Seeds dispersed by water.

Interesting Facts

This is one of the most important host trees for epiphytes in South Florida. It also provides significant food and cover for wildlife.

Pictures

Crinum americanum
String lily, swamp lily



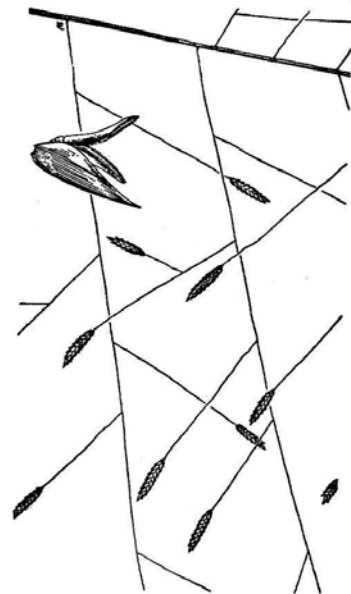
Croton punctatus
Beach tea



Distichlis spicata
Saltgrass



Eragrostis elliottii
Elliott's lovegrass



Descriptions

Croton punctatus

Beach tea is somewhat rare element of beach dunes and coastal strand.

Description

Small, dense shrubby herb, typically 1-3 ft in height. As broad as tall.

Leaves

Greenish with a silvery cast, to 2 inches long.

Flowers

White, inconspicuous, and fragrant. Unisexual, with male flowers above and female below, clustered toward the ends of the stems. Flowers all year.

Fruit

Inconspicuous capsule.

Crinum americanum

Description

Medium herbaceous wildflower from a basal rosette; grows erect, in small clumps.

Leaves

Strap-like, leathery leaves grow directly from the bulb and are 1-4 feet long, 2-3 inches wide.

Flowers

The flower stem is about 1 inch in diameter, 2-3 ft tall, with 2-6 flowers forming a showy umbel at the top. The fragrant flowers are white, sometimes marked with pink. The sepals are 3-4 inches long and ½ inch wide. They are joined at the base, forming a long tube, but curve backward at the end to form a ball-shaped blossom. The upper half of the stamen is purple, with purple anthers extending out from the blossom as the sepals curve backward.

Fruit

Green fleshy capsule.

Interesting Facts

Some authorities place this beautiful flower in the amaryllis family instead of the lily family. It differs from many lilies in that its floral parts are attached above the ovary rather than below.

Eragrostis elliottii

A widespread and common understory grass of open uplands and short hydroperiod wetlands, but rather weedy in disturbed ecosystems.

Description

Small to medium herbaceous clumping grass, typically 6-18 inches in height. About as broad as tall.

Flowers

Whitish inflorescence. Semi-showy inflorescence.

Fruit

Inconspicuous caryopsis.

Distichlis spicata

Saltgrass is widespread and in the eastern United States is most commonly found along estuaries and the troughs of back dune areas along the shoreline.

Description

A native perennial from 15 to 35 inches in height (less tall in dense colonies); forms dense mats with scaly rhizomes and sometimes stolons.

Leaves

Lower leaves consist of sheaths only, which are overlapping and glabrous. Leaves are mostly cauline and vertically two-ranked. Blades are firm, the edges often flat at the base and folded or rolled inward meeting in the middle and are generally less than 10 cm long. Salt crystals may be found on the leaves and stems.

Flower

The inflorescences are dense, spike-like panicles, which range from 5-7 cm long or less. The inflorescence is yellowish in color, turning straw brown as it dries. It is a dioecious species with male and female reproductive parts on separate plants, and can be found in flower from June to October.

Pictures

Erythrina herbacea
Coralbean, Cherokee bean



Flaveria linearis
Yellowtop



Forestiera segregata
Florida privet



Gaillardia pulchella
Blanket-flower, gaillardia



Descriptions

Flaveria linearis

Yellowtop is a nectar plant for many different kinds of butterflies.

Description

Small to medium herb about 1-2 ft in height. Spreads and forms mounds broader than tall.

Leaves

Narrow, linear.

Flowers

Showy clusters of yellow disk flowers. Flowers all year; peak summer-fall.

Fruit

Inconspicuous achene.

Erythrina herbacea

Coral Bean is a deciduous natural legume whose bright, red flowers are instant butterfly attractors.

Leaves

Leaves are grouped in three, semi-heart-shaped leaflets.

Flowers

Oblong, scarlet blossoms appear in May and last through June.

Fruit

Large beans split and reveal red seeds in summer and fall.

Interesting Facts

Coral Bean seeds are poisonous.

Gaillardia pulchella

Blanketflower is a prolific annual that will grow basically anywhere. Its showy, salt tolerant blossoms attract butterflies.

Leaves

Narrow, alternate, lance-shaped, with the lower leaves toothed at the edge.

Flowers

Zinnia-like flowers, year-round, usually orange or maroon with a yellow tip and a darker center disk. Color varies. Appears singly on long stems that may sprawl or remain upright.

Fruit

A 4-pitted lavender-pink, magenta, or violet drupe, about ¼ inch in diameter. Lasts long into winter and is eaten by a variety of birds.

Stems

Green and strong enough to support the weight of the large flower head.

Interesting Facts

It is naturally seen in coastal areas, but recently has been used to seed highway medians.

Forestiera segregata

Description

Large shrub or small tree with a dense, irregular crown composed of many small trunks from crooked trunks. Bark pale or creamy, thin, smooth with many breathing pores (lenticels). Typically 8-15 ft in height in South Florida, to 17.5 ft in Florida. Often as broad as tall.

Leaves

Dark green above, ¾ to 2 inches long. Semi-deciduous, with the old leaves falling as the new flush of growth begins.

Flowers

Yellowish-green, semi-showy flowers, in small clusters from the axils of the previous year's growth. Dioecious, with male and female flowers on different plants, or polygamodioecious, with a few flowers of the opposite sex or bisexual flowers on the same plant. Flowers all year; peak in spring

Fruit

Black or dark purple drupe.

Interesting Facts

Plants with smaller leaves growing in the pine rocklands of Miami-Dade County have been described as a distinct species, *F. pinetorum*, or variety, *F. segregata* var. *pinetorum*.

Pictures

Garberia heterophylla
Garberia



Hamelia patens
Firebush



Helianthus debilis
East coast beach sunflower



Heliotropium curassavicum
Salt Heliotrope



Descriptions

Hamelia patens

Firebush is a native, showy, fast-growing, semi-woody evergreen shrub that attracts butterflies and hummingbirds.

Leaves

3-7 whorled leaves at each node. Elliptic to oval in shape, about 6 inches long, gray-pubescent underneath with reddish veins and petioles.

Flowers

Bright reddish-orange or scarlet tubular flowers arranged in terminal clusters (cymes). Individual flowers are each about ¾ inches long. Flower stems are also a bright red.

Fruit

Each fruit is a juicy berry with many small seeds, ripening from green to yellow to red and finally to black. Arranged in clusters.

Interesting Facts

Indigenous people in tropical America use extracts of the Firebrush leaves and stems to treat all kinds of skin diseases. Modern researchers have found that extracts of Firebush contain several active phytochemicals which have antibacterial and antifungal properties.

Garberia heterophylla

Garberia is native to the sand ridges and hills of central and northeast peninsular Florida. This plant should be placed in a site which receives full sun. It tolerates drought but prefers acid soils.

Leaves

first in basal rosettes, proximal cauline sometimes opposite or subopposite, distal alternate; blades grayish green, 15–35 × 7–20 mm, bases cuneate to attenuate, apices rounded or slightly retuse, faces often viscid when fresh

Flowers

lavender pink. Usually flower in the fall. The flowers are showy

Fruit

irregularly shaped, they measure less than a ½ inch in length; the cover is dry or hard, they are inconspicuous and not showy

Heliotropium curassavicum

Description

Prostrate, herbaceous, perennial with rubbery stems 12" long

Leaves

Blueish green sessile leaves; ½ -1" long and ⅙- ¼" wide

Flowers

White flowers, two ranks along an elongated, curled stem, ~ 3/32" wide

Fruit

Brown; inconspicuous

Interesting Fact

Used for medicinal purposes to cure coughs, asthma, and scorpion bites in the West Indies. Alkaloids in leaves linked to liver cancer.

Helianthus debilis

Beach sunflower is a native Florida plant used for dune stabilization. It is known as an excellent butterfly attractor.

Leaves

Triangular, hairy leaves, alternate along the trailing stems.

Flowers

A 2-inch yellow sunflower with a brown center, blooms all year long.

Stems

Beach sunflower has deciduous stems.

Propagation

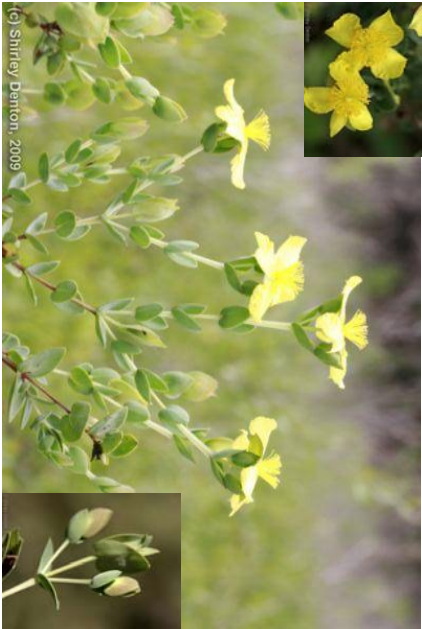
By seeds or cuttings.

