

Ornamentals

Training for 4-H Horticulture ID and
Judging Contest





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Allamanda

Allamanda spp.

- Allamanda is an evergreen, erect, vine-like shrub. Simple leaves are opposite or in whorls of three to four, elliptic to oblong in shape, and may be four to six inches long.
- They exude a white milky sap.
- The flower is funnel-shaped, with five united rounded petals, and up to five inches across.
- Bright yellow flowers are seen during warm seasons.



Dow Gardens , Dow Gardens, Bugwood.org



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Azalea

Rhododendron spp.

- An evergreen, dense shrub with many branches. Leaves are simple, entire, and elliptic in shape, and are arranged alternately on the stem; they are deep green and very pubescent.
- New growth has pubescent stems.
- Flowers appear in the spring, are funnelform and are borne on umbel-like clusters of many colors.



Bald Cypress

Taxodium distichum

- A large, deciduous gymnosperm tree, growing to 150 feet.
- Leafy branchlets have tiny, simple, flat leaves (needles) growing at right angles on either side of the twig. Leaves are bright green in spring and coppery brown in fall.
- Trunks are buttressed (flared) at the bottom. Bark is gray, coarse, and peels in strips. On wet sites bald cypress forms aboveground structures known as "knees."
- Form is pyramidal when young and irregular when mature.
- Cones are male or female, round to oval, green or brown, to 3 inches.



Beautyberry

Callicarpa americana

- Beautyberry is a deciduous, rounded, shrub that measures six to eight feet tall with many spreading branches.
- The leaves are ovate, simple, and opposite. They are usually three to seven inches long and one to three inches wide. Both leaf surfaces are covered with short hairs and the leaf margins are serrate.
- Clusters of inconspicuous white, pale pink, or lavender flowers appear in the spring.
- The fruit is a fleshy, round drupe about 1/8 inch wide and is purple to violet, or rarely white.
- The small fruits occur in dense clusters that surround the stem.



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Bougainvillea

Bougainvillea spp.

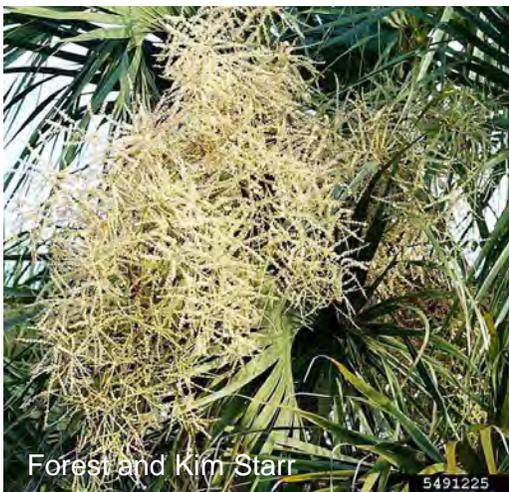
- A bougainvillea is a sprawling, evergreen, woody vine which can be trained as a shrub.
- Leaves are alternate, elliptic to ovate in shape, and two to four inches in length.
- Where the petiole attaches to the stem there is a sharp, slender thorn which is replaced by flowers in flowering branches.
- Flowers are white and inconspicuous.
- The showy portion consists of three colorful bracts. The bracts range from purple to white with intermediate shades of red, pink and orange.



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Cabbage Palm

Sabal palmetto

- A dense, erect, medium sized, single trunked palm with a tight rounded canopy.
- The leaves are green or gray green, with no spines or teeth on the petioles; they are fan-shaped, costapalmate, divided 1/3 of the way to the base, with long pointed, tapering segments which are split at the tips.
- Threads often present between the leaf segments. The trunks are often covered with old leaf bases called "boots."
- The flower spikes are white and showy. The fruit is a globose, brown-black shiny drupe no more than 1/2 inch around.



Camellia

Camellia spp.

- The camellia is a densely foliated evergreen shrub or small tree.
- The simple, dark green, leathery leaves have an alternate to whorled arrangement and finely serrate margins.
- Attractive, solitary or clustered flowers appear on the ends of branches and in leaf axils from fall to spring.
- Flowers possess from six to many petals and stamens.
- Flower form is very variable and colors include shades of red, pink, and white.



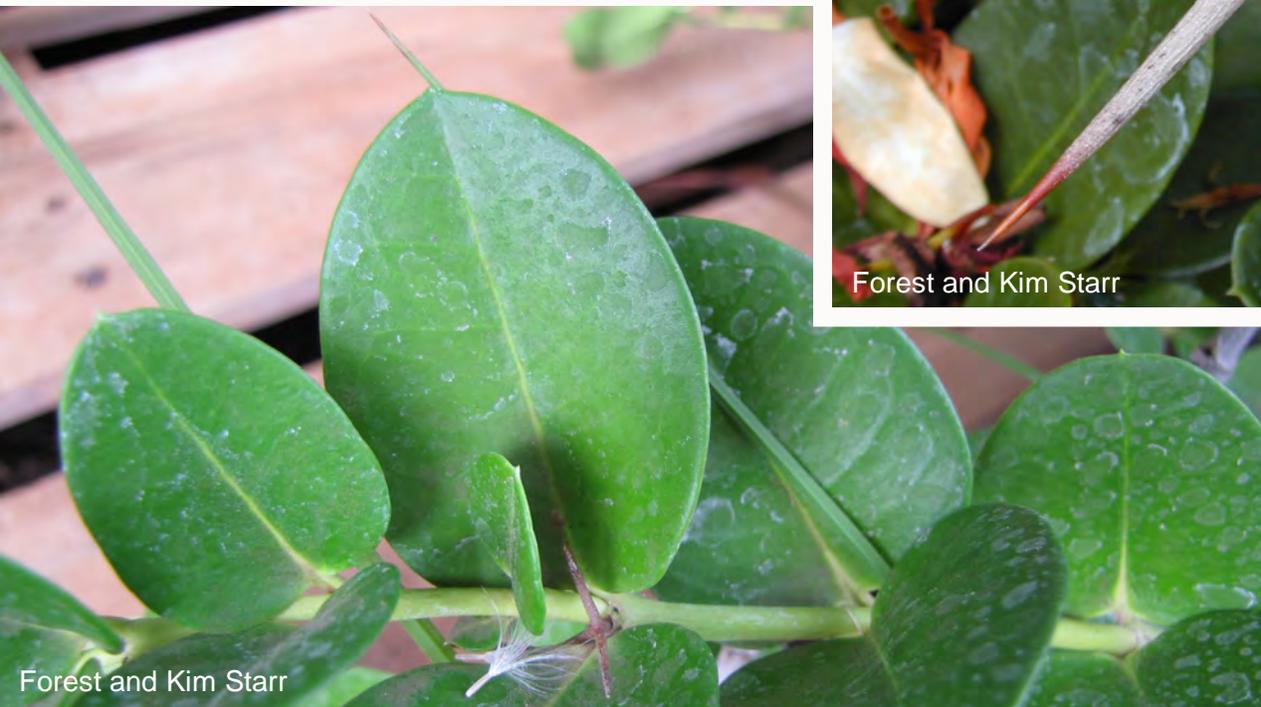
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Carissa, Natal Plum

