The Journey to Sustainability Begins with Education
Edible Landscaping for People & Wildlife

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What is Edible Landscaping?

The thoughtful arrangement of edible plants in the landscape into a unified, functional biological whole to maximize their aesthetic appeal and food production.

Treating Edibles as Ornamentals
What is Edible Landscaping?

- Edible landscaping doesn’t have to be all edible. In fact, filling the yard with edibles would often produce too much food for most families, not to mention time and work.

- Instead, careful planning and the judicious use of fruits, herbs, vegetables and ornamentals results in a yard that is flavorful, practical, visually pleasing.

http://www.rosalindcreasy.com/edible-landscaping-basics/
Why Do Edible Landscaping?

Best of both worlds – edible & ornamental
Inter-planting reduces pests
New textures, forms, colors
Grow what you like best
Fun for kids
Responsible water use
Great conversation piece
Edible Landscaping Techniques

Edible Substitutions

Instead of a Shade Tree...

Plant a Fruit Tree
Edible Landscaping Techniques

Edible Substitutions

Instead of an Ornamental Shrub...

Plant a Fruiting Shrub
Edible Landscaping Techniques

Bountiful Vines

- Grape
- Hardy Kiwi
- Passion Flower
- Scarlet Runner Bean
- Malabar spinach
- Dragon Fruit
Edible Landscaping Techniques

Great Groundcovers

Thyme
Oregano
Perennial Peanut
Strawberries
Chives
Sage
Process of Edible Landscaping

Any Landscape Can Become an Edible Landscape

• Choose for appropriate size
• Plant what you like to eat
• Choose for desired maintenance level
• Select appropriate varieties of edibles
"outdoor rooms" are created by taking advantage of sweeping curves and border plantings of flowering shrubs and trees.
Edible Landscape
Homestead Level Example

http://stlucie.ifas.ufl.edu/UrbanGardenSeries.html
Backyard Landscaping for Wildlife

© Larry Kornack
© Travis Blunden
© Sharon Rtaaco
Florida Biodiversity Background

• Native Ecosystems
  – 69 Identified Statewide
  – 6 Categories
    • Interior vs Coastal
    • Uplands vs wetlands vs waters
• Native Animal Species
  – 700 land vertebrates
  – 1,000 fish
  – 30,000 land invertebrates
• Native Plant Species
  – 4,000 flowering plants
  – 3rd largest plant diversity of any state
Florida’s Imperiled Biodiversity

Planting of FL native plants is public support of biodiversity conservation efforts.
Florida’s Imperiled Biodiversity

Factors Causing Threats to Biodiversity

• Loss of Natural Ecosystems due to
  – Urban Development
  – Agriculture
  – Exotic Species
  – Functional Constraints
    (eg., fire exclusion)

• Environment Degradation
  – Climate Change
  – Pollution
Residential Areas & Biodiversity Protection

- Over 77% of people in North America live in urban and suburban areas.
- Urban impacts on Natural Resources include:
  - Energy
  - Water
  - Natural habitat

- **Backyard Landscaping for Wildlife** - an individual & community opportunity
Backyard Landscaping for Wildlife 101

✓ Provide habitat for a community of biodiversity

✓ All animals need:
  – Food
  – Cover
  – Water
  – Space

Habitat
Plant and structure diversity, both vertical and horizontal, provides cover, food and space.
Design Process for Backyard Landscaping for Wildlife

➢ Get to Know Your Property
  • Observation
    – Shady areas; Wet areas
    – Functional & high traffic areas
    – Existing plants (native or exotic)
    – Topography and soils

➢ Create a Diagram of Future Landscape
  • Draw shapes of planting areas
  • Allow natural spacing & arrangements of plants
  • Add non-plant elements
Example Diagram
FL Edible Native Plants:
Use For Edible and Wildlife Landscaping

Elderberry

Red Mulberry

Plum Flatwoods

American Persimmon

http://www.sharonsflorida.com/floridas-wild-edibles.htm
How to Find Native Edibles of Florida

- Pick up local plant guidebooks
- Learn your native plants by visiting natural habitats in environmental preserves, parks & forests
- Learn areas of occurrence of wild food plants in natural habitats
  - dominant habitat vs ecotones (transition areas)
  - open vs closed canopy
Resources on FL Native Edibles

