



NATIVE PLANTS FOUND WHEN HIKING AND THEIR ETHNOBOTANICAL USES

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Cabbage Palm

Sabal palmetto



<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/44002>



Photo: Jim Davis



House of palmetto leaves at Oakliffe - Rockledge, Florida

- Designated state tree in 1953 – 1970 replaced coconut palm on state seal
- 10 to 25% of raccoons diet can be fruit from sabals
- Swamp cabbage – cooked over fire with meat seasoning or eaten raw
- Seminoles used berries to treat headaches and fever
- Thatch (Chickee) houses, mats, paddles, staffs, gigs, and arrows
- *To'li'* – stickball ~400 years



Photo: Jim Davis



Bald Cypress/Pond Cypress

Taxodium spp.



- Timucua, Seminole, and Mikosukee
- Wood for houses (Chickee), ox bows, toys, coffins, canoes and drums
- Furniture, paneling, shingles, beehives, fenceposts
- 1980 to 1995 harvesting doubled in Florida
- Long-lived over 600 years
- Sofkee spoons
- ‘Jim’s Little Guy’



Saw Palmetto

Serenoa repens



Photo: Jim Davis



Photo: Jim Davis

- Aphrodisiac, prostate
- Alternative food source (fruit, new stalks cooked or eaten raw)
- Seminoles – fiber, baskets, brooms, fans, Seminole dolls, fire dance fans
- 2,000 tons of saw palmetto products exported to Europe - \$50 million
- Saw palmetto has been added to the state's list of commercially exploited plants
- Native Plant Harvesting Permit

Immokalee men arrested, accused of illegal harvesting of saw palmetto berries worth more than \$5K



YouTube Search

Saw Palmetto Berry Harvesting FAQ



Serenoa repens fruit, saw palmetto berries

Harvesting saw palmetto berries in Florida requires a permit from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS).

[Permit Application](#) [PDF]

[Completed Application Sample](#) [PDF 635.5 KB]

To learn more about harvesting requirements, select a question below to expand the answer. See a PDF version of the FAQ in English [PDF 212 KB] or Spanish [PDF 206.4 KB].

Print this page

Seven arrested for picking protected saw palmetto berries

19,703 views • Aug 9, 2018

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BUTTONBUSH

CEPHALANTHUS OCCIDENTALIS



- All parts said to be medicinal
- Inner bark- dental, liver, ophthalmic (Choctaw, Chickasaw)
- Seminoles – constipation, prostate
- Leaves – used as a tea, specifically for women, blood disorders and fevers
- Modern day herbalists – stimulates digestive system
- Emesis – nausea
- Bitter glycosides
- Toxic plant –fatal to cattle

American Beautyberry

Callicarpa americana



- Fruit in August to late fall
- White – alba or lactea
- Native Americans used as a tea in sweat bath rituals
- Berries, roots and leaves steeped in tea to treat skin disorders, stomach disorders, colic
- Malarial fevers
- Said to repel mosquitoes, ants, ticks – Callicarpenal and intermedeol
- Horses and Mules



Waxmyrtle/Southern Bayberry

Myrica cerifera



- Waxy berries in late fall/winter
- Four pounds of berries to one pound of wax – bayberry candles
- Seminoles fermented leaves used to treat fevers, headaches, stomachaches
- Newlyweds used ashes from leaves to strengthen marriage
- Wax used in surgeons' soap, shaving lather, sealing wax
- Planted around houses to keep pests away
- Flammable oils

Live Oak

Quercus virginiana



Photo: Jim Davis



Quercus virginiana
Photo by John R. Park

- White oaks (Chinkapin, Post, Overcup)
- Red oaks (Laurel, Shumard, Water)
- Food source for Native Americans and settlers (Acorns in sofkee or roasted)
- Animal feed
- Wood used as fuel, tools, lumber, timber
- 19 native species of oaks
- Galls "Little People"
- Tannic acid used in tannin and dyes
- Astringent

Yaupon Holly

Ilex vomitoria

- Dioecious
- “Black Drink” - leaves
- Bark used for “old people's sickness or nightmares
- Branches – arrows
- Tea substitute