Pictures

Hydrocotyle umbellata
Marsh Pennywort



Hypericum tetrapetalum
Four-petal St. Peter's-wort



Ilex glabra
Inkberry, gallberry



Ilex opaca
American holly



Descriptions

Hypericum tetrapetalum

Description

Small shrubby wildflower, about 2-3 ft in height. Taller than broad.

Flowers

Yellow. Semi-showy. Blooms all year; peak spring-fall.

Fruit

Inconspicuous capsule.

Hydrocotyle umbellata

Description

Also known as dollarweed, this plant is a perennial aquatic weed that spreads out horizontally forming dense mats in shallow water, mud, or in marshes

Leaves

Alternately arranged, round in outline, smooth, and often shiny. Leaf margins have rounded teeth and each leaf occurs on a petiole that may reach 6 inches in length. Leaf blades may reach 2 inches in width and are bright green in color and have veins that originate from the central point of the leaf

Flowers

Occur in clusters that form an umbrella-like head. Individual flowers are very small and consist of 5 white petals but many flowers occur together in a single cluster

Fruit

inconspicuous

Ilex opaca

Description

This tree grows to be 35 to 50 ft tall and 15 to 25 ft wide. It has a dense, pyramid-shaped crown.

Leaves

Alternate, simple and lanceolate or elliptic in shape, 2-4 inches long and 1-1 ½ inches wide. Medium to dark, green in color and, shiny or flat. Leaf margins are usually spiny and will be flat or wavy.

Flowers

Small, green or white in color, fragrant and found in clusters in the leaf axils.

Fruit

Berries are round and bright red, orange or yellow, a ½ inch in diameter.

Bark

The bark is light gray and may be covered by wart-like growths. Because the bark is very thin, it is easily damaged.

Interesting Facts

The preserved berries of this tree were used by American Indians as decorative buttons. Historically, the wood was used to make canes. When stained black, it was substituted for ebony in inlay work.

Ilex glabra

Inkberry is a common shrub in loblolly-shortleaf pine communities. With wiregrass (*Aristida stricta*), it may be one of the most conspicuous members of the understory of Florida's longleaf pine forests. The common name is in reference to the dark blue-black fruits.

Description

Native, open evergreen shrubs, commonly growing 4 to 8 ft tall, with numerous sprouts from thick, heavy, tuberous rhizomes, forming clusters and extensive, dense thickets.

Leaves

Alternate, simple, entire or finely toothed toward the tip, 1-2½ inches long, evergreen, leathery, shiny and dark green above, lighter and dull beneath.

Flowers

Either staminate (male) or pistillate (female), borne on separate plants (the species is dioecious). Individual flowers small, greenish-white and inconspicuous, the staminate 3-7 in short-stalked clusters, the pistillate solitary in leaf axils. Blooms March-June.

Fruit

Small seeds, nearly black, and smooth and shiny. Grouped 5-7, appearing Sept-Oct, and persisting into the following spring.

Pictures

Ilex vomitoria
Yaupon holly



Ipomoea imperati
Beach morning glory



Ipomoea pes-caprae
Railroadvine, morning-glory



Itea virginica
Virginia-willow, sweetspire



Descriptions

Ipomoea imperati

Beach morning glory has stems that root at the nodes where they touch the soil and this helps prevent sand erosion.

Leaves

Leathery, 1-1½ inches long, usually oval or occasionally lobed, on long, trailing stems.

Flowers

Delicate 2 inch, trumpet-shaped white flowers with yellow centers appear in summer and fall.

Fruit

A small, inconspicuous pod.

Interesting Facts

Beach morning glory is related to the sweet potato and is sometimes mistaken for railroad vine, another one of its near relatives.

Ilex vomitoria

Yaupon Holly is an extremely tough evergreen shrub or small tree.

Leaves

Dark green with alternate arrangement and an ovate shape.

Flowers

White and creamy in color, not showy.

Fruit

The berries, common to the Holly family, are ½ inch round and distinctively red.

Bark

Smooth and gray, often mottled with yellow-green patches.

Interesting Facts

Native Americans used the Yaupon Holly tree to produce an intoxicant used for ceremonial and medicinal purposes. An infusion, called *black drink* by some tribes, contains caffeine and other compounds.

Itea virginica

36

Sweetspire grows in swamps and along the edges of streams and lakes.

Description

Sweetspire is an open, airy shrub up to 8 ft tall with slender, arching branches.

Leaves

Alternate, tardily deciduous, long-elliptic, 3-4 inches long by 1-1½ inches wide and toothed along the margins. The leaves darken to red and purple in autumn, and may persist throughout most of winter, especially in the south.

Flowers

The white flowers are individually small, but borne from the tips of branches in elongated clusters (racemes) that are very showy. The clusters of slightly fragrant flowers are up to 6 inches long and may last for several weeks in the spring and early summer.

Fruit

Dry capsules in the same 6 inch clusters, usually remaining on the shrub throughout the autumn and winter.

Ipomoea pes-caprae subsp. Brasiliensis

35

Railroad vine is a native coastal plant that, like sea oats, helps prevent beach erosion.

Leaves

Leathery green 4 inch leaves are carried on 6 inch petioles. Are 2-lobed, and look more heart-shaped than the leaves of its near relative, the beach morning glory.

Flowers

Pink to lavender, funnel-like. Open in the morning and only one time each. However, the flowers appear year-round, peaking from May till November.

Fruit

Brown, in the form of 1/2 inch pods, each containing four seeds.

Stems

Flexible, thick stems root at the nodes.

Landscape usage

Railroad vine is highly resistant to heat, salt, wind, and poor, sandy soils.

Interesting Facts

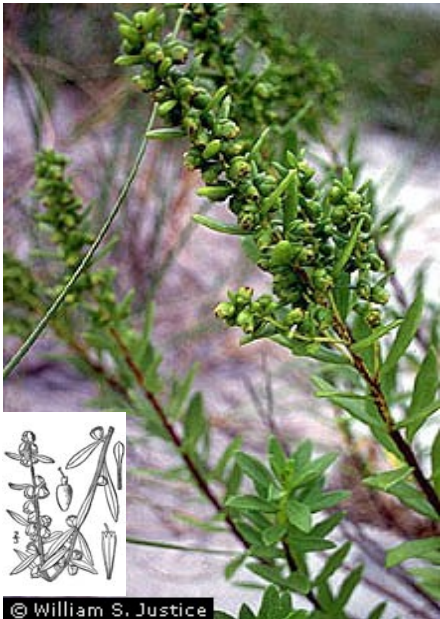
The Carib Indians used railroad vine in ritual baths to alleviate evil spells. The juice from the succulent leaves has been used as a first aid to treat jellyfish stings.

Pictures

Iva frutescens
Bigleaf marsh-elder



Iva imbricata
Seacoast sumpweed



Juncus effusus
Soft rush



Juncus roemerianus
Black needlerush



Descriptions

Iva imbricata

Description

Small shrub with spreading branches, typically 2-3 ft in height. Spreading, becoming much broader than tall.

Leaves

Light green, succulent and smooth.

Flowers

Green and inconspicuous, appearing summer to fall.

Fruit

Inconspicuous yellowish-brown achenes in globular clusters.

Iva frutescens

The marsh elder is normally associated with the mid to high marsh ecosystem, forming the last line of defense for shoreline erosion control.

Description

A perennial, deciduous shrub commonly growing between 3-8 ft high.

Leaves

Succulent leaves are egg-shaped to narrowly lance-shaped and oppositely arranged except for the upper reduced leaves. Lower leaves grow 4-6 inches long and 1-2 inches wide.

Flowers

Many greenish-white flower heads are arranged on terminal stems subtended by tiny green, leaf-like appendages.

Interesting Facts

Marsh elder naturally grows in the mid to high salt marsh-estuarine area, back dunes, and on muddy sea shores from Massachusetts to Florida and Texas, commonly occurring with groundsel tree (*Baccharis halimifolia*) to form the salt bush community. It is often confused with groundsel, which exhibits succulent, coarsely toothed leaves alternately arranged on the stem.

Juncus roemerianus

With its range of salinity tolerances, black needlerush is used in tidal estuary restoration along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Dense stands of black needlerush form deep fibrous root systems, which provide very good shoreline protection.

Description

Moderate growing, bunch forming, grass-like perennial. Coarse and rigid, 1½ -5 ft tall.

Leaves

Stiff and pungent, terete.

Flowers

Lateral inflorescence with an involucre bract that is terete and erect. The perianth is usually brownish. Flowers from May to October.

Fruit

Small dark seeds; matures from July to November.

Interesting Facts

90% of the biomass of marsh plants, such as black needlerush, is not consumed by herbivores. Instead, marsh plant biomass is decomposed to microbial biomass. This microbial biomass is available to primary consumers which initiate food webs leading to commercially important fishes and crustaceans.

Juncus effusus

Soft rush is especially good for stabilizing or restoring disturbed or degraded areas for erosion and slope control. These plants can be invasive.

Description

A rhizomatous, perennial herb with a large, tufted, cespitose growth form. *Juncus effusus* stems are stout but soft, 2-6 inches tall and 1.5-3 mm wide.

