



Lake Beautyberry

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

MAY 2026 NEWSLETTER

SOLD OUT!!!

What happened? All plants sold out in 15 minutes at the Lake Beautyberry Chapter Plant Sale April 11 at WT Bland Library. Was it the very cold weather where many tropical landscape plants were killed and people decided to go native? Or, it's Spring and time to plant anyway?

Thank you to all attendees and to all the volunteers who made the event possible.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Christopher Ball, Mount Dora
Lamar Fife, Tavares
Chad Hill, Mount Dora
Cathy Lewis, Leesburg



MOUNT DORA ARBOR DAY

With the mayor of Mt. Dora reading the 1st National Arbor Day Proclamation to some 400 attendees at the 10 am opening celebration event, the tree fever was at a high pitch. This first Mt. Dora Arbor Day event was sponsored by the City's Urban Forestry Department and the Mt. Dora Friends of the Environment. 425 trees were given away in a very short period of time, with 480 crepe myrtle seedlings.

This event was on Saturday, April 25th, 10 am-3 pm at Sunset Park, downtown Mt. Dora.

Our chapter was represented by Delphine Salai, Tina Mertz, and Neta Villalobos-Bell. The interest in native plants continues to grow! We spoke with many people who already had native plants in their yards.

The final attendee count was around 750 humans, 10,000 bees, 20 members of the Round Lake Drum line and 11 members of the Mt. Dora Bagpipers brigade.



UPCOMING EVENTS



FLORIDA'S BUTTERFLIES

Saturday, May 2, 2026

W.T. Bland Library, 1995 N Donnelly St, Mt Dora, FL

- A Butterfly Release at 10:35am in Nunan Butterfly Garden at the Library.
- Dr. Marc Minno, Butterfly Expert, will present an adult program about Florida's Fascinating Butterflies at 11am.



UPCOMING EVENTS

SHARE YOUR YARD EXPERIENCES

Sunday, May 17, 2026, 1:30pm

W.T. Bland Library, 1995 N Donnelly St, Mt Dora, FL



This is our traditional Spring program where there is member presentations and audience participation. We learn and grow together by sharing our experiences.

Free and open to the public.

ANNUAL NATIVE GARDEN TOUR

June 6, 2026, Saturday, 7:30am – 12:30pm @The Villages



During this self-guided driving Native Garden Tour you will see how using Florida Native Plants enhance gardens, lower water usage, and support local wildlife, especially birds, butterflies and other pollinators. The tour is open to members of The Florida Native Plant Society. More details to follow, so check the Villages Chapter website for more details later: thevillages.fnpschapters.org

Click here for the [Villages Garden Tour](#) 5 years ago or scan QR Code:



ATTRACT MORE BIRDS TO YOUR YARD



Holly berries

Original Publication 2020: Seminole Audubon Newsletter and Friends of Wekiva River Newsletter.

*The following is the first in a series of 5 articles that will enhance your garden as bird habitat. **Series 1:** Fruit, **Series 2:** Seeds, **Series 3:** Nuts, **Series 4:** Insects, **Series 5:** Shelter and Nests*

Best Florida Native Plants for Birds

Series 1 of 5 = Food: Fruit

In this series of articles to create an inviting habitat using suggested Florida native plants to attract birds, we'll cover their habitat needs, that is, food, shelter and nesting. For resident birds, it's more than just providing a buffet to stop by and fly away. Hopefully, they will want to stay to reproduce. For migrants, providing a safe stopover to refresh and feed is increasingly important considering we are still losing ground to development in Florida. The plant choices you make are important for the survival of our bird populations.

No one component, or food type will function fully as a habitat, all components from different food types, shelter, nesting, and diversity will ensure more success.

Birds, of course, like people, consume a variety of food at different stages of development and in their lifetime, such as fruit, seeds, nuts, insects, and more.

Here, **Series 1** suggests just a few of the many Florida native plants available that produce fruit. Choosing the plant best suited for a yard depends on the plant culture and behavior that best match the yard conditions, such as, soil type, light, mature size, space, and more. Differing conditions can affect the growth and behaviors.

Lake Beautyberry Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

Our Mission is to Champion Florida's Native Plants and Their Habitats!

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HOLLY

Hollies are dioecious meaning they have separate male and female plants. Only the females produce the berries.

American Holly, *Ilex opaca*

Height: 30-50' Spread: 15-30' Soil: well-drained, slightly acid

Light: full sun to shade

Fruit: bright red, fall-winter Evergreen

Yaupon Holly: *Ilex vomitoria*

Height: 8-25' Spread: 5-15' Soil: tolerant in wide range Light: Shade to part sun

Fruit: bright red, fall-winter Evergreen

Dahoon Holly: *Ilex cassine*

Height: 20-40' Spread: 8-30' Soil: moist to wet Light: full sun to part shade

Fruit: reddish orange to bright red, winter Evergreen



HAWTHORN

Hawthorns are in the rose family producing apple-like fruit called haws or hips. They grow rather quickly and produce fruit around 7 years. Thorniness varies with and between species.

Summer Haw: *Crataegus flava*

Height: 3-20' Spread: 3-8' Soil: dry, well-drained Light: prefers sun

Fruit: red apple-like, summer Deciduous

Parsley Haw: *Crataegus marshallii*

Height: 10-20' Spread: 3-8' Soil: moist to wet Light: part shade

Fruit: bright red apple-like in fall Deciduous May sucker if roots disturbed



HACKBERRY

Hackberry is in the elm family characterized by rapid growth. There are four native species in Florida but only one is commercially available.

Sugarberry: *Celtis laevigata*

Height: 60-80' Spread: 30-50' Soil: best in moist but adapts

Light: part shade to full sun

Fruit: reddish orange to yellowish in fall Deciduous Forms root suckers to spread





Indigoberry

WAX MYRTLES

Three species are native to Florida but only one is commercially available. They can improve poor soils because their roots have nitrogen-fixing bacteria, much like legumes. They are dioecious meaning only the female plants bear fruit.

Southern Wax Myrtle: *Myrica cerifera*

Height: 4-20' Spread: 4-20' Soil: wet to dry

Light: full sun to part shade

Fruit: bluish green with waxy coating Evergreen

Can spread through root suckers



COFFEE FAMILY

The Rubiaceae family consist of terrestrial and predominantly woody plants and are important as understory plants. These plants are tolerant of a wide variety of environmental conditions (soil types, altitudes, community structures, etc.) and do not specialize in one specific habitat type; although, genera within the family often specialize.

White Indigoberry: *Randia aculeata*

Height: 3-10' Spread: 3-6' Soil: dry, well-drained Light: full sun to part shade

Fruit: whitish with dark purple to black pulp, year round Evergreen Often spiny

Dioecious

Resources for additional research on these plants:

- www.fnps.org
- www.plantrealflorida.org
- www.flawildflowers.org

- **Native Plant Landscaping for Florida Wildlife**, Craig N. Huegel
- **Forest Plants of the Southeast and Their Wildlife Uses**, James H. Miller & Karl V. Miller
- **A Gardener's Guide to Florida's Native Plants**, Rufino Osario
- **Florida's Best Native Landscape Plants**, Gil Nelson

Do you have books about native plants that you no longer read? Consider bringing to a members meeting for our book exchange, as well as native plant seedlings or seeds.



Delphine Salai

Author: Neta Villalobos-Bell.
Certified Advanced Florida Master Naturalist, Certified Horticulture Professional, Certified National Association Interpreter. Member of Florida Native Plant Society.