Photos: Jim Davis

Photo: Tyler Jones, UF

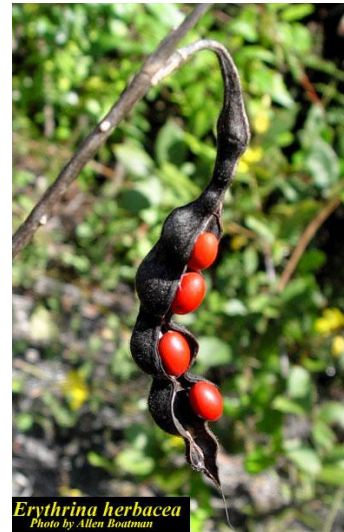
Cherokee Bean

Erythrina herbacea



Photo: Jim Davis

- Seeds used as rat poison
- Alkaloids
- Seeds can be toxic
- Severe vomiting and diarrhea
- Heliotropic leaves (Sun)



Carolina Jessamine

Gelsemium sempervirens

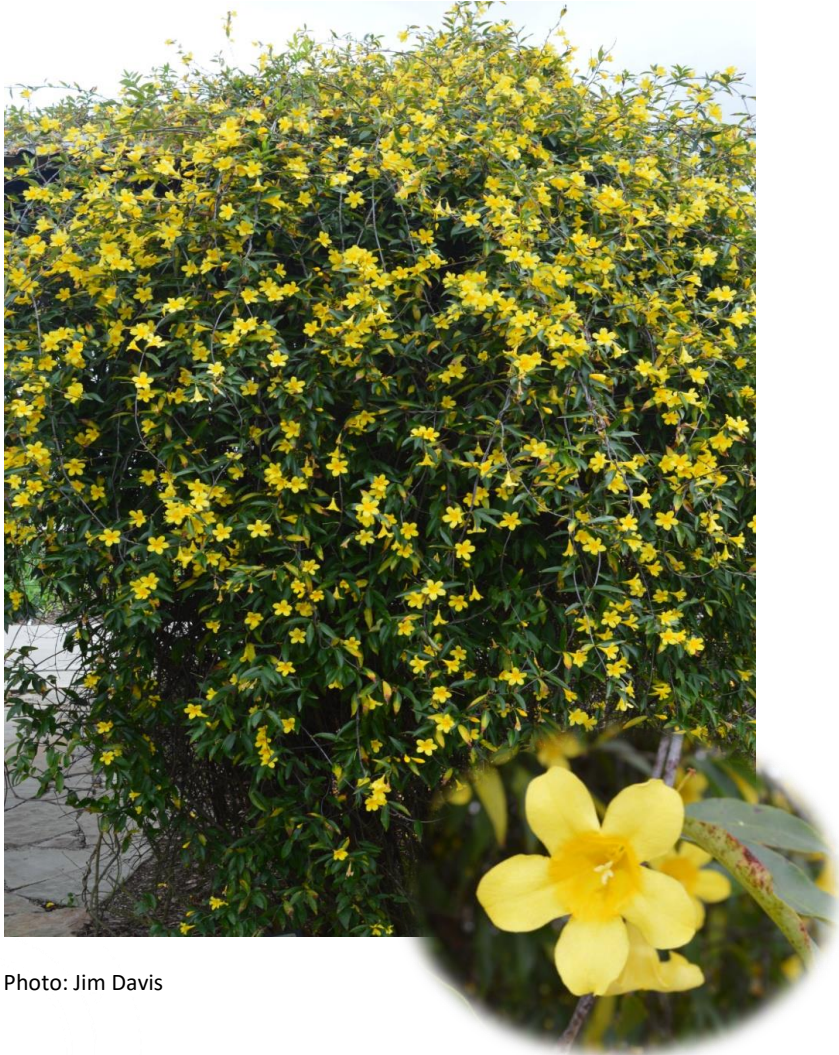


Photo: Jim Davis

- Toxic – alkaloids
- Humans have been known to be poisoned from sucking the nectar from the flowers or from eating honey made from these flowers
- Staggering and uncoordinated, with dilated eyes and convulsive movements, comatose and death
- Rhizome and roots dug up in fall for medicinal purposes
- Flammable

Maypop

Passiflora incarnata



Photo: Jim Davis



- Fruit makes “popping” sound when crushed
- Fruit and skin can be eaten raw or cooked- removing seeds
- Pulp used in jams, syrups and beverages
- Leaves used for teas and tonics
- Used as sedative
- ~50 European sedation drugs and U.S. natural products contain extracts
- Cyanogenic glycosides (repels most herbivores)



