# AlterNatives

# Attention Landscapers and Home Gardeners:

The following "invasive exotic" plants are harmful to our state's natural areas. Avoid using them in your landscapes. Instead, select from the AlterNative species listed in this brochure.

# The "Bad Guys" (a.k.a. Invasive Exotic Plants)

Chinese Tallow Tree: Triadica sebifera (formerly Sapium sebiferum)

Brazilian Pepper: Schinus terebinthifolius

Chinese Ligustrum: Ligustrum sinense

Coral Ardisia: Ardisia crenata

Heavenly Bamboo: Nandina domestica

Elephant Ear, Wild Taro: Colocasia esculenta

Lantana: Lantana camara

Mexican Petunia: Ruellia simplex (formerly Ruellia brittoniana)

Japanese Honeysuckle: Lonicera japonica

Tuberous Sword Fern: Nephrolepis cordifolia

Asparagus Fern: Asparagus aethiopicus (formerly Asparagus sprengeri)

Wedelia: Sphagneticola trilobata

Turn the page for Eco-Friendly AlterNative Plant Suggestions

## Why Invasive Plants Are a Problem

What is an "Invasive Exotic Plant" and who gets to hand out that label?

The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) monitors and records the spread and damage of these plants state-wide. Their mission is "to support the management of invasive exotic plants in Florida's natural areas by providing a forum for the exchange of scientific, educational, and technical information." Learn more at www.FLEPPC.org

By the FLEPPC definition, an Invasive Exotic plant is a "species outside of its natural range that displaces native species and disrupts ecosystem processes." In essence, they have become 'problem' plants for Florida's varied ecosystems. They are to be avoided at all costs, especially in urban landscapes and gardens where making a home for them may allow them to escape to nearby natural areas.

The worst offenders: Category I Invasive Exotics
Invasive exotic plants are termed "Category I" when they
"...alter native plant communities by displacing native
species, change plant community structures or ecological
functions, or hybridize with natives." This means they
have become 'problem plants' in Florida and have
required management by a variety of governmental and/
or municipal agencies to prevent them from displacing
and taking over our natural areas. Our state spends an
estimated \$60 million annually on invasive species control
programs.

Also to be avoided: Category II Invasive Exotics
FLEPPC describes Category II invasive exotic plants as
those that "have increased in abundance or frequency
but have not yet altered Florida plant communities to
the extent shown by Category I species. These species
may become ranked Category I, if ecological damage is
demonstrated." See the FLEPPC website to see the list of
Category II plants.

# AlterNatives for Northeast Florida

Non-native, inv and protect Flo



#### AlterNatives (plant these instead)

Carpinus caroliniana Hornbeam



photo by Shirley Denten

medium, long-lived deciduous tree wi beautiful bark and striking fall color
 larval food plant for tiger swallowfull and red-spotted purple butterflies, good wildnie food plant

Acer saccharum ssp. floridanum FL Sugar Maple



rounded, deciduous tree (30°-35') with heart shaped leaves
 rosy pink flowers in early spring before leaves emerge
 bunding branches make great cut flowers
 moderate growth rate



photo by Michael Drommond & bust, for Systematic Botany

gorgeous fall color slow growing but attractive tree tolerates moist but not wet soils Can reach 25-50 ft. in height

#### Non-Native (remove)



Schinus terebinthifolius Brazilian pepper

#### **AlterNatives** Myrcianthes fragrans Simpson's Stopper

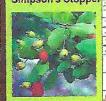


photo by T. Ann Williams © Inst. for Systematic Botany

Deauthor write howers followered-orange fruits
 aftractive to birds for food and

cover - drought tolerant

#### Non-Native (remove)



Ardisia crenata Coral Ardisia

prote by Bill Johnson

#### AlterNatives (plant these instead)

Vaccinium darrowii Darrow's Blueberr



- dwarf evergreen to 3' tall
- fine textured gray-green leaves
provide nice contrast
- prefers sandy, acidic suils (e.g.
scrub, flatwoods, and sandhills)
- delicious truit and showy spring

llex glabra Inkberry



grows on low pH sandy to peaty soils

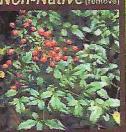
sons
- slow growing evergreen shrub
- sine fextured follage; 6' fall mature
- follage may turn plum-colored
in winter
- typical of pine flatwoods

Vaccinium myrsinites Shiny Blueberry



evergreen with dark, glessy leaves; grows to 3 fall
 has cultural requirements similar to those of V. darkowli
 can be propagated by tip cuttings

Non-Native (remove)



Nandina domestica Heavenly Bamboo

photo by Gif Nefson in Inst. for Systematic Botany

### **AlterNatives**



grows on low pH soil (sand to ) slow growing evergreen shrut line textured foliage; 6° mature

neight • follage may turn plum-colored

in winter typical of pine flatwoods

#### Non-Native (remove)



Lantana camara Lantana, Shrub Verbena

#### AlterNatives (plant these instead)

Helianthus debilis Dune Sunflower



photo by Keith Bradley: © Inst. for Systematic Bolany

drought tolerant, long-blooming semi-evergreen perepulal who pests & continuous blossoms
 highly recommended for any garden
 frost kills to ground but recovers
with warmer weather

Gaillardia pulchella Firewheel



photo by Laurie Sheldon

rounded clumps of soft leaves with brightly colored flowers throughout the summer • grows to 2" tell and readily reseads • great for attracting butterflies

Phlox pilosa Downy Phlox



mounding perennial grows 2' tall
 pale pink to lavender flowers are fragrant with basally-fused petals forming an elongate tube for nectaring from slems and foliage covered with soft hairs

#### Non-Native (remove)



Ruellia simplex Mexican Petunia

### **AlterNatives**

Echinacea purpurea Purple Coneflowe



photo by Laurie Sheldon © Laurie Sheldon

hardy perennial, blooms profut throughout extended flowering period
 attracts butterflies

fast growth prefers well drained soils

#### Non-Native (remove)



Nephrolepis cordifolia Tuberous Sword Fern

#### AlterNatives (plant these instead)

Nephrolepis biserrata Giant Sword Fern



photo by Laurie Sheldon & Laurie Sheldon

-fush, evergreen fern prefers acidic soils and is common in hammocks and swamps - upright leaves can grow over 5 fong - spreads via underground rivizomes and can quickly colonize

Thelypteris kunthii Southern Shield Fern



photo by Keith Bradley © lost, for Systematic Bolony

initiage takes of a profite cast at initer approaches often called "river tern" because is frequently found along water

Osmunda cinnamomea Cinnamon Fern



fertile fronds take on a chocotate color, which contrasts beautifully with its sterile, outward-arching fronds

fronds

• young fiddleheads are covered with a fuzzy material that is a favorite among birds for nest liping.

### Non-Native (remove)



Asparagus aethiopicus Asparagus fern

photo by Joel Tenyan S hist, for Systematic Botony

#### **AlterNatives** Hypericum tenuifolium Atlantic St. John's W



great low evergreen ground or for dry sunny siles
 fine short dense needle like le
 good in masses

#### t these instead) Illicium parviflorum Ocala Anise



hoto by Shirley Denton Schirley Denton

small yellow ribbon like petaled lowers in spring shade tolerant, pest free good screen/hedge rarge, evergreen, crought-tolerant shrub with fragrant foliage

#### llex vomitoria Yaupon Holly



photo by Shirley Denton © Shirley Denton versatile evergreen