Carissa macrocarpa

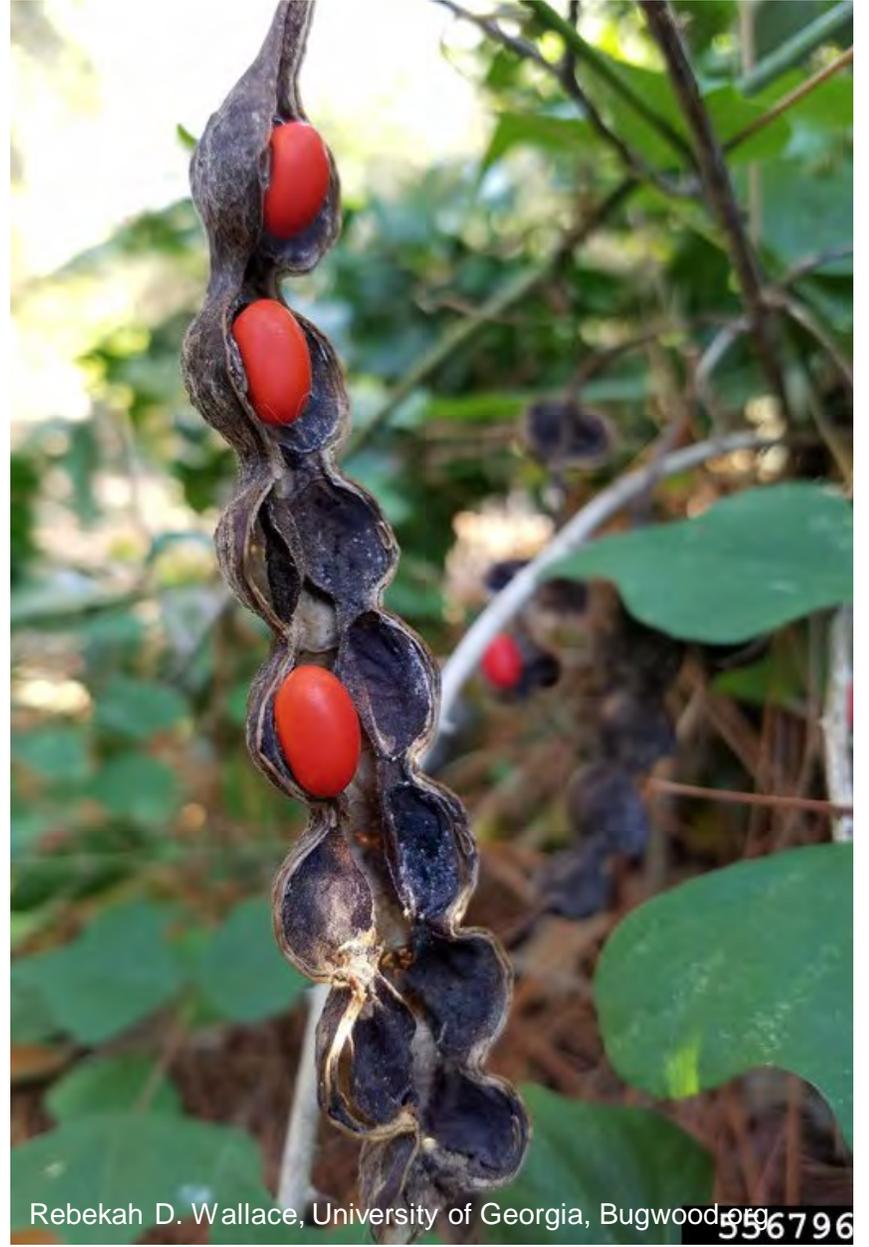
- Natal plum is a dense, broad evergreen shrub or small tree that can reach twenty feet tall but is typically shorter.
- The two to four inch, simple, opposite leaves are leathery in texture, dark green, and shiny. Leaves and stems have a milky sap.
- The stem has forked spines up to two inches long.
- The fragrant, white flowers are solitary, star-shaped to two inches across. Flowers occurs almost year-round, but primarily during the warmer months.
- The fruit of the Natal plum is an edible berry which is oval, red to purple, and up to two inches long.



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Cherokee Bean, Coral Bean

Erythrina herbacea

- Cherokee bean is a semi-deciduous shrub that attains a height of five to ten feet.
- The Cherokee bean has compound (trifoliate) leaves that are alternate, light to medium green in color, and four to eight inches long.
- The leaflets are spade-shaped.
- Scarlet, tubular flowers are produced from April to June.
- The fruits of the Cherokee bean are drooping pods that split in the fall to reveal the beautiful but poisonous, scarlet seeds.