Photo: Jim Davis

Muscadine/Scuppernong

Vitis rotundifolia



- Wine and jelly
- Black, purple, bronze seedy grapes
- Carlos, Noble, Black Beauty, Ison (Self-fertile cultivars)
- Long stems used by Seminoles as deer snares
- Wild muscadines male or female



Red Maple

Acer rubrum

- Lowland woods, swamps, along streams
- 1800's introduced to settlers by native Americans
- Cooking ware, ox yokes, arrowheads
- Sweet drink from sap
- Acer species used for liver and skin disorders



Butterflyweed

Asclepias tuberosa



- Butterfly host plant (Monarchs, Queens)
- Introduced to settlers
- Pleurisy (Inflammation of the thin layer of tissue that lines the lungs and chest wall)
- Bruises, sore muscles
- S.E. tribes boiled used like a vegetable
- When used with Indian Hemp (*Apocynum sp.*) , it was made into a strong chord
- Milky latex, sap.

Button Snake-Root, Rattlesnake Master

Eryngium yuccifolium



- Used in rituals and purification at funerals (black drink in S. Fl.)
- Prepared warriors for battle
- Rope and string – sandal, baskets
- Used to treat snakebites – sap as a preventative – roots, shoots eaten(cooked)chewed
- Fever treatment by settlers and Natives
- Expelling worms, vomiting, impotence



Marsh Pennywort

Hydrocotyle umbellata



- Found in water or on banks
- Respiratory ailments
- *C. asiatica* leaves and stems used as blood purifier, diuretic, leprosy and longevity promotor
- Gotu kola (burns, wound healing)



Sweetgum

Liquidambar styraciflua



- 5-star leaves- aromatic
- Storax sold commercially in pharmaceutical products such as antiseptics and expectorants (an agent that promotes the discharge or expulsion of mucus from the respiratory tract).
- Civil war doctors used it as an astringent, diarrhea, dysentery
- American storax used today in cigarettes, candy, soda and chewing gum
- Used today to treat coughs, colds, skin infections and bronchitis



Climbing Hempvine

Mikania scandens



- Coastal swales, river margins, floodplains
- Sunflower family – Asteraceae
- Seminoles used as a dermatological aid – itching
- Blooms year round



Florida Betony

Stachys floridana



- “Rattlesnake Weed”
- Tuberos roots are edible
- Used by settlers and native Americans
- Mint family (Square stem)



Bamboo-Vine, Greenbriar, Wild Asparagus

- Smilax spp.*
- Used as a dye, and as medicinal
 - Thickening agent from rootstock used in jellies
 - Seminoles – source of starch
 - Used to make bread or fritters
 - Modern day uses include synthetic cortisone and steroid production



Elderberry

Sambucas canadensis



- Food source for settlers and native Americans
- Used to make toys, and textile dyes
- Berries used for jams, pies and syrups
- Flowers can be dipped and flower and deep fried or eaten raw
- Medicinal –emetic, antiseptic used to treat bee stings
- Cyanogenic glycosides – toxic

Pickernelweed

Pontederia cordata



Photo: Jim E. Davis

- Seed and young leaves (unrolled) can be eaten raw or seeds can be roasted and ground into flour
- Seeds- granola mix
- Some U.S. tribes used as a contraceptive



Slash Pine

Pinus elliottii



- Found in low, wet flatwoods
- Turpentine, resins, waterproofing ships (Naval Stores Industry)
- Resins – “Cat face” – Dade Battlefield (“Herty System”, Professor UGA)
- U.S. largest producer of turpentine, most coming from Florida
- Medicinal to treat irritants



Dade Battlefield



Pokeweed/Pokeberry

Phytolacca americana



- All parts poisonous
- Young leaves eaten as a vegetable (when prepared correctly)
- Canned commercial products exported to Africa and Europe
- Medical – native Americans and settlers
- Chronic rheumatism and ringworm
- Wear gloves when handling
- Has caused fatalities
- “Poke Salad”

Golden Polypody/Resurrection Fern

P. aureum, *P. incanum*



Phlebodium aureum
Photo by Shirley Denton

- Epiphytes
- Treatment for ill babies
- Root mixture containing resurrection fern and shoestring fern (*Vittaria sp.*) used for chronic conditions
- Used in baths to treat insanity