Leaves

Dull chocolate brown or chestnut-colored at the base, inner sheaths dark toward the summit.

Flowers

Inflorescence is a many-flowered, loosely clustered panicle, 1-4 inches long. The capsule is oblong, of about the same length as the perianth, obtuse or retuse.

Fruit

Retucilate (forms net or network).

Interesting Facts

Soft rush is also called candle rush by the Japanese, and is used for tatami mats. These flexible mats can be rolled and stored when not needed.

Pictures

Juniperus virginiana
Eastern red cedar



Kosteletzkya virginica
Saltmarsh mallow



Laguncularia racemosa
White mangrove



Lycium carolinianum
Christmasberry



Descriptions

Kosteletzkya virginica

Seashore mallow adapts to less saline soils. The plant grows in brackish, swampy conditions, shallow standing water, or regular garden soil.

Description

A large coarse, hairy perennial, much-branched and angular in habit. Normally 4 to 6 ft (spreading to 4 ft in width) at maturity, which it reaches in about 5 years. Once its reached this height, its life is nearing its end, as it only lives about 5 years.

Leaves

Grayish green and triangular-ovate with triangular lobes at the base.

Flowers

Hibiscus-like flowers are light pink and 3 inches across with a central column of yellow stamens, terminal or axillary and stalked.

Fruit

Brown capsule.

Juniperus virginiana

Description

Red cedar is a medium-sized dioecious or rarely monoecious evergreen tree from 33 to 66 ft tall, shaped like a pyramid or column, with reddish-brown to grayish colored bark that is fibrous and shedding. Branches are usually reddish-brown.

Leaves

Opposite, simple, green or blue-green, closely appressed and overlapping the leaf above (scale-like), and long or needlelike.

Cones

Male and female cones are on separate trees. The smallish male cones are yellowish-brown, papery, solitary at the tips of branchlets, ovoid to ellipsoid. The larger female cones are solitary at the tips of branchlets, dark blue or bluish-purple, waxy and berrylike. Flowers from March to May; the female cones ripen September through October.

Fruit

There are 1-3 seeds per cone. Red cedar seeds are yellow-brown and round, 2-4 mm in diameter, ridged near the base, and sometimes shallowly pitted. Red cedar trees come to seed-bearing age in 10 years, and they bear cones every 2-3 years.

Lycium carolinianum

The Christmas Berry is a member of the nightshade family (family Solanaceae) which includes herbs, shrubs, vines, and trees with often showy flowers generally in branched clusters.

Description

Medium shrub with usually somewhat spiny branches, erect or spreading. About 6-8 feet in height; rarely to 10 feet. About as broad as tall, but with a very open structure.

Leaves

Succulent, dull green, small.

Flowers

The four-petaled, somewhat tubular, lavender to blue flowers usually occur singly. ¼ to ½ inch, eggplant shaped. Flowers all year; peak summer-fall.

Fruit

Bright red succulent berry.

Interesting Facts

The berries are edible and have a sweet, tomato-like taste.

Laguncularia racemosa

Description:

Either a spreading shrub or medium-sized tree that reaches 40 - 60 ft in height.

Leaves

Smooth and opposite, 1 to 3 inches in length. They are rounded both at their apices and near the petiole, are leathery in texture, and have 2 small glands on the petiole that extrude sugars. Leaf color is yellow-green.

Flower

Small and white, blooming at either the leaf axils or branch tips.

Fruit

Reddish-green in color, approximately a ½ inch long, with longitudinal ribbing.

Distinguishing mangrove species:

White mangrove leaves are more yellow-green in color, more rounded than either red or black mangrove leaves, and bear 2 small glands at the leaf base. Red mangroves have conspicuous prop roots which grow downward from the branches; black mangroves have numerous, finger-like projections called pneumatophores which grow upward around the base of the tree; white mangroves may have either of these types of roots, depending on environmental conditions.

Pictures

Lyonia lucida
Fetterbush, shiny lyonia



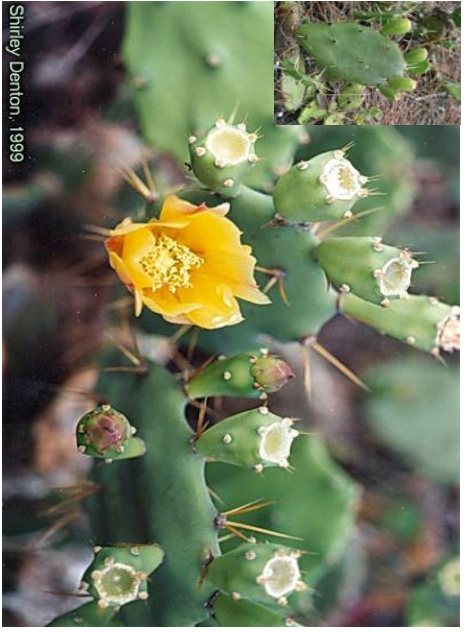
Monarda punctata
Dotted horsemint



Myrica cerifera
Wax myrtle



Opuntia stricta
Erect prickly-pear cactus



Descriptions

Monarda punctata

Description

Dotted horsemint is an herbaceous to semi-woody, multi-branched perennial (sometimes an annual) to 3 or 4 ft tall. Like most herbaceous mints, it has opposite leaves and square stems.

Leaves

Lanceolate, ½ to 3 inches, with short petioles and toothed margins. Smells like oregano. Both stems and leaves are hairy.

Flowers

Small and rather inconspicuous (both terminal and axillary) but arranged in showy heads, 2-7 per stem. Each flower head rests upon a flamboyant palette of pink to lavender leafy bracts. The little corolla is tube-shaped and bilaterally symmetrical with two lips, in typical mint fashion. Flower tubes are pale yellow with purple spots, less than an inch long, and protrude from the rounded heads.

Interesting Facts

Native Americans made a tea from the leaves to treat flu, colds and fever, as they increase sweating. Essential oils from horsemint are high in thymol, which is an effective fungicide and bactericide and also used to expel hookworms. Today thymol is manufactured synthetically.

Lyonia lucida

Fetterbush is a common understory shrub in wet savannas, bogs, cypress swamps, pine flatwoods and even dry scrubby habitats throughout the southeastern coastal plain.

Description

Evergreen shrub with shiny dark green leaves and sweetly scented flowers. Bushes average around 3-6 ft tall, but can sometimes get as tall as 12-15 ft. Often grows in thickets and individual bushes can have multiple stems.

Leaves

Thick shiny green leathery leaves are elliptic to oval, alternately arranged, 1-3 inches long, and about half as wide. There is a conspicuous vein that runs around the leaf blade just inside and parallel to the margin.

Flowers

Little bell-shaped jewels, about ½ inch long, borne in 10-15 flower clusters from the leaf axils. They come out on wood of the previous season, before new growth begins in early spring, and last for several weeks. Usually pink; some are nearly white and some nearly red. Although they may be small, the flowers are in showy clusters and are very fragrant.

Opuntia stricta

Leaves

Generally spiny, rounded or oval pads, 3-5 inches across.

Flowers

Flat to cupped and showy, appears in spring & summer. Blooms are 1-3 inches across and predominately yellow, often with reddish centers.

Fruit

Fig-like, up to 3 inches long and either smooth or spiny. Usually red when ripe.

Trunk

Older stems have a protective, thin, light brown bark.

Interesting Facts

Used by the Indians as a fruit and vegetable. The sweet juicy fruits of the prickly-pear, called tunas, are said to taste a bit like watermelon and are very popular everywhere except the United States. In fact, annual world-wide commercial production of prickly-pear tunas is more than twice that of strawberries, avocados, or apricots! The pads, called nopales, are a popular vegetable in Mexico and Central America. They are usually cooked but can be eaten raw (these taste a little like green beans).

Myrica cerifera

Wax Myrtle grows well from coastal areas to inland wet areas and thrives in high, dry regions in semi-shade or full sun.

Description

This aromatic, dioecious small tree or shrub has a slender trunk and branches that form a round crown. Can grow to 40 ft tall with a trunk of up to 8 inches in diameter.

Leaves

Alternate, simple and usually measure 2 to 4-inches long and ¼ inch wide with coarse teeth above the middle. Smooth on top and hairy underneath with small, orange glands on both sides.

Flowers

Tiny male flowers found in short, auxiliary catkins, females grow in close bunches.

Fruit

Ripening throughout the winter, fruit can be found on the female plants in dense clusters. Each fruit is approx. 1/8 inch in diameter and coated with a bluish-white wax.

Bark

Gray and silver with younger branches being waxy and hairy.

Pictures

Osmunda cinnamomea
Cinnamon fern



Panicum amarum
Beach panic grass



Parthenocissus quinquefolia
Woodbine, Virginia creeper



Paspalum distichum
Knotgrass



Descriptions

Panicum amarum

Beach panic grass is an ideal dune plant. The above ground portion of the plant reduces wind velocity allowing sand to drop out of the wind stream and accumulate. The below ground portion of the plant stabilizes and holds the sand in place with an extensive fibrous root and rhizome system.

Description

A native, perennial, rhizomatous, warm-season grass, growing to a height of 4-8 ft with a growth habit ranging from erect to prostrate to decumbent. A robust grass, it spreads slowly from short, strong rhizomes or by rooting from lower nodes of plant stems (culms) to form open clumps.