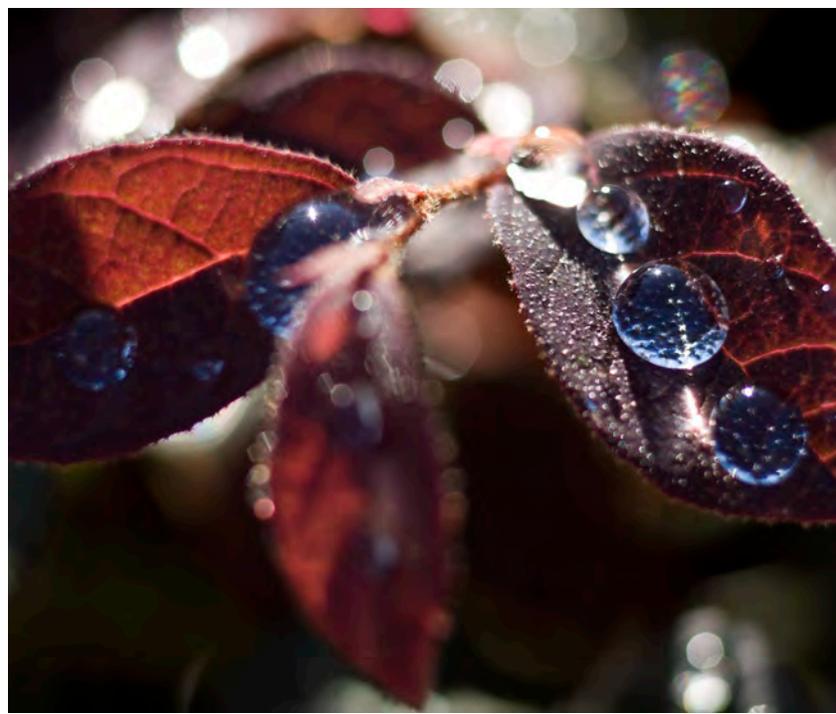
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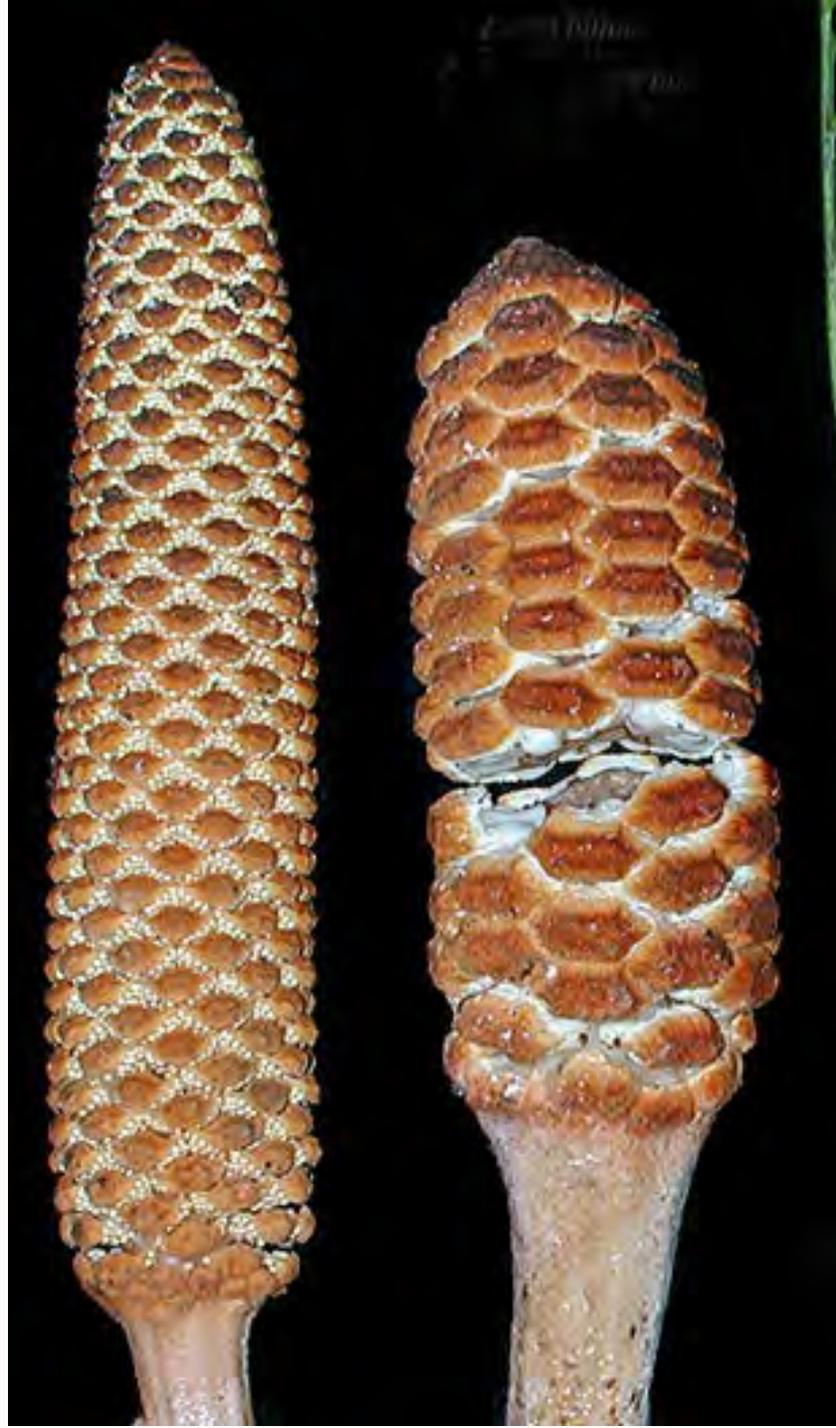
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Chinese Fringe Bush

Loropetalum chinensis

- A medium to large shrub growing to 5 to 10 feet.
- Branches may be tiered, upright, drooping, or vase shaped.
- Leaves less than two inches, pubescent, alternately arranged, with serrated margins, ovate form that is uneven at the base, and pinnate veins.
- Flowers in clusters of four or eight are held at the end of branches. Each flower has four petals that are narrow, linear, and twisted or curved.
- One form has green leaves with spring blooming white flowers; while others have purplish to red leaves and pink to reddish flowers, blooming heaviest in spring with lighter blooms throughout the summer.



Coontie

Zamia integrifolia

- Low growing, evergreen, gymnosperm, usually lacking a trunk and with dense foliage in mound-like clumps.
- Palm-like leaves are pinnately compound, with leaflets dark green, leathery, linear lanceolate to 6 inches long, with margins entire to finely toothed near the tips and sometimes revolute.
- Separate pollen and seed cones borne on short stalks at the base of the plant.