Photo: Jim E. Davis

American Mistletoe

Phoradendron serotinum

- Parasitic
- Deciduous trees
- “thief” “tree”
- Used in Christmas Holiday
- All parts toxic
- Medicinal – stimulate smooth muscles
- Leaves used for teas, topical preparations by S.E. tribes
- *Phoradendron spp.* Only food source for Great Purple Hairstreak
- 1985 to 1992 1,754 cases of accidental poisoning in children or pets



Photo: Lyle Buss UF/IFAS

Carolina Willow

Salix caroliniana



- Native Americans extracted salicin (salicylic) from bark to relieve pain
- “Cooling medicine” Ward off fevers
- Analgesic and emetic
- Using of a type of root concoction increased a hunter's success
- Host plant to Viceroy butterfly



Black-eyed Susan

Rudbeckia hirta



- Seminoles used to treat sunstroke
- Headaches and used in teas for colds
- Root juice for earaches and used topically to treat snake bites



Coontie

Zamia sp.

- Flour base (sago) w/sofkee
- Roots - Washed, boiled and fermented – Timucuan and Calusa
- Seeds toxic
- Staple carbohydrate - bread
- Mikasuki word *konti*
- Seminole “*Conti hateka*”
- Atala butterfly



Photo: Jim Davis



Photo: Lyle Buss

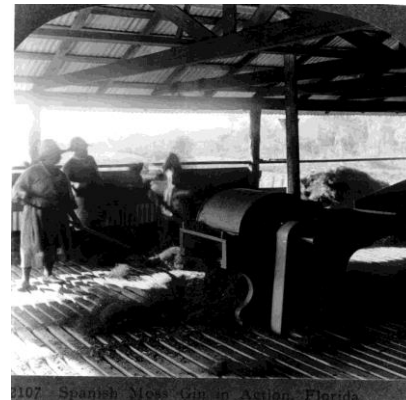
Spanish Moss

Tillandsia usneoides



Photo: Jim Davis

- Epiphyte
- Native Americans used to absorb unwanted liquids, bedding, and tanning hides
- Used to rub on newborn babies for curly hair
- Gorez Gorez “Graybeard”
- Used for stuffing mattress and automobile cushions
- 1900 to 1975 ginning (Tampa)



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Thank You

Atlas of Florida Plants

<https://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/Default.aspx>

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Atlas of Florida Plants website. The header features the site's logo, a search bar with a dropdown menu for 'Scientific Name', and navigation links for 'Advanced Search' and 'Search Help'. A 'Contact Us' link is also present. The main navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Browse By', 'Search', 'Herbarium Specimen Search', 'Institute for Systematic Botany', 'Links', 'About', and 'References'. The content area is divided into several sections: 'Plant Photos' with a photo of *Capsicum frutescens* and a 'Browse Photos' button; 'About the Plant Atlas' with a paragraph describing the site's scope and a link to learn more; 'Browse the Plant Atlas By Map' with a map of Florida and instructions on how to use it; 'Plant Search' with a search form and 'Advanced Search' button; and 'Specimen Search' with a search bar and a photo of a plant specimen.

Atlas of Florida Plants
Institute for Systematic Botany

Scientific Name Search

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Plant Photos

[Browse Photos](#)

About the Plant Atlas

Florida has over 4,700 species of native or naturalized plants in Florida, including over 4,300 species of vascular plants and over 400 species of bryophytes (plants known only from cultivation are not included). The Atlas of Florida Plants is a joint effort by the Institute for Systematic Botany, the University of South Florida, and the USF Water Institute to provide a comprehensive searchable database of plants in the state of Florida. This website also provides access to the [USF Herbarium](#), which houses about 300,000 specimens from around the world (about 2/3 of these are databased and available online).

[Learn more about the Plant Atlas »](#)

Browse the Plant Atlas By Map

Select a county below to view plant species for that county. Hover over a county to view the county name.

Plant Search

Use the form below to search or browse for plants. For complex queries, please use the Advanced Search button.

Scientific Name Search

Action: [Search](#) | [Browse](#)

[Advanced Search](#)

Specimen Search

The USF Herbarium has over 195,000 specimens digitized and we're adding more each day.

Resources

50 Common Native Plants Important In Florida's Ethnobotanical History¹

Ginger M. Allen, Michael D. Bond, and Martin B. Main²

Introduction

Ethnobotany was probably first coined as a term in 1895 by one of Florida's early botanists, John Harshberger, and describes the study of the interaction between people, plants, and culture (Harshberger 1895). There are many components to ethnobotany, including food, fibre, medicine, shelter, fishing and hunting, religion, mythology, magic, and others.