➢ UF/IFAS EDIS Documents:
  • 50 Common Native Plants Important In Florida's Ethnobotanical History – see [http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw152](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw152)
  • Using Native Plants – see [http://livinggreen.ifas.ufl.edu/landscaping/using_native_plants.html](http://livinggreen.ifas.ufl.edu/landscaping/using_native_plants.html)

➢ Books:
  • ‘FL’s Incredible Edibles’ by R. Deuerling & P.s. Lantz. 2000
Resources on FL Native Edibles

Websites:
• Edible Plants of FL - http://www.wildfloridian.com/EdiblePlants.html
• Wild Floridian – http://www.wildfloridian.com/EdiblePlants.html
• FL’s Wild Edibles - http://www.sharonsflorida.com/floridas-wild-edibles.htm

Youtube Videos:
• Foraging for fruit in Tampa, FL - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7tgRV3Om7o

Group Activities:
• Wild Food Foraging Meetup in West Palm Beach, FL - http://www.meetup.com/WILD-FOOD-FORAGING/
• Edible Plant Project: workshops - http://edibleplantproject.org/
• FL Native Plant Society: talks & conferences - http://www.fnps.org/
• Andy Firk’s ‘FL Useful Plants’ Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/Florida-Useful-Plants-Andy-Firk-228427313873845/
### Sampling of Wild Edibles of Florida: Salad Plants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Name</th>
<th>Edible Parts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amaranthus spp. (Amaranth)</td>
<td>leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bidens alba (Spanish needle)</td>
<td>flower petals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cercis canadensis (Redbud)</td>
<td>flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commelina spp. (Dayflower)</td>
<td>leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydrocotyle umbellata (Dollarweed)</td>
<td>leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lepidium virginicum (Peppergrass)</td>
<td>leaves &amp; seed pods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micromeria officinale (Micromeria)</td>
<td>leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchella repens (Partridge berry)</td>
<td>berries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pteridium aquilinum (Bracken fern)</td>
<td>fiddlehead under 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhexia virginica (Meadow beauty)</td>
<td>leaves &amp; flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scirpus validus (Bullrush)</td>
<td>young shoots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smilax spp. (Catbrier)</td>
<td>tender new shoots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stachys floridana (Florida betony)</td>
<td>tubers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stellaria media (Chickweed)</td>
<td>leaves &amp; stems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typha spp. (Cattail)</td>
<td>young shoots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viola spp (Violet)</td>
<td>leaves &amp; flowers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[http://www.wildfloridian.com/EdiblePlants.html](http://www.wildfloridian.com/EdiblePlants.html)
## Sampling of Wild Edibles of Florida: Potherbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Edible Parts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amaranthus spp. (Amaranth)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bidens alba (Spanish needles)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chenopodium album (Lamb's quarters)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydrocotyle umbellata (Dollarweed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phytolacca americana (Pokeweed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[plants under 8&quot;]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontederia cordata (Pickerelweed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portulaca oleracea (Purslane)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pteridium aquinum (Bracken fern)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[fiddlehead under 6&quot;]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumex acetosella (Sheep sorrel)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumex crispus (Curly dock)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smilax spp. (Catbrier)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[tender shoots]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stellaria media (Chickweed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[leaves &amp; stems]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradescantia ohiensis (Spiderwort)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typha spp. (Cattail)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young shoots]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viola spp (Violet)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[leaves &amp; flowers]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngia japonica (Hawk's beard)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[young leaves]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Sampling of Wild Edibles of Florida: Beverages and Teas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant</th>
<th>Parts Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Diospyros virginiana</em> (Persimmon)</td>
<td>[dried leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Monarda punctata</em> (Horsemint)</td>
<td>[leaves &amp; flowers]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Passiflora incarnata</em> (Passion flower)</td>
<td>[fruit]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pinus spp.</em> (Pine)</td>
<td>[young needles]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Rhus copallina</em> (Sumac)</td>
<td>[fruit]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Rosa spp.</em> (Wild Rose)</td>
<td>[rosehips]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Rubus spp.</em> (Blackberry)</td>
<td>[dried young leaves]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sambucus canadensis</em> (Elderberry)</td>
<td>[dried blossoms]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sassafras albidum</em> (Sassafras)</td>
<td>[bark &amp; roots]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Viola spp.</em> (Violet)</td>
<td>[dried young leaves]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Sampling of Wild Edibles of Florida: Jellies