Leaves

The leaves are ¼ to ½ inch wide, 7 to 20 inches long, smooth without hair, and bluish in color.

Flowers

The inflorescence is a narrow panicle 12 to 15 inches in length that is contracted in maturity. Flowering begins in September and continues through December.

Fruit

Small quantities of poor quality seed are produced on compact clusters 6 to 12 inches long and 2 to 4 inches wide.

Osmunda cinnamomea

Description

Medium herbaceous fern, 3-6 ft, grows from the ascending tips of thick, creeping semi-woody rhizomes. Roots are black, wiry and fibrous, eventually forming a tough, thick mat. The plant is readily identified by the distinctive cinnamon colored non-leaflike fertile fronds, or in their absence, by the presence of a conspicuous tuft of orange hairs on the underside of each pinna at its base.

Leaves/Sporangia

Most ferns carry their reproductive spores on the undersides of the fronds; cinnamon fern (and other species of *Osmunda*) have separate and distinctive fertile fronds in addition to the typical sterile fronds. The large sterile fronds grow 3-5 ft tall and are pinnately compound, with each of the 30-50 pinnae divided again. First, the fiddleheads (unfurled fronds of a young fern) are cinnamon brown and covered with a dense wooly pubescence, turning pale green as they unfold and mature and later in the year, to golden brown before dying back in winter. The fertile fronds, which lack leafy pinnae, emerge in spring from the center of the plant, standing a little above the vase-like cluster of sterile fronds. They are green at first but soon turn rich cinnamon brown. Fertile fronds are covered with abundant masses of brownish sporangia; they die back after shedding their spores in late summer.

Paspalum distichum

Description

Used for controlling erosion in ditches and canal banks, it can be problematic in crops, along water body margins, and in other disturbed places.

Leaves

Flat, often keeled at the base, and hairless except for a few long hairs at the base. Sheaths are open and usually are covered with long hairs. Leaves are rolled in the bud.

Flowers

Blooms from June through October. The flower head is "V"-shaped, formed by two (sometimes three) branches. The main flowering stem can be up to 6 inches (15 cm) long. The branches grow from about 2/5 to 2-2/5 inches (1-6 cm) long.

Fruit

Brown; inconspicuous

Parthenocissus quinquefolia

Virginia Creeper resembles the irritating Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) to the unobservant hiker. It should be remembered that Poison Ivy generally has 3 leaves, Virginia Creeper has 5.

Leaves

Palmate, medium-green, usually five compound, oval leaves, pointed at tips and 2-4 inches long. Fall color can be brilliant purple to red.

Flowers

Panicles of yellow-green flowers appear in spring.

Fruit

Blue-black berries are ½ inch across and attractive to birds.

Stem

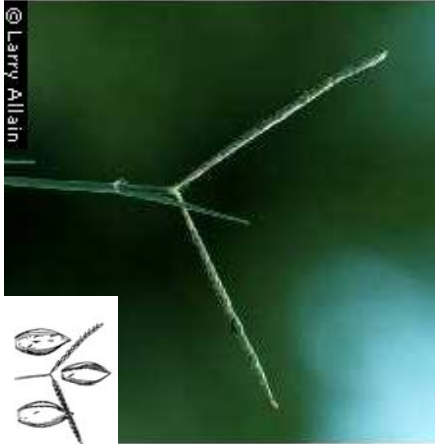
Brown, attaching by branched tendrils to almost any surface. This vine climbs by adhesive tendrils that may mark painted or wooden surfaces.

Interesting Facts

The genus name, *Parthenocissus*, is Latin for the Greek translation of the plant's common name, Virginia creeper. *Partheno* means virgin; *cissus* means vine, and *quinquefolia* is Latin for "five leaves."

Pictures

Paspalum vaginatum
Seashore paspalum



Passiflora incarnata
Passion vine



Persea borbonia
Red bay



Phyla nodiflora
Frogfruit



Descriptions

Passiflora incarnata

Description

A native, fast growing perennial vine, which employs tendrils to grab hold of adjacent shrubs, structures and other supports to lift itself to heights of 8 to 12 ft.

Leaves

Alternate leaves (5 to 6 inches wide, 6 to 8 inches long) are palmate with 3 lobes and finely serrated margins.

Flowers

Spectacular flowers are pale-lavender (rarely white) with five petals 2 to 3 inches in diameter and five smaller sepals. Has a "crown", or corona (white or lavender with purple bands) of numerous fringelike segments that arise from above the petals. Blooms June to September.

Fruit

Sweet-smelling, yellowish fruits develop two to three months after flowering and may be harvested July to October. The pulpy fruit, or "maypop", is large and oval, about the size of a hen's egg, and contains many flattened, dark-colored seeds that are covered with an arillate pulp, which is the edible portion of the fruit.

Interesting Facts

The unique appearance of the flowers was purported by early Spanish explorers to represent the sufferings of Christ.

Paspalum vaginatum

Seashore paspalum is a native, warm season perennial.

Description

Small creeping herbaceous grass. Typically 6-12 inches in height to 2 feet in flower. Spreading and forming large open or dense patches.

Leaves

Blades range in lengths of 2.5–15 cm and in widths of 3 – 8 mm, which may be flat or folded inward length wise. Blades are mostly glabrous having a sparse amount of long hairs located on the top surface close to the base.

Flowers

Inconspicuous green inflorescence turning brown.

Fruit

Inconspicuous light brown/yellowish caryopsis.

Phyla nodiflora

Description

Small creeping herbaceous wildflower about 1-3 inches in height to 6 inches when in flower. Spreading and forming large open or dense patches.

Flowers

White flowers with purple bracts, semi-showy. Flowers all year.

Fruit

An inconspicuous aggregate of 4 nutlets.

Persea borbonia

Red bays grow throughout Florida and are normally found in hammocks, bluffs, coastal dunes and scrub habitats.

Description

Large shrub to medium-sized aromatic evergreen tree, can grow to 70 ft in height and 3 ft in diameter.

Leaves

Bright green with a narrow orange-colored mid rib, grows to 4 inches in length and 1½ inch in width. The leathery leaves are oblong and smooth on the margin. When the leaves are crushed they tend to be very aromatic. Routine occurrences of leaf galls can be useful for identification.

Flowers

Small, pale yellow flowers bloom in the spring. Form in small clusters along hairy stalks.

Fruit

Dark bluish-black drupes, mature late summer to fall and are approximately ½ inches long and 1.2 centimeters in diameter, containing a large, rounded seed.

Bark

Twigs are green to reddish. As tree ages and matures, the bark becomes brownish-gray. Bark very rough with vertical, interlacing fissures between ridges.

Pictures

Pinus elliotii
Slash pine



Poinsettia cyathophora
Painted-leaf



Prunus caroliniana
Cherry-laurel, laurel cherry



Prunus serotina
Black cherry



Descriptions

Poinsettia cyathophora

Description

Annual herb 1-3 ft in height.

Leaves

Green stems and alternate lobed leaves, the upper or bracteal leaves usually red toward the base.

Flowers

The terminal flowers are yellowish with 1-2 small glands or nectaries.

Fruit

Capsule, 4.5-5 mm.

Interesting Facts

A member of the spurge family (family Euphorbiaceae). Spurges are commonly herbs, with milky sap; in the tropics also includes shrubs or trees. Among the valuable products of the family are rubber, castor and tung oils, and tapioca. Most members of the family are poisonous, and their milky sap will irritate the membranes of the eyes and mouth.

Pinus elliotii

Description

Can grow to 100-ft tall and 2 to 3 ft in diameter. Its trunk is straight with scaly, rough twigs. The crown is composed of short, thick branches that end in rusty-silver buds. Has a high drought and salt-spray tolerance.

Leaves

Needles that come in groups of twos and threes. Needles are usually 7 to 12 inches long and have a fascicle sheath of 3/8 to 5/8-inches long.

Flowers

Slash pines do not possess flowers; this gymnosperm has naked seeds that are carried in its cones. The seeds are winged.

Fruit

The cones are stalked and oval and grow to be 3 to 6 inches long.

Bark

Dark gray with deep furrows broken into irregular rectangular plates. The red/brown inner bark is visible around plates.

Prunus serotina

Description

Medium-sized tree, can grow to be 60 - 90 ft tall. Has an irregularly-shaped oval silhouette of dark, shiny deciduous leaves. Bark is thin, and becomes reddish-brown with age. Older stems develop a irregular but distinct bark pattern.

Leaves

Alternate, simple, oblong to ovate, 3 to 6" long. Finely saw-toothed margins have one or more glands on the petiole near the base of the leaf. Top of the leaf is dark, shiny green and paler on the bottom. Depending on the individual tree and season, leaves may turn yellow-orange to orange-red.

Flowers

White, seen in groups of terminal clusters up to 3 inches long. Appears in early spring as the leaves unfold and has a fragrant aroma.

Fruit

Dark, rounded drupe about 1/4" in diameter. Matures in later summer.

Interesting Facts

The twigs and leaves of this tree contain hydrocyanic acid; consumed in large amounts it can poison animals. Inner bark is used to produce wild cherry cough syrup.

Prunus caroliniana

Description

Can grow to a height of 40 ft and have a 25-foot spread. If allowed to grow to tree size, its crown takes an oval appearance.