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Coral Honeysuckle

Lonicera sempervirens

- Vigorous twining, spreading vine. Current year stem growth is reddish.
- Dark green, smooth leaves, opposite, entire, ovate, with pinnate veins.
- The upper leaves just below the flower cluster are fused together.
- Tapered trumpet-shaped blooms up to two inches in red, scarlet, coral, or yellow.



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Crapemyrtle

Lagerstroemia indica

- This freely branching, erect, deciduous shrub or small tree has simple, entire leaves, which are subopposite in arrangement, and oblong-elliptic to rounded in shape.
- The new growth is pubescent underneath and has square pinkish stems.
- The flowers are borne in terminal and axillary panicles. They have fringed petals up to 3/4 inch long. Flower colors are white, pink, red or purple.
- The fruits are brown, globular capsules up to 1/2-inch.



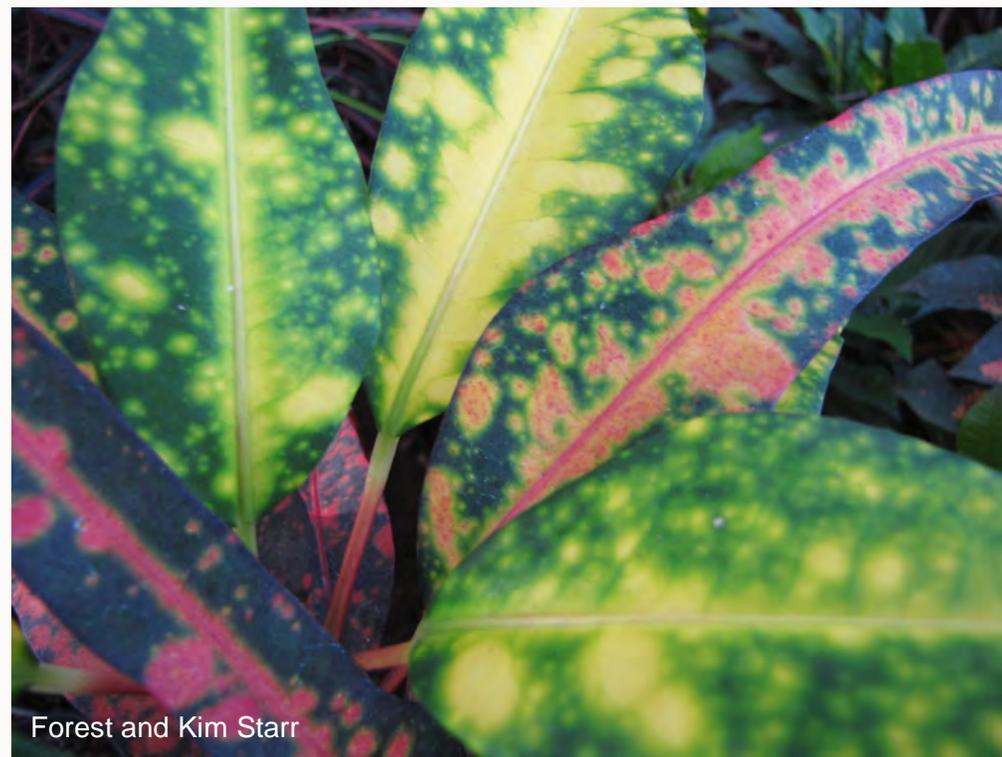
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Croton

Codiaeum variegatum

- The croton is an evergreen, tropical shrub that are unbranched or irregularly branched
- Stems and leaves contain a clear to milky sap that stains and is poisonous
- Simple leaves alternately arranged, smooth and leathery, variable in shape, entire to deeply lobed, and often clustered at the ends of branches.
- Leaf color and pattern varies widely in combinations of green, red, yellow, orange and/or pink.



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Dogwood

Cornus florida

- Dogwood is a small deciduous tree that grows from 20 to 30 feet high and wide.
- The simple leaves are entire, opposite, and up to six inches long. The leaf surface is crinkled and has veins that are markedly curved. Fall leaf color is red.
- The flowers are small dense heads surrounded by four white bracts.
- The fruits are round to oval, red, showy drupes less than 1/2 inch long, which are borne in clusters of two to six.



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Bill Cook, Michigan State University, Bugwood.org

Elm

Ulmus spp.

- Elm trees can vary greatly in stature and leaf size depending on the species.
- The simple leaves, lopsided at the base, have crenate margins and are alternately arranged, leathery, shiny, dark green, and elliptic to ovate in shape.
- In the spring, small green inconspicuous flowers are produced that are followed by green, wafer-like seedpods.
- Bark varies by variety, but several are interesting in appearance (such as lacebark elm and winged elm) and can distinguish the elm from other trees.

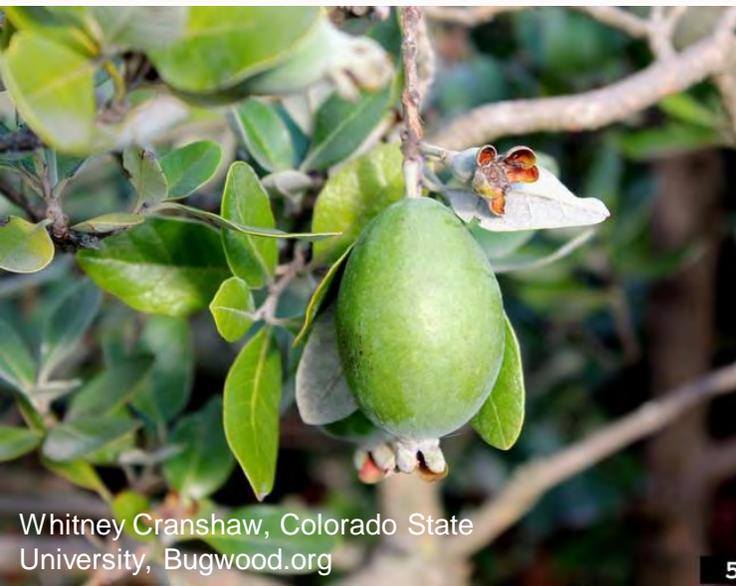


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Feijoa, Pineapple Guava

Acca sellowiana

- Pineapple guava is a densely foliated, evergreen shrub or small tree which grows 10 to 15 high and wide.
- The simple, rather leathery leaves are arranged oppositely on the stems. They are elliptic to oblong in shape, two to four inches long, dark green above, and gray pubescent below.
- Flowers have four to six fleshy, edible, white to pale pink petals, with many protruding red stamens.
- The edible fruits are round or egg-shaped, one to three inches long with waxy blue-green or gray-green skin around a juicy greenish-white pulp.



