

## It's Time To Focus on Wildflowers and Native Plants !

It's time to **FOCUS** on restoring balance to our private and public landscapes by using Florida native plants species whenever possible. Our garden clubs can and do make a difference in our environment today and in what we leave behind for future generations.

**Why Use Florida native plants ? ...** Native plants withstand our climate demands better than most of their hybridized cousins. Most are drought tolerant and more insect and disease resistant. This means using less of our valuable water for irrigation and less contamination of our ground water with fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. Also many of our birds and butterflies prefer native plants because they often have more nectar than the hybridized cultivars. The supply of nectar and natural habitat is ever becoming more of an issue as Florida continues to lose more and more greenspace as our population skyrockets. If we can preserve native plants for our wildlife we can also maintain the essential bond between people and nature that fosters a sense of stewardship for the land and its living creatures.

**What can we do? ...** plant them in your private and public landscapes and on the roadsides. Create native gardens for birds and butterflies at libraries, schools, parks and nursing homes. The possibilities are endless. There are 2,800 native plants and an additional 1,300 naturalized plants, so many to choose from ! And don't forget how important it is to **EDUCATE THE PUBLIC !!!!**

There is a new **Wildflower** section on the [www.FFGC.org](http://www.FFGC.org) website under **Horticulture**. I have put together numerous publications and photos that are printable to help you educate your members and to do a wildflower/native plant program. Florida native ecotype seed ordering information is also listed. Audrey Swindal also has a **Native Plants** section that features a special native plant each month. Headquarters has 3 power point Wildflower presentations available for you to check out. [Take pictures !](#) Available awards are listed on the website.

Florida Wildflower Foundation has grant money available for planting, education and research projects. [www.floridawildflowercouncil.org](http://www.floridawildflowercouncil.org) Remember to support wildflower /native plant research by buying the wildflower license plate !

*I am here to help you get started... [Dara Dobson](#) (850) 859-0096  
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