Leaves

Alternate, simple and either elliptic, oblong and lanceolate. May be 2 to 4 inches long with a shiny upper surface and a duller lower surface. Leaf margins may be entire or have teeth. Petioles of new leaves are usually reddish in color. When crushed, leaves have a smell similar to maraschino cherries.

Flowers

White, with a pleasant aroma. Less than 1/4 inch in diameter, they appear as racemes in the leaf axils and commonly appear in the spring.

Fruit

Shiny, black drupe less than 1/2 inch in diameter. Fully mature by late summer or early fall.

Bark

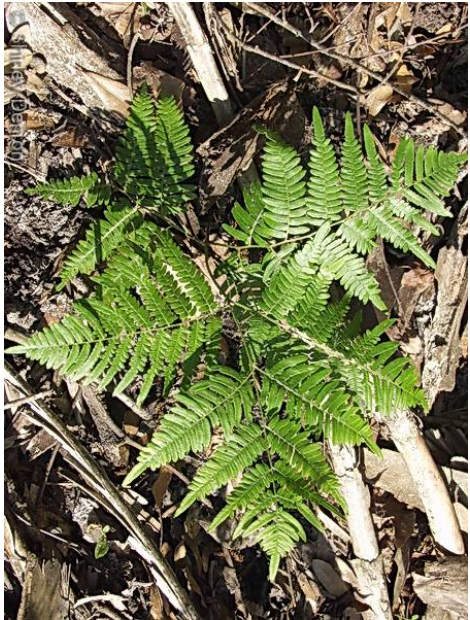
Light brown in its first season, but gradually turns dark gray to black with age.

Pictures

Psychotria nervosa
Shiny-leaf wild-coffee



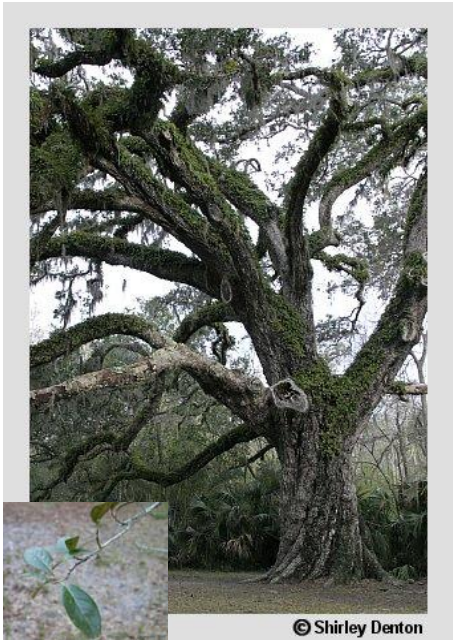
Pteridium aquilinum
Bracken fern



Quercus laurifolia
Laurel oak



Quercus virginiana
Live oak



Descriptions

Pteridium aquilinum

Bracken fern is a perennial fern that is deciduous in all but tropical climates.

Description

In springtime, bracken fern sends up robust fronds on arching stems arising from long, branching, hairy rhizomes that creep below the ground surface. Unlike many other ferns that grow in clusters, bracken fronds arise singly from along the rhizome. The fronds are 1-3 ft long (sometimes considerably larger), more or less triangular in outline, and divided two, three or even four times, with the ultimate segments each about a ½ inch long. Bracken does not produce specialized reproductive fronds. Instead, the spores are contained in linear patches along the margins of the ultimate segments.

Interesting Facts

Bracken fern, like some other ferns, has a cosmopolitan distribution. This is so because the spores of ferns are so tiny they are readily carried on the wind. Bracken is one of the most widespread ferns in the world. Warning: the foliage of bracken fern is poisonous to livestock. Although it is still eaten by people in several cultures around the world, the fiddleheads and rhizomes of bracken fern are now believed to be carcinogenic when consumed.

Psychotria nervosa

Wild coffee occurs in scrub habitats, pinelands, uplands, hammocks, and other natural areas as long as water is not a limiting factor.

Description

Shrub-like with multiple stems, and may reach a final height and width of 4 - 10 ft.

Leaves

Foliage is shiny and dark green in color. Oval leaves are approximately 6 inches in length, simple and opposite on the stem. Veins are prominent and pinnate, sunken deeply into the leaves to give a highly textured appearance.

Flowers

White and occurring in clusters throughout the spring and summer months.

Fruit

Ovaloid and measure approximately 0.3 inches in length.

Interesting Facts

Wild coffee is placed in the same family as *Coffea arabica*, the source of the coffee bean. However, the plant contains no caffeine and produces an alkaloid chemical compound that has been shown to be hallucinogenic.

Quercus virginiana

The live oak is one of Florida's most widespread oaks. Historically, its wood was used for ship's ribs and knees.

Description

A monoecious evergreen tree with wide-spread limbs that branch close to the ground. Has a short, stout trunk and a dense, round-shaped crown. Grows to a height of 40 - 50 ft and has a trunk 3 to 4 ft in diameter. Branches may spread to be 100 ft or more wide.

Leaves

Simple, alternate, leathery, oblong, smooth on top and pale and silvery white on the bottom. Leaf edges are slightly rolled under and are ½ to 4 inches in length and 3/8 to 2½ inches in breadth.

Flowers

Small and unisexual. Male flowers are in catkins.

Fruit

An acorn usually ¾ - 1 inch long with a top-shaped cup that encloses 1/3 of the nut. The nut is oblong in shape, and is dark brown and lustrous.

Bark

Dark red-brown to gray-brown and may be close to one-inch thick. As the tree gets older, fissures in the bark will deepen.

Quercus laurifolia

Description

A rapidly growing tree that lives to be 30 - 50 years old. Can grow to be 50 - 60 ft tall and 2 to 4 ft in diameter.

Leaves

Alternate, simple, elliptical, and 2 to 5 ½ inches long and ½ to 2 inches wide. Leaf base is wedge-shaped and the margin entire. Shiny green on top and paler below, each leaf has a yellow mid rib and petiole.

Flowers

Small and unisexual. Males are found as 3 inch catkins. Females are found on short stalks in the leaf axils.

Fruit

An acorn, found sessile, in ones or twos and commonly ½-inch long. A thin, saucer-shaped cup covers ¼ of the nut.

Bark

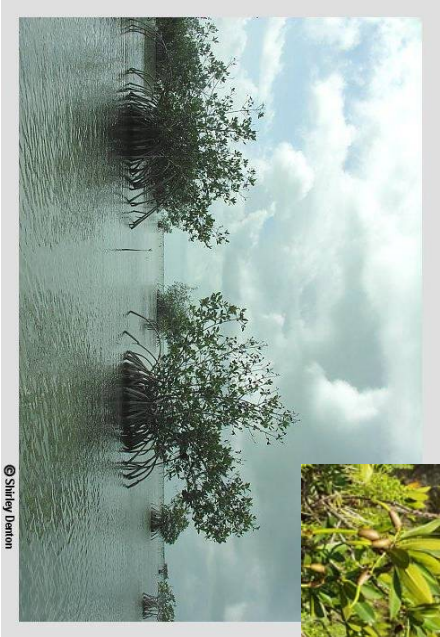
Approximately ½-inch thick, dark red-brown, and mottled by deep fissures that are separated by flat ridges.

Interesting Facts

Fruit and insects harvested from trees are used as food. The tree is used for nesting and cover by wildlife. In addition, laurel oaks are used locally as fuel.

Pictures

Rhizophora mangle
Red mangrove



Rhus copallinum
Winged sumac



Ruellia caroliniensis
Carolina wildpetunia



Sabal minor
Dwarf palmetto



Descriptions

Rhus copallinum

Winged sumac often forms thickets, and a mass in bloom or in fruit makes a memorable sight.

Description

A fast growing and short lived deciduous shrub or small tree getting up to about 20 ft tall with an irregular crown spreading to 10 ft or so.

Leaves/Stem

Alternate, pinnately compound, about 1 ft long with 9-23 leaflets. The rachis (leaf stem) is winged between the leaflets. Stems and twigs are densely pubescent (covered with short soft hairs). The leaves turn brilliant orange red in fall before they drop.

Flowers

Greenish yellow flowers appear in spring, summer and fall. Are tiny, but packed in showy terminal clusters 6-10 inches long.

Fruit

Small red pubescent drupes hung in big clusters; appears in fall and persists through much of the winter even after the leaves have fallen.

Interesting Facts

Native Americans used the roots of winged sumac to treat dysentery and made a dye from the berries.

Rhizophora mangle

A distinguishing characteristic of mangroves are the numerous, aerial roots that anchor it against the constant motion of the waves. Red mangroves have conspicuous prop roots which grow downward from the branches.

Description

Commonly 15 ft tall, this tree can grow to be 75 ft tall and 4 ft in diameter. Has a round-shaped crown with a flat top.

Leaves

Opposite, elliptical to oval with a narrowing base. The thick leaves are dark green and shiny on top and measure 2 to 6 inches long and 1 to 2 inches wide. More elliptical than that of black mangrove and less rounded than that of the white mangrove.

Flowers

Can be seen year round. Yellow, hairy and approximately 3/4 inch in diameter. Found in clusters of two or three, they grow in the axils of young leaves.