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Glossy Abelia

Abelia x grandiflora

- This evergreen to partly deciduous, erect shrub has many spreading branches. It can grow six to eight feet high and wide.
- Up to two inches long, simple leaves are arranged oppositely or whorled on the stem. They are ovate, glossy, and have coarsely serrated margins.
- Small, white to pink-tinged flowers are funnel-shaped. Flowering is in the spring and summer.



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Hibiscus

Hibiscus rosa-sinensis

- Hibiscus is an upright evergreen tropical shrub with few to many branches. It is densely foliated, and reaches a height of five to twelve feet.
- The leaves are alternately arranged, simple, glossy green, and four to eight inches long.
- Leaf shape is ovate with finely serrated margins, borne on long petioles that are sometimes reddish in color
- The solitary flowers come in many colors. They have a bell-shaped calyx, five to many petals, and a long, conspicuous column of stamens.



Holly

Ilex spp.

- Hollies are evergreen and vary in size from shrubs to small trees, depending on the species.
- Leaves are generally spiny or serrated and shiny.
- Clusters of red berries appear in the fall and winter.



Hydrangea

Hydrangea spp.

- Hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), sometimes called French hydrangea, is a large shrub with beautiful masses of color. They fill gardens with their ovate, serrated leaves and incredible blooms during the warm months.
- The two kinds of hydrangeas offer different looks to a garden. "Mop heads" have big round, dense balls of showy flowers that add a bold statement, whereas "lace caps" are more subtle and elegant.
- There is also *Hydrangea paniculata*, which has smaller leaves.
- The native oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*), has deeply lobed leaves resembling large oak leaves. It's an excellent shrub for shady areas, with cone-shaped white flowers that aren't quite as showy and dense as "mop heads."



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Indian Hawthorn

Raphiolepis spp.

- A dense, rounded, medium textured, evergreen shrub. This shrub is a slow grower and it will take many years for it to reach a mature height of 5 feet.
- Leaves are simple, alternate, clustered at twig tips, oblong and leathery, with serrate margins.
- Flowers are white or pinkish, 5/8 inch across, and are borne on loose terminal panicles in the spring.
- Fruit are purplish-black pome about 3/8 inch long.



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Ixora

Ixora spp.

- Ixora is an upright, erect, much branched tropical evergreen shrub which can grow 10 to 15 feet in height, but is usually smaller.
- The simple, opposite, leaves are oblong or obovate, and up to four inches long.
- They are leathery and pliable with short petioles.
- Flowers are borne on dense, terminal flat-topped cymes and they have four (rarely five) petals which may be colored red, pink, or yellow.



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Juniper

Juniperus spp.

- Junipers can be either evergreen shrubs or trees.
- Shrubs are well-branched, low growing, and coniferous. It grows horizontally to 1-2 feet tall and is used as a ground cover. The stems are reddish-brown. Foliage is densely arranged on the stems, prickly, and may be green, bluegreen, or yellowish green in color. The leaves, which grow in whorls of three, are about half an inch long, linear, flattened and have a sharp pointed tip. The berry-like seed cones are round, to ½ inch long, silvery or blue-black with a white, waxy surface.
- Trees are evergreen gymnosperms that produces two types of leaves: juvenile leaves which are short, needle-like and prickly (awl-like) and adult leaves that are dark green and flattened (scale-like). The bark of this large-growing tree (up to 40 feet) is reddish to gray-brown and peeling. Plants are dioecious, with pollen cones and seed cones borne on separate plants. The pollen cones are brown, papery, to 1/8 inch long, and borne at the branch tips. The berry-like seed cones are blue to purple with a white bloom, to ¼ inch long, globose to ovoid, fleshy, with 1-3 seeds.



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Ligustrum, Japanese Privet

Ligustrum spp.

- An upright, low branching, evergreen shrub or small tree.
- Simple, entire leaves are opposite and ovate to elliptic in shape: they are dark green, leathery and glossy.
- Branches have raised lenticels.
- Fragrant flowers are borne on terminal panicles and are white, with four petals united at the base.
- The fruit is an oval, blue-black, berry-like drupe.



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Liriope

Liriope muscari

- A stemless, perennial evergreen ground cover which forms dense, grass-like clumps.
- Leaves are linear, dark green with parallel veins, 8-10 inches long and 3/4 inch wide.
- Purple flowers are small and dense, borne in clusters on racemes which are usually taller than the leaves.
- Fruits are black, small, round, berry-like.



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Live Oak

Quercus virginiana

- This large oak is an evergreen tree with a spread greater than its height.
- Branches are drooping and low.
- Simple, entire leaves are spirally arranged, and are elliptic to ovate-shaped with revolute margins. The underside is whitish-grey.
- Bark is gray to reddish brown, scaly, and vertically furrowed.
- Flowers are yellow-green catkins, blooming in spring.
- Fruits are acorns to 1 inch long, sometimes in pairs or trios, with a goblet-shaped cup enclosing the top quarter to half.



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Mondo Grass

Ophiopogon japonicus

- A clumping, perennial, evergreen herb that forms dense, fine-textured grass-like mats.
- Leaves are dark green, linear, to 15 inches long and 1/8 inch wide.
- They occur in tufts, and curve toward the ground.
- The small, nodding, lilac or white flowers, are borne on spike-like, loose racemes that may be shorter or longer than the leaves.



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Muhly Grass

Muhlenbergia capillaris

- Clumping upright grass growing 3 to 4 feet tall
- Fine textured leaves (blades) are simple, linear and green in color.
- Veins are parallel.
- Delicate, pink to purple flowers appear in a mass from late summer through early winter. A white form is also available.