*Callicarpa americana* (Beautyberry) [berries]
*Diospyros virginiana* (Persimmon) [fruit]
*Gaylussacia spp.* (Huckleberry) [berries]
*Morus rubra* (Mulberry) [fruit]
*Opuntia spp.* (Prickly pear cactus) [fruit]
*Passiflora incarnata* (Passion flower) [fruit]
*Prunus spp.* (Wild plums & cherries) [fruit]
*Rhus copallina* (Sumac) [fruit]
*Sambucus canadensis* (Elderberry) [berries]
*Vaccinium spp.* (Blueberry) [berries]
Wild Native Edible Fruits of Florida:

Examples by Wildlife Habitat
Native Edible Fruit Examples of Upland Habitats
Muscadine grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*)

- Muscadines are vigorous, deciduous vines growing 60-100 ft. in the wild.
- Muscadines are dioecious, with male and female flowers on different plants.
- Fruits are eaten fresh and/or used for jellies, jams and wines
- Habitat: pine flatwoods; dry hammocks and coastal sites

[Link to more information](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs100)
Blueberry

- Three (3) types of wild blueberries
  - Dwarf (*Vaccinium tenellum*)
  - Evergreen or Shiny (*Vaccinium myrsinites*)
  - Glaucous (*Vaccinium darrowii*)

- Two (2) types of cultivated blueberries
  - Rabbiteye (*Vaccinium virgatum*)
  - Southern Highbush (interspecific hybrids of *V. darrowii*, *V. virgatum*, and *V. corymbosum*)
Red Mulberry (Morus rubra)

- It is a medium size shade or background tree with large, rough textured, showy leaves and it fruits in the spring.

- Edible berries may be eaten fresh or you can make mulberry pie, sauce, jam or jelly. The delicious fruit also attracts birds and other wildlife.

- Habitat: Native Red Mulberry trees grow throughout Florida except in the southernmost peninsula. They are found growing in rich, moist soils, but locally they pop up in almost any habitat except for dry scrub lands.

http://okeechobee.ifas.ufl.edu/News%20columns/FYN.edible.natives.htm
Hog Plum (*Ximenia americana*)

- Small shrub-like tree w/ leaves of shiny green upper surfaces and paler lower surfaces
- Sharp, rigid, spines can be found in some leaf axils and at the axils of the branchlets.
- Ripe fruit has orange color and smooth, creamy, mellow, tangy taste
- Habitat: scrubs, hammocks, pinelands and ruderal areas

Acorns (Quercus spp)

• Acorns taste good and are nutritious and easy to harvest.
• Acorns from white oak group (e.g., live, bluff, Chapman, chinkapin, overcup, post, swamp chestnut, & white oaks) are edible w/o processing.
• Acorns from red oak group (laurel, black, blackjack, bluejack, myrtle, shumard, turkey, red, water & willow oaks) require processing to remove tanins before eating.
• Habitat: scrub; hammocks; mesic uplands; bottomland
Prickly Pear Cactus (*Opuntia humifusa*)

- Florida boasts nine native prickly pear species w/ *O. humifusa* the most common one.

- The plate-like sections we call “leaves” on prickly pear cactus are actually modified stems. Young stem segments of some prickly pear are edible, and are grown much like a vegetable crop (nopales).

- When ripe during mid to late summer, people can enjoy eating red-purplish prickly pears - but first the spines must be removed.

- Preserves made from prickly pear fruit are quite delicious, and the round black seed inside have been roasted and ground into flour.

- Habitat: scrub; pine flatwoods; coastal uplands

http://okeechobee.ifas.ufl.edu/News%20columns/Prickley.Pear.htm
Beauty Berry (*Callicarpa americana*)

- The American Beautyberry is a deciduous understory shrub that grows to 6 feet in height. The shrub blooms in July with light purple flowers.
- The flowers grow along the twigs at the base of the leaf axils.
- By fall, these blooms develop into clusters of dark red berries that attract birds.
- Ripened fruit used for jellies.
- Habitat: pine flatwoods; hammocks; ruderal areas
Blackberry (*Rubus* spp.)

- **The blackberry ‘cane’** is an arching, thorny, woody stem. Where the tip touches ground, it takes root and spreads.

- **Leaves** – sharp-toothed and pointed, compound with 3 to 5 leaflets - the middle leaflet is the largest.

- **Flowers** - small five-petaled white flowers growing in clusters located on the end of stems.