In this document we provide an introduction to ethnobotany in Florida and brief insight into the historical importance of some of Florida's plants to humans. We hope this document inspires readers to further investigate their region's ethnobotanical history. This information is not intended as a guide to using plants for medicinal or other purposes. Readers are **warned** that some of the most potent poisons known are derived directly from plants and that alleged ethnobotanical uses may be based on unsubstantiated information. Further, the use of plants for medicinal or other purposes may not be safe without proper preparation or dosage, and potential **allergic** reactions or illness caused by interactions with prescribed medications cannot be predicted. **Note:** these warnings should be provided as part of any educational program.

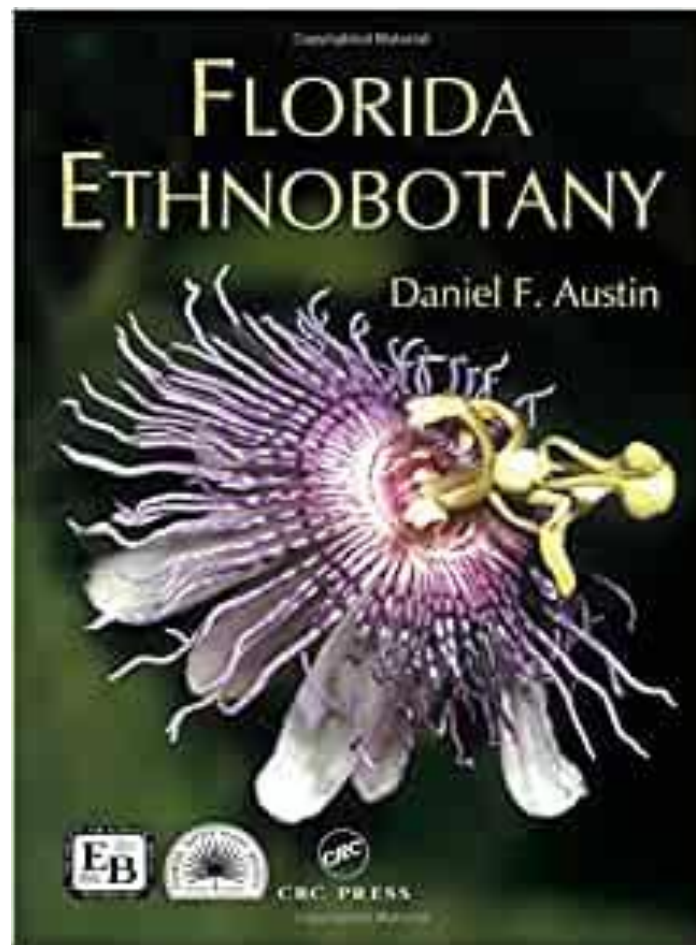
Additionally, we provide a non-technical catalog of 50 common plants that have played an important role in Florida's

ethnobotanical history (Table 3). Plants included on the list are considered native or naturalized, are easy to locate and identify, and have interesting histories that lend themselves to teaching others about practical implications of Florida's plant communities. Plant names and status follow descriptions by Missouri Botanical Gardens, Wunderlin et al. (2000), and the Florida Native Plant Society.

Ethnobotany in Florida

Plants create their own chemical components that may be used to attract or repel insects and animals, attack other plants, or defend against fungi and other plant pathogens. For humans, these chemical components may be nutritious, poisonous, hallucinogenic, or therapeutic. Humans have been accumulating knowledge of plants and their uses for thousands of years. The first recorded culturally significant plant remains were found in Iraq at a human burial site estimated at 60,000 years old.

Many plants provided important sources of food for Native Americans and early settlers in Florida. Important food plants included fruits, nuts, roots (starch), grains, and greens that varied by habitat, region, and time of year. A few examples of important food plants included fruits from cocoplum (*Chrysobalanus icaco*), pond apple (*Ammonia glabra*), and saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*); and starch from coontie (*Zamia pumila*) roots (see Table 3). The "heart" of



1. This document is Circular 1439, one of a series of the Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Published December 2002. Reviewed November 2012. Please visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. Ginger M. Allen, senior wildlife biological scientist, and Martin B Main, Ph.D., associate professor and Extension wildlife specialist, University of Florida,



THANK YOU

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