Patti Anderson, Identifying Commonly Cultivated Palms, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org



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Needle Palm

Rhapidophyllum hystrix

- This handsome native palm grows slowly to a height of 5 feet.
- It has a rounded, clumping form.
- The fronds are palmate with long narrow leaf segments and silvery white undersides.
- The palm may be trunkless, or short-trunked, with brown matting and black 6-8 inch needlelike spines.
- Fruits are round, brown, and hairy.



Juan Campá, MGAP,
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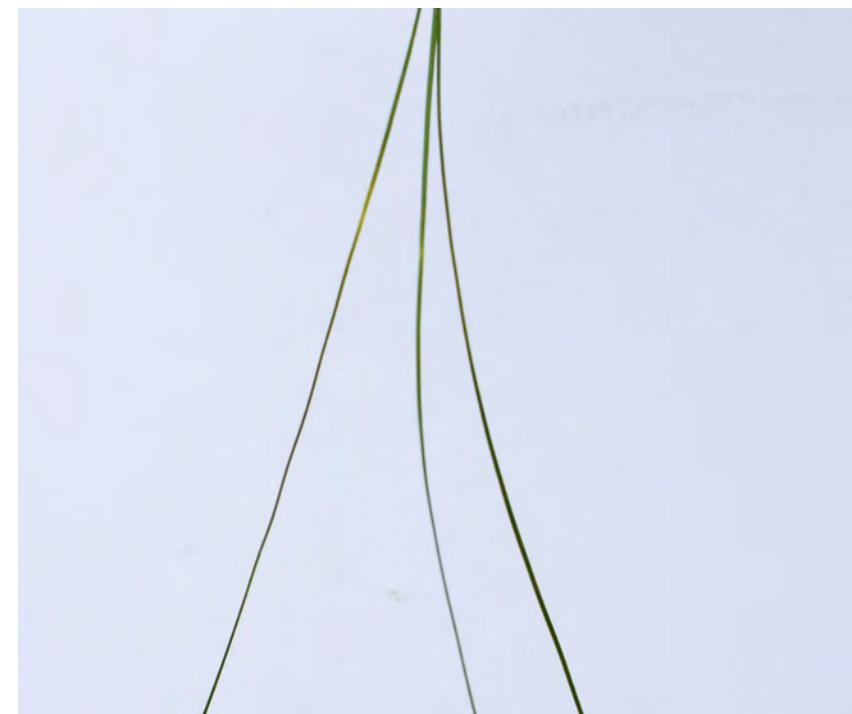
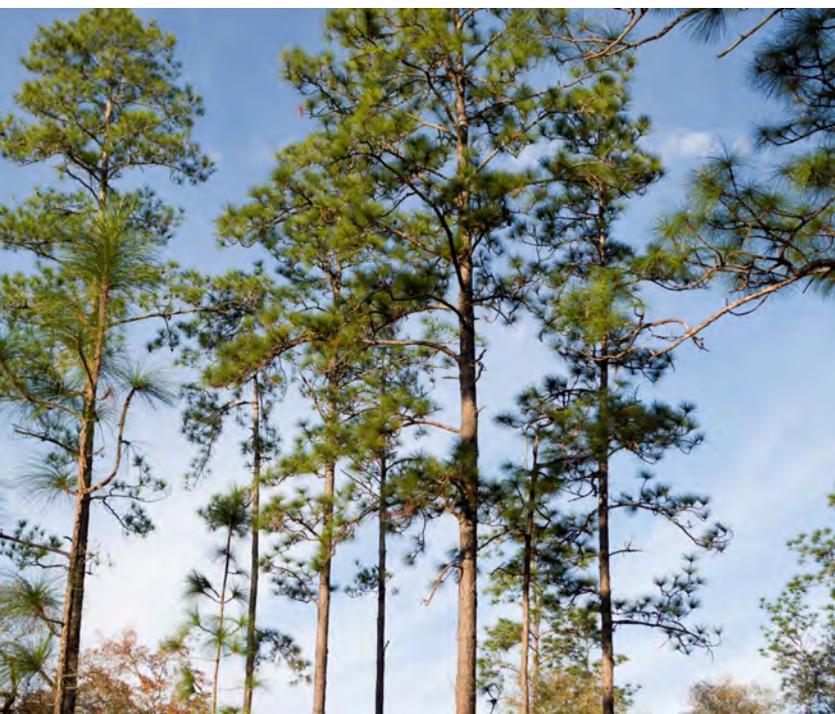
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Pindo Palm, Jelly Palm

Butia capitata

- The Pindo Palm is single-trunked and erect.
- The blue-gray fronds are odd-pinnately compound, eight to ten feet long, and strongly curved toward the trunk.
- The petioles have spines which point towards the leaf tip.
- Numerous, very small creamy yellow to reddish flowers are borne on three to four foot inflorescences.
- The edible round to oval shaped fruits are yellow to orange colored, one inch drupes in clusters.



Pine

Pinus spp.

- Tall, resinous/aromatic, coniferous trees which are evergreen and monoecious.
- Leaves produced are of two kinds: scale-like, soon falling off the tree, or needle-shaped, long and borne in clusters of 2–5.
- The fruit is a male (pollen) or female (seed) cone. Pollen cones are herbaceous, smaller, clustered, and cylindrical to conical. Seed cones are woody, solitary or paired, and typically larger and broadly ovate.