Fruit

Rusty-brown conical berry. Before falling from tree, seeds germinate and send down initial root, 6" to 12" long. When fruit falls, root lodges in soil and top begins to grow.

Bark

The bark is gray to red brown and broken by fissures.

Sabal minor

Description

A small fan palm with a trunk that remains below ground.

Leaves

Depending on age and growing conditions, the leaves can be anywhere from 1-5 ft in length and width. The smooth petiole (leaf stem) is a little longer than the leaf. The leaves of *Sabal minor* differ from those of the similar-looking saw palmetto *Serenoa repens* in having a short midrib, an extension of the petiole and a smooth stem, while the saw palmetto is armed with small sharp spines that form the sawlike edges that give the plant its name.

Flowers

The inflorescence (cluster of flowers) is erect, extending well above the leaves.

Fruit

Black, about 1/2 inch in diameter. Their weight causes the flowering stalk to arch downward, sometimes to the ground.

Ruellia caroliniensis

An uncommon understory herb in mesic flatwoods.

Description

Small to medium wildflower typically 6-15 inches in height. Usually erect and taller than broad.

Leaves

Crowded, opposite, oval leaves.

Flowers

Violet, trumpet-shaped flowers on short hairy stems from leaf axils in unstalked clusters of 2-4. The flowers have a slender corolla tube and five, petal-like lobes. Blooms spring-summer. Usually only one or two of the light purple flowers are open on any given day. Among the seven other members of this genus occurring in the East, this one is recognized by the long-pointed calyx lobes and bracts under the flower.

Fruit

Inconspicuous capsule.

Pictures

Sabal palmetto
Cabbage palm



Salicornia sp.
Glasswort



Salix caroliniana
Coastal Plain or Carolina Willow



Salvia coccinea
Scarlet sage, tropical sage



Descriptions

Salicornia sp.

Glasswort is a salt-tolerant plant that readily survives inundation with sea water and is common in sand dunes, salt marshes, mangrove creeks, mosquito impoundments, and scrub areas.

Description:

A low-growing, succulent that grows prostrate or upright into mats from thin rhizomes.

Leaves

Highly reduced to tiny, opposite scales that are nearly invisible. Color is typically brownish to bright green along the stems. Stems are jointed, and may be either simple or branched, often growing more than 3 ft in length.

Flowers

Blooms in summer and fall. Flowering stems are upright, 3 -12 inches in height and brownish-purple in color. Flowers are tiny, appearing in groups of three, and sunken into the hollows of the joints.

Fruit

Bladder-like, with thin walls enclosed by flower scales.

Interesting Facts

Glasswort is sometimes used as sea vegetable, prized for its saltiness and crunch.

Sabal palmetto

The Cabbage Palm is the official tree of the State of Florida.

Description

Can grow to be 30 to 80 ft in height and have a spread of 10 to 15 ft. Has a symmetrical crown of large, fan-shaped leaves that spread around its top. Bark is brown in color and covered by shallow ridges.

Leaves

Alternate, 4 to 8 ft long, with a midrib that curves down from the top of the tree; margins have deep divisions of numerous fibers.

Flowers

Small, ¼ inch in diameter and white in color. Often found in clusters that are 2 to 2½ feet long. The fragrant flowers appear in early summer.

Fruit

Round and 1/3 inch in diameter. When fruit ripens in the fall, blackish in color.

Interesting Facts

Its trunk has been used as wharf pilings, poles and in the construction of docks, the leaves are often made into baskets, mats and hats, and the fruit is eaten by wildlife.

Salvia coccinea

Description

Scarlet sage (in the mint family) is a subshrub perennial in warmer climates and an annual where winter temperatures stay below freezing for more than a few hours at a time. Reaches 2-3 ft tall.

Leaves

1-2 inch triangular leaves on long petioles opposite each other on a square stem.

Flowers

Showy flowers are bright red, about an inch long, and arranged in loose whorls along the upright stem. Blooms appear continuously from early summer to first frost. There are several cultivars, including pink, white and bicolored.

Interesting Facts

Don't confuse this species with the popular bedding plant, *Salvia splendens* (also called scarlet sage), a frost-tender perennial from Brazil (usually grown as an annual), most of whose many flamboyant cultivars do not attract butterflies or hummingbirds, and do not reseed themselves.

Salix caroliniana

Description

Small tree to medium tree or large shrub with a spreading, open, irregular crown. Trunks short, often leaning. Bark gray, roughened with ridges and furrows.

Leaves

temperate deciduous, light green, long and narrow, to about 8" long.

Flowers

Greenish-yellow, inconspicuous catkin

Fruit

Capsule containing wind dispersed seeds.

Pictures

Salvia lyrata
Lyre-leaved sage



Sambucus nigra var. canadensis
Elderberry



Serenoa repens
Saw palmetto



Sesuvium portulacastrum
Sea purslane



Descriptions

Sambucus nigra var. canadensis

Description

A bushy, multi-stemmed, wide spreading shrub up to 10-15 ft tall, with brittle branches that are pithy and soft. Often forms dense thickets.

Leaves

Opposite, pinnately compound (featherlike), up to a foot long. 5, 7 or 9 saw-toothed leaflets, each about 2-6 inches long. Crushed foliage has an unpleasant smell. Twigs have wartlike corky lenticels on the outside, spongy white pith on the inside. The plant is normally deciduous, but in central and south Florida may have leaves all year round.

Flowers

Tiny star-shaped white flowers, arranged in showy sprays up to 10 inches across. Flat-topped circular flower clusters (cymes) can be very abundant, often covering the whole plant. In much of Florida, there are some elderberries in bloom every month of the year.

Fruit

Edible shiny blue-black drupes (diameter ¼ inch) with 3-5 stoney seeds.

Interesting Facts

Elderberries have more vitamin C per unit weight than oranges or tomatoes.

Salvia lyrata

Description

Perennial wildflower in the Mint family.

Leaves

Basal rosette of 3-8 inches, with elongated, stalked leaves that broaden toward the tips and have irregular margins that usually appear pinnately lobed or cut; may be solid green or blotched with a dark wine-purple along the midrib. A 1-2 ft hairy square stem emerges from the rosette.

Flowers

Uneven whorls of two-lipped lavender to blue flowers. Shorter upper lip of the tubular 1 inch flower has three lobes, lower longer lip has two. Heaviest flowering is typically during a several-week period sometime April to June, but the plants may produce a few flowers at almost any time of year.

Fruit

Egg-shaped seeds turn dark brown when ripe. Are held loosely in a cup-like structure.

Interesting Facts

The young leaves have a mild minty flavor and may be used in salads or cooked as a potherb. The leaves were once thought to be useful as an external "cure" for cancer.

Sesuvium portulacastrum

Sea purslane is an important sand stabilizer in the pioneer zone of beach dunes and can tolerate occasional flooding by sea water.

Description

Small prostrate herb about 3-8 inches in height. Spreading and forming large patches much broader than tall. Found in beach dunes and brackish coastal areas.

Leaves

The succulent leaves are edible (although very salty) and have been used as a source of vitamin C.

Flowers

Semi-showy. Sepals green on the outside, pink to pinkish-purple on the inside; the petals are absent. Flowers all year.

Fruit

Inconspicuous capsule.

Serenoa repens

Description

This evergreen shrub is almost always found creeping along the ground. Generally, its height is between 3 to 8 ft but it can reach 25 ft. Its trunk can be 9 to 10 inches in diameter.

Leaves

Palmate, up to 3½-feet wide, divided into many stiff, tapering segments. The petiole can be 3 to 4 ft long and has three sides with small, sharp teeth on its margins.

Flowers

Small, whitish flowers, found on branched stalks that can reach up to 3½ ft long.

Fruit

Yellow, darkens to black as it reaches maturity by summer.

Bark

Comprised of the old bases of past leaves and brown-colored fiber.

Interesting Facts

The saw palmetto is a food source for the Florida Black Bear. The endangered grasshopper sparrow nests in association with the saw palmetto and the Florida Panther enjoys palmetto as a daytime rest sites.

Pictures

Sideroxylon foetidissimum
Mastic, false mastic, wild olive



Sisyrinchium angustifolium
Pointed blue-eyed-grass



Solidago sempervirens
Seaside goldenrod



Solidago stricta
Wand Goldenrod



Descriptions

Sisyrinchium angustifolium

Description

Blue-eyed grass grows in a clump around 1-2 ft across and about the same height. Native habitat is open woods, moist pinelands, fields, meadows, marshes, the edges of swamps and grassy roadsides.

Leaves

Linear, up to 20 inches long, often growing in the shape of a fan, and looking a lot like grass leaves. The plants are evergreen in mild climates.

Flowers

Has six bluish purple "petals" with yellow centers: In truth, the "petals" consist of three sepals and three true petals, but they all look pretty much alike. The flowers are about 3/4's of an inch across, and stand erect above the leaves on slender grasslike flattened stalks. Individually, they are short lived, but the succession of flowers can last several weeks in spring and early summer.

Sideroxylon foetidissimum

Description

Medium to large tree with an irregular, rounded crown. Trunks large, erect, buttressed at the base, to 3 ft in diameter. Typically 30-60 ft in height; to 118 ft in South Florida. Taller than broad. Bark brown to gray brown or reddish-brown, thick, broken into thick plates exposing inner bark.

Leaves

Leaves glossy, dark green to yellowish-green with a wavy margin, 2-6 inches long.