- **Fruit** - actually small clusters of tiny druplets, each with a single seed. The receptacle detaches with the fruit. Ripe fruit are soft, shiny black, and tart and flavorful.

- **Habitat** – sandhills; pine flatwoods; upland mixed forests; sandy thickets; ruderal areas
Saw Palmetto (*Sereno repens*)

- Saw palmetto is a fan palm that grows as a shrub.

- It has a creeping, horizontal growth pattern and grows in the warm climates of the southeast coast, from South Carolina to throughout Florida.

- Lush, green, "saw-toothed" leaves fan out from thorny stems.

- The plant has white flowers, which produce yellow berries. The berries turn bluish-black when ripe, and are dried for medicinal use.

- Habitat: pine flatwoods; scrub; coastal strands, grasslands and hammocks
Native Edible Fruit Examples of Freshwater Wetland Habitats
**Pond Apple (Annona glabra)**

- The trees grow to a height of around 15 to 20 feet, have thin, gray trunks and sometimes grow in clumps. The leaves are ovate to oblong. The fruit is oblong to spherical and apple-sized or larger.

- The fruits have been used to make jelly, custard and wine.

- Habitat: common in the Everglades, and they are also found in freshwater swamps, sinkholes, and wet sloughs in south Florida. It is tolerant of saltwater, e.g., tidal basins, and cannot grow in dry soil.
Elderberry (Sambucus nigra subsp. Canadensis)

- A tall, spreading shrub with multiple slender trunks. It reaches 10-15 feet tall and 8-10 feet wide.
- In late winter and early spring, it offers abundant large flat-topped clusters of tiny white flowers followed by small purple berries in the summer.
- All parts of the Elderberry shrub – flowers, berries, roots, bark and leaves – have long been used for a variety of edible and medicinal purposes.
- Habitat: moist locations along stream banks, road ditches and pond shorelines

http://gardengossipmagazine.com/Elderberry.html
Native Edible Fruit Examples of Coastal Habitats
Cocoplum (*Chrysobalanus icaco*)

- An evergreen shrub/tree which bears a tasteless to sweet pulpy drupe (fruit)

- Its unique flavor, fleshy consistency, and thin skin made it an excellent candidate for jams and jellies. The seeds can be roasted and eaten for their almond-like flavor or crushed and added to the jelly.

- Habitat - pine flatwoods; Everglades tree islands; cypress domes and strands; Hammocks; coastal beaches and dunes; and along the edges of freshwater swamps.

http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenPubsAZ/Cocoplam_Chrysobalanus_icaco.pdf
Seagrape (Coccoloba uvifera)

• A sprawling evergreen shrub or small tree that reaches a maximum height of 8 m (26 ft), but most specimens are little more than 2 m (6.6 ft) tall.
• It has large, round, leathery leaves with a primary vein that has a red color extending from the base, and the entire leaf turns red as it ages. The bark is smooth and yellowish.
• In late summer it bears green fruit, about 2 cm (0.79 in) diameter, in large grape-like clusters.
• The fruit gradually ripen to a purplish color. Each contains a large pit that constitutes most of the volume of the fruit.
• Fruits edible raw or used in making jellies and wines. Medicinal teas made from roots, leaves, and bark.
• Habitat: coastal strand; beach dunes; coastal grasslands; coastal hammocks
Bladder cherry (*Physalis* sp)

- Small shrub or bush which bears one or two fruits each contained in a pod or bladder in early summer to late summer. Similar to but smaller than the tomatillo.

- The whole fruit with the husk removed is used in preserves. Pies may be made from fruits that have dropped and matured on the ground.

- Habitat: coastal uplands, beach dunes, coastal grasslands

http://www.eattheweeds.com/physalis-tomatos-wild-cousin-2/
Bird Pepper
*(Capsicum annuum var. glabriusculum)*

- Small short-lived shrubbery herb with dark green shiny leaves.
- Typically 2-3 feet in height. Often about as broad as tall.
- A short-lived plant, generally living 1-2 years.
- Ripe fruit rated at 100,000-225,000 Scoville heat units (very hot!)
- Habitat: coastal hammocks

[Link to website](http://regionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn/plantdetail.asp?tx=Capsannuglab)
Acknowledgements

Roy Beckford
“Twelve Native Edible Plants of Florida”
AG/NR Extension Agent III
UF/IFAS Extension Lee County
Online Resources