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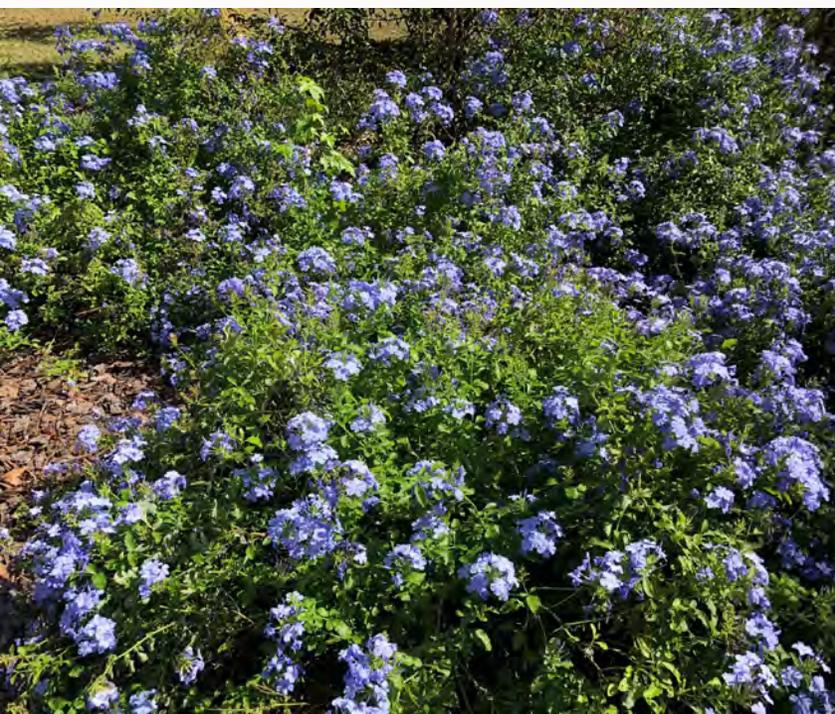
Pittosporum

Pittosporum tobira

- A freely branching, evergreen shrub or small tree.
- The obovate leaves are simple and entire, glossy dark green, with a leathery texture and revolute margins.
- Leaves are alternate and spirally arranged on the branches, often appearing clustered at the branch tips.
- The fragrant, ½ inch long white flowers, 5-petaled flowers turn pale yellow with age and are borne in umbels at the branch tips.
- The fruit is a tan to yellowish capsule to ½ inch long, opening to reveal seeds covered with a red fleshy skin.



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Plumbago

Plumbago auriculata

- Plumbago develops sprawling, mounded shapes.
- Foliage is bright green, of medium density, and remains evergreen in frost-free areas of the state. Leaves are alternate, simple, oblong, and less than two inches long.
- Stems are thin and somewhat vine-like, keeping its form delicate.
- Phlox-like blue or white flowers give off a pleasant fragrance.
- Inconspicuous fruits appear in the winter.



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Podocarpus

Podocarpus macrophyllus

- An upright, densely-foliaged evergreen, dioecious, coniferous shrub (often pruned as a hedge) or tree with a narrow columnar canopy.
- Simple leaves are linear, alternate, and spirally arranged, with entire margins.
- They are leathery in texture, glossy dark green above with a prominent midrib.
- Seeds are covered with a green to blue-ish protective skin (often with a white, waxy bloom) and are borne on a fleshy, red to purple receptacle.



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Red Maple

Acer rubrum

- The red maple is a low branching, deciduous tree with an open growth habit and oval canopy.
- Leaves are opposite with three to five lobes. They are unequally serrate, and three to six inches across. Petioles are pink-red and leaves turn red in fall.
- Red flowers appear on drooping racemes in the spring.
- The fruits are two-winged samaras, which occur in clusters on slender stalks, and ripen soon after the flowers fade.
- The samara wings are thin and about 3/4 inch in length.



Rob Routledge, Sault College, Bugwood.org



Chris Evans, University of Illinois, Bugwood.org



Redbud

Cercis canadensis

- The redbud is a deciduous, moderate to rapid growing tree, reaching a height of 20 to 30 feet. It has an irregular growth habit when young but forms a graceful vase-shape as it gets older.
- The cordate leaves are simple, alternate, and three to five inches long. The green leaves turn yellow in the fall.
- The half-inch long flowers appear in clusters along older stems in early spring before the leaves emerge. Flowers may be lavender, pink or purple.
- The fruit is a flattened, papery brown pod, one to three inches long.



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River Birch

Betula nigra

- River birch is a medium sized, deciduous tree that grows to 70 feet tall. About 15 to 20 feet above the ground, the tree tends to divide into large, arching branches, forming an irregularly spreading crown.
- The leaves are simple, alternate and diamond-shaped, about one to three inches long and one to two inches wide. The leaf margin is doubly serrate.
- The flowers are two-to-three-inch long reddish-green catkins that appear in the spring.
- The reddish-brown fruits are cone-like, 1 to 1 1/2 inches long, with many hairy scales, and contain many tiny, three-winged seeds. They ripen and break apart in the fall.
- River birch is distinguished by reddish, brown bark peeling off in film-like papery curls.



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Royal Poinciana

Delonix regia

- Royal poinciana is 30 to 40 feet tall, but its elegant wide-spreading, umbrella-like canopy can be wider than its height. In Florida it is a semi-evergreen tree.
- The alternate, bipinnately-compound leaves have a feathery appearance and are one to three feet long.
- The flowers have four scarlet or orange-red petals about three inches long; one upright slightly larger petal is marked with yellow and white.
- Fruits are dark brown pods up to two feet long and two inches wide.



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Sago Palm

Cycas revoluta

- Sago Palm is an slow growing, evergreen, coniferous palm-like plant which will eventually reach a mature height of 10 feet.
- Leaves are glossy green, pinnately-compound and three to four feet long. Leaflets are stiff and dark green.
- This plant is dioecious with a cylindrical pollen cone borne in the center of the male plant. The female seed cone, also borne at the center of the plant, is short and broad, consisting of fuzzy, feathery modified scale-like leaves.
- Tan seeds with a reddish-orange covering, up to two inches long are produced between these scale-like leaves.



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Sea Grape

Coccoloba uvifera

- The sea grape is an evergreen, dioecious tree or sprawling shrub with an irregularly branched trunk that can reach a height of 20 to 30 feet.
- The canopy is rounded and loosely spreading.
- Leaves are leathery, round, and large (up to 10 inches in diameter), with a reddish primary vein extending from the base, and a reddish brown, papery sheath (an ocrea) wrapping around the stem at the base of each leaf
- The inconspicuous ivory flowers are produced on footlong racemes.
- The edible, single seeded round fruits, which can be up to 3/4 inch in diameter, are borne in dense green grape-like clusters, ripening to a deep purple in late summer.