Flowers

Greenish-yellow; inconspicuous but foul-smelling. Flowers spring-fall; peak in summer.

Fruit

Yellow-orange berry, about 1 inch long. Winter-summer. The fruits are edible raw, but the latex is very sticky.

Solidago stricta

Description

Small to medium herb with attractive spikes of yellow flowers.

Leaves

except at the base of the plant, small, ovate, and pressed close to the stem. Basal leaves much larger, ovate, with long petioles, and margins not toothed.

Flowers

Narrow, erect, plume-like clusters (to 10" long) of yellow, daisy-like flowers bloom in August-October atop stems rising to 3-6' tall

Fruit

Inconspicuous achene.

Solidago sempervirens

Description

Large herbaceous perennial wildflower about 1-2 ft in height; 4-6 ft when in flower. Taller than broad when in flower.

Leaves

A tight clump of narrow, evergreen basal leaves is topped by leafy, erect or arching, 2-8 ft stalks. Are somewhat succulent.

Flowers

Terminal or upperaxillary flowering heads are dense, the lowest branches somewhat recurved. Flowers are deep-yellow in showy spikes. Flowers all year; peak summer-fall.

Fruit

Inconspicuous achene.

Interesting Facts

The leaves can be used to make a tea. Goldenrods are also not a cause of hay fever, as has been suggested.

Pictures

Sorghastrum secundum
Lopsided indiagrass



Spartina sp.
Cordgrass



Sporobolus virginicus
Seashore Dropseed (grass)



Tradescantia ohiensis
Ohio spiderwort, bluejacket



Descriptions

Spartina sp.

Cordgrass is a herbaceous, native, warm season grass that forms dense vegetative colonies along shorelines and inter-tidal flats in coastal wetlands. A robust, rapidly spreading plant, tolerant to fluctuating water depths and salinity, it spreads primarily by vegetative propagation, producing new stems from an extensive system of underground rhizomes.

Description

Plant height will vary according to site conditions, but generally will range from 24 to 72 inches. Colonies tend to grow parallel to and continuous along shorelines; the width and thickness of a vegetative colony is controlled by a number of sitespecific conditions such as elevation, shoreline slope, and frequency, depth, and duration of flooding.

Interesting Facts

Generally, this species occurs in the coastal states along the U.S., however it is not native on the West Coast and is very invasive there.

Sorghastrum secundum

Lopsided Indiangrass is a warm-season, perennial bunch grass.

Description

Medium to large herbaceous grass. Typically 2-3 ft in height; to 6 ft when in flower. As broad as tall except when in flower.

Leaves

The leaf blade is flat; ¼ to ½ inch wide and 12 to 24 inches long. The leaf sheath is rounded and the ligule has a membrane ¼ to ½ inches long and pointed.

Flowers

Showy, brownish inflorescence, summer through fall.

Fruit

Inconspicuous caryopsis. The seedhead has a narrow golden brown one-sided panicle giving it the name lopsided Indiangrass.

Interesting Facts

Larval host plant for Delaware skipper (*Anatrytone logan*), dusted skipper (*Atrytonopsis hianna*) and swarthy skipper (*Nastra lherminier*).

Tradescantia ohioensis

Description

Perennial herb, total height from 2-3 ft.

Leaves

The branched, erect stems of Ohio spiderwort are tinged purple and bear grass-like leaves from up to eight nodes.

Flowers

Showy clusters of blue, three-petaled flowers top the stems. Flowers tend to open in morning. When touched in the heat of the day, the flowers shrivel to a fluid jelly.

Fruit

Small light-green capsule, surrounded by three green bracts. Mature 2-3 weeks after flowering.

Interesting Facts

Named after John Tradescant (1608-1662) who served as gardener to Charles 1 of England. *Tradescantia* species will hybridize in just about any combination.

Sporobolus virginicus

Description

perennial grass with erect leafy stems. It grows in mat formations from rhizomes to a height of 15-30 cm.

Leaves

alternate, up to 15 cm long, and are in two ranks on either side of the stem.

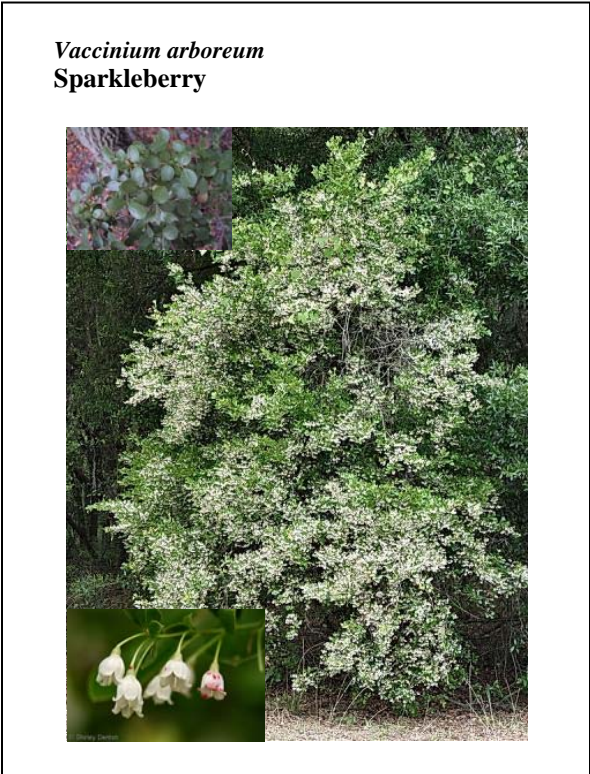
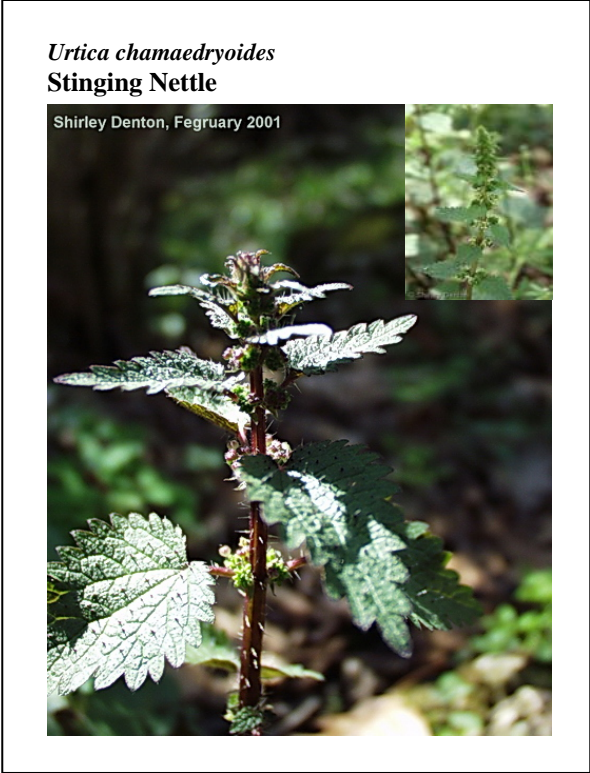
Flowers

Brown ; Inconspicuous flower heads can grow up to 10 cm long.

Fruit

Brown ; Inconspicuous; approximately 4 mm long.

Pictures



Descriptions

Urtica chamaedryoides

Herb, annual, with taproot, 1.5-8 dm. Stems usually branched from base, erect or reclining.

Leaves

Leaf blades narrowly ovate to orbiculate, distal blades sometimes lanceolate, 2-8 × 1-6 cm, base nearly cordate to rounded, sometimes cuneate in distal leaves, margins serrate, apex rounded to acute; cystoliths rounded or ± elongate. Inflorescences ± globose cymes.

Flowers

Flowers unisexual, staminate and pistillate intermixed in same inflorescence, sessile to short-pedunculate. Pistillate flowers: outer tepals linear, 0.4-0.8 mm, inner tepals ovate, 1.4-2 × 1-1.4 mm. Achenes ovoid to broadly ellipsoid, 1.2-1.4(-1.6) × 0.8-1 mm. 2 n = 26.

Fruit

tiny and seed-like (achene), 1 mm (0.04 in) long, flattened, egg-shaped in outline, brown, enclosed by bract-like structures.

Uniola paniculata

Sea oats are perhaps the most important plants in the beach community because of their abilities to rapidly colonize beaches and dunes. Not only are they salt and drought tolerant, but their extensive rhizomes and root systems trap blowing sands and aid in stabilizing dune systems.

Description

Sea oats are erect, semitropical grasses with tough, pale green leaves. Plants may grow 3 - 6 ft in height.

Leaves/Stem

Thin, tapers to sharp points, and are rolled inward slightly at the margins. Measures 8-16 inches in length, and approximately 0.25 inches in width. Rhizomes are elongate and extensively creeping in habit.

Flower/Fruit

Flowering spikelets are flat and measure 10-20 inches in length. Seed heads are large, and straw colored when mature in late summer.

Interesting Facts

Sea oats seeds provide food for many coastal strand species such as the red-winged blackbird, which is the primary consumer of sea oats seeds. Other species include songbirds, especially sparrows; marsh rabbits, and mice.

Vaccinium myrsinites

Blueberries, typical members of the heath family, like a sandy, acidic soil. Consequently, they actually do better in poor sandy soil than in humus-rich fertile soil.