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Shumard Oak

Quercus shumardii

- A tall (growing to 80 feet or more), vigorous, deciduous tree with wide-spreading branches.
- Leaves are simple, alternate, to 8 inches long with 5 to 9 sharp pointed lobes.
- The leaves turn bright red in the fall.
- The nut or acorn is $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1 \frac{1}{4}$ inch long, ovoid, with a shallow cup enclosing $\frac{1}{4}$ of the acorn, solitary or in pairs.



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Southern Magnolia

Magnolia grandiflora

- Upright, large-trunked, evergreen tree with large (5-8 inches long), leathery leaves that are alternate, shiny, dark green above and light green or fuzzy brown below.
- The flowers are very large (8-10 inches wide), fragrant, with white, waxy petals. Flowering occurs in late Spring to Summer.
- Fruits are cone-like, 4-inch-long aggregates of many seeds that have a shiny red covering.



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Sweet Gum

Liquidambar styraciflua

- A deciduous tree with an upright growth habit. When young the canopy is pyramidal in shape, but it becomes rounded with age.
- Simple leaves are spirally arranged, palmately shaped with 5 or 7 lobes and may be up to 7 inches wide. The margins are finely serrate and leaves show some fall color. When crushed, they are resinous-aromatic.
- The twigs sometimes have corky, twisted wings.
- Fruits is a long stalked, woody, globose head of capsules, about 1 inch in diameter, each capsule with two sharp beaks at its opening, making the surface very prickly.



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Sycamore

Platanus occidentalis

- A large, many branched, deciduous tree, pyramidal when young but becoming globular with age.
- The bark is thin and peeling, mottled green, brown, tan, and white, with a camouflage-like appearance
- Simple, alternate leaves are shallowly 3-7 lobed, 4-8 inches wide and up to 12 inches long. Margins are coarsely toothed and petioles are long with enlarged bases.
- Flowers are inconspicuous.
- Fruits are globular heads of achenes, usually solitary, lacking spines, to 1 inch, and contain many tiny hairy winged seeds to ½ inch.



Thryallis, Golden Shower

Galphimia gracilis

- This evergreen, erect shrub can grow to about 8 feet but is usually pruned to a shorter size.
- The small, simple, opposite leaves are elliptic in shape and are lighter green beneath.
- There is a small gland (appearing as a bump or tooth) on each side of the base of the leaf.
- Yellow, 2/3 inch, star-shaped flowers are held on terminal 4-inch racemes.
- The petals are clawed (with a narrowed base) and are sometimes red at the base.



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Viburnum

Viburnum spp.

- Viburnum characteristics can vary by species.
- Walter's viburnum (*V. obovatum*) has fine, dense foliage that add texture to the landscape. It has small white flowers.
- Arrowwood viburnum (*V. dentatum*) is native to the southern United States. Unlike other viburnum species, it is deciduous and grows only as a shrub. It reaches 12 feet tall at its highest. Like Walter's viburnum it produces white flowers, but the fruits are a more vibrant blue.
- Sweet viburnum (*V. odoratissimum*) is native to Asia and grows as a large shrub or small tree. It has large, leathery, dark green leaves. The foliage is evergreen and small white flowers produce a fragrant scent in the spring. Red berries emerge in the fall and turn black as they ripen.



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Wax Myrtle, Southern Bayberry

Myrica cerifera

- A large, rounded evergreen shrub or small tree, with dense foliage that forms clumps.
- Leaves are lanceolate, arranged alternately on the stem and aromatic. They are thin, often coarsely serrated along the margins and have tiny glands (dots) on both sides.
- The trunk is crooked and covered with grayish-white bark.
- Flowers are inconspicuous.
- Fruits are grayish-blue drupes, borne in dense clusters. They have a waxy coating (that dries white), which can be used to make candles.



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16



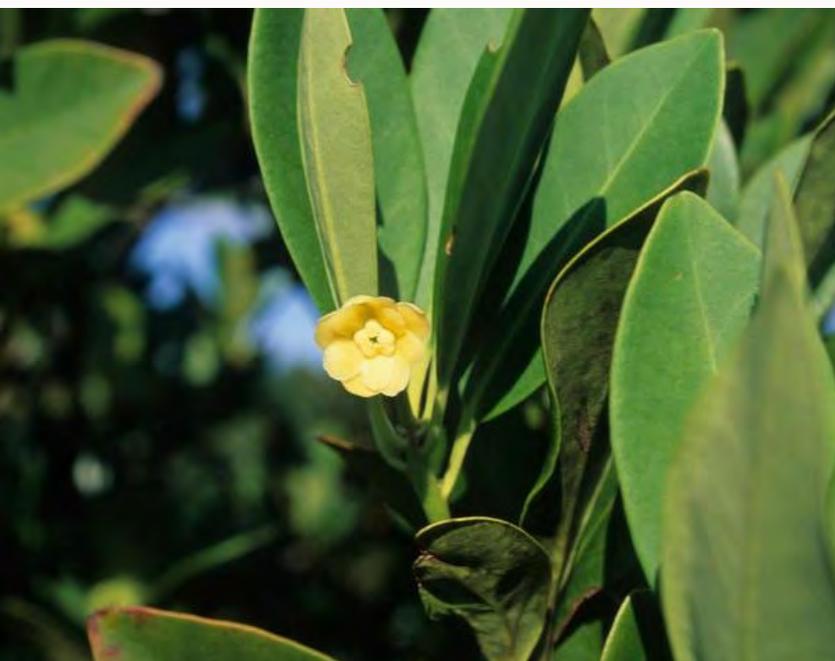
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160

Yellow Anise, Small-Flowered Anise

Illicium parviflorum

- Anise is an evergreen shrub or small tree which can grow to a height of 25 feet.
- The solid green leaves are two to four inches long, simple, spirally-arranged, and obovate to elliptic in shape.
- Crushed leaves have a licorice aroma.
- Flowers are inconspicuous and fruit is a star shaped many-seeded pod about 3/4 inch in diameter.



Yucca

Yucca spp.

- Yucca produces clusters of white flowers are held above green or variegated strap-shaped leaves.
- Leaves are alternate, simple, entire, evergreen, and lanceolate.
- They come in many sizes and often have sharply pointed leaves.