Description

Shiny blueberry is a neat, compact and dense little evergreen shrub. Has many branches and a rounded habit, can get up to 3 ft tall.

Leaves

Little, green, glossy leaves all year long

Flowers

Pinkish, white urn-shaped flowers in spring.

Fruit

Shiny, edible, blue-black berries ripen in summer.

Interesting Facts

The closely related glaucous blueberry (*V. darrowii*) is very similar, and can be found growing in the same places, but its leaves, berries and flower stalks are usually covered with a powdery bloom that can be wiped off with the finger. The condition is called "glaucous", and it imparts a beautiful bluish cast to new leaves and stems, unlike the glossy green leaves of shiny blueberry.

Vaccinium arboreum

Sparkleberry is a small bushy tree, characterized by a short, crooked bole, contorted branches, and a dense, round crown.

Leaves

Simple, alternate, and deciduous or persistent for a year. 1-3 inches long, about 1 inch wide, oval in shape, with an acute or rounded apex. The leaf base is wedge-shaped, margins are entire or have very small teeth. Leaf surfaces are dark green and glabrous above, paler below, sometimes with 5 scattered hairs along the midrib and principal veins. Leaf petioles very short or nearly sessile.

Flowers

Perfect with small, leaf-like bracts.

Fruit

A ¼ inch diameter, shiny, blue/black, many-seeded berry; is edible and resembles a blueberry in taste. The seeds are tiny and kidney-shaped.

Twigs

Slender, brown to reddish-brown, and sometimes angled. The pith is white and homogeneous.

Bark

Dark brown, sometimes with a purplish tinge, divided into long, thin, elongated, shreddy, interlacing ridges.

Pictures

Verbesina virginica
Frostweed



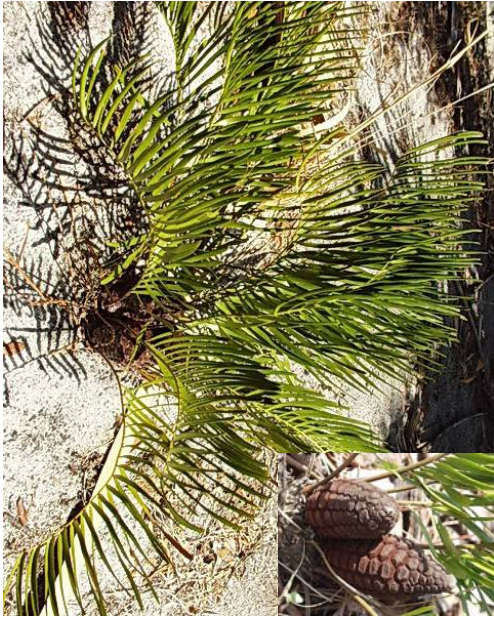
Yucca aloifolia
Spanish Bayonet



Yucca filamentosa
Adam's needle



Zamia pumila
Arrowroot, coontie



Descriptions

Yucca aliofolia

Description

Growth region is North America US Lower 48, Puerto Rico and The Virgin Islands, specifically in the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina.

Leaves

sharp pointed straplike leaves each about 2' long. Young leaves near the growing tip stand erect; older ones are reflexed downward, and the oldest wither and turn brown, hanging around the lower trunk like an Hawaiian skirt.

Flowers

2' long spike of white, purplish-tinged flowers, each blossom about 4" across.

Fruit

oval, 1- 3", the fruit cover is dry or hard with a brown color

Verbesina virginica

This easy-to-grow *Verbesina* lends stately, dark green leaves and white, autumn flowers to the dappled shade found at the edges of woodlands, where it can form sizable colonies with its spreading rhizomes.

Description

Each stem has soft, fleshy green flanges running longitudinally down its length. When winter weather brings ice, the stems exude water that freezes into fascinating shapes, hence its common name Frostweed.

Leaves

All or mostly alternate, dark green.

Flowers

White, Aug-Nov.

Interesting Facts

The ice crystals formed on the stems of this and other plant species have been given many names, such as: ice ribbons, ice flowers, ice fringes, ice fingers, ice filaments, ice leaves, frost flowers, frost ribbons, frost beards, frost castles, and rabbit ice. Similar phenomena include the formation of ice crystals in loose soils, known variously as ice needles, frost column, kammeis (German), or pipkrake (Swedish), and the formation of ice crystals on dead, rotten tree branches, known in German as haareis and in English as hair ice, silk frost or cotton candy frost.

Zamia pumila

Leaves

Stiff, feathery fronds to 3 ft in length, with a dozen or more narrow, opposite, shiny, dark green leaflets.

Flowers

Since coontie is a cycad, the flowers are in the form of cones. The coontie has brown cones. On male plants cones are slender to 7 inches long; female plants- shorter, squatter cones.

Fruit

Female cones split open when ripe, exposing poisonous fleshy, orange-red, 1-inch seeds.

Trunk

A tuber-like structure, located underground.

Interesting Facts

Coontie is a cold-tolerant cycad that was used by the Seminole Indians for making bread once the poison was removed. Coontie is also a primary food source for an endangered butterfly.

Yucca filamentosa

Description

Adam's needle is a native, evergreen, perennial shrub that looks a little like a small palm, but is actually more closely related to the lilies.

Leaves

Grayish-green leaves appear from a rosette at or near the ground; stiff and sword-shaped (about 1 inch wide and up to 2-3 ft long) with sharp, pointed tips and long, curly, filamentous threads at the margins.

Flowers

Bell-shaped flowers (about 2 inches long) are a creamy white to pale yellow or green with broadly ovate petals; appears in late spring and summer and hangs loosely in clusters from a large, central spike emerging from the rosette up to 12 ft high (taller in warm climates, shorter where winters are cold). The plant dies after flowering and fruiting, but produces lateral buds that start new plants around the edges of the original.

Fruit

Capsules that contain 120 to 150 small black seeds that are dispersed by wind.

Interesting Facts

The leaves of *Yucca filamentosa* contain the strongest fibers native to North America.

Pictures

Zanthoxylum clava-herculis
Hercules-club



Zanthoxylum fagara
Wild-lime



Casuarina equisetifolia
Australian Pine



Schinus terebinthifolius
Brazilian Pepper



Descriptions

Zanthoxylum fagara

Description

Small to medium tree or large shrub with a cylindrical crown from many small, irregularly-shaped branches. Trunks generally short, to about 10 inches in diameter. The branches bear many sharp, hooked spines. Bark gray, rough. Typically 10-20 ft in height to 26 ft in South Florida and as broad as tall or broader.

Leaves

Compound, about 3-4 inches long. When crushed, the leaves have a lime-like aroma.

Flowers

Greenish-yellow and fragrant but inconspicuous. The plant is dioecious, with male and female flowers on separate plants. Flowers all year; peak winter-summer.

Fruit

Orange-brown glandular punctate follicles open to reveal small, shiny, black seeds.

Interesting Facts

The wood is much desired for making furniture. The plant also provides significant food and moderate amounts of cover for wildlife. Is a larval host plant for giant swallowtail (*Papilio cresphontes*) butterflies.

Zanthoxylum clava-herculis

Description

Small to medium tree or large shrub with a rounded, spreading crown; is found in hammocks and coastal thickets. Trunks short to 18 inches in diameter, but usually much less. Bark light gray, roughened by numerous cone-like warts bearing long, sharp brown spines. Typically 10-20 ft in height in South Florida to 65 ft in Florida. Often as broad as tall.

Leaves

Temperate deciduous, compound, aromatic, shiny green above, to about 8 inches in length.

Flowers

Greenish-yellow and inconspicuous. Flowers unisexual. Blooms spring-summer.

Fruit

Small subglobose glandular-punctate follicles.

Interesting Facts

The common and Latin species names both refer to the spiny branches. The bitter aromatic bark is a home remedy for toothache; chewing bark or foliage numbs the pain. Is a larval host plant for giant swallowtail (*Papilio cresphontes*) butterflies.

Schinus terebinthifolius

Description

Brazilian Pepper is a sprawling shrub, it can reach a height of 7–10 m. The branches can be upright, reclining, or nearly vine-like, all on the same plant.

Leaves

The leaves are alternate, 10–22 cm long, pinnately compound with (3-) 5-15 leaflets; the leaflets are roughly oval (lanceolate to elliptical), 3–6 cm long and 2-3.5 cm broad, and have finely toothed margins, an acute to rounded apex and yellowish veins. The leaf rachis between the leaflets is usually (but not invariably) slightly winged.

Flowers

small white flowers borne profusely in axillary clusters.

Fruit

The fruit is a small red spherical drupe 4–5 mm diameter, carried in dense clusters of hundreds of berries.

Casuarina equisetifolia

Also known as Australian-oak, Horsetail Tree, and Beach She-oak.

Description

Introduced into the United States in the late 1800's .it is an invasive exotic plant. The tree itself is pine-like, with shaggy open crowns. The bark of the Australian Pine is dark brown to light gray, furrowed into thin strips. It can achieve a height of 100'.

Leaves

tiny, scale-like, whorled on jointed, quill-like twigs.

Flowers

Male and female flowers are present on the same plant and are inconspicuous. Male flowers occur in terminal spikes, while the female flowers are in small, axillary clusters.

Fruit

3/4" yellowish-brown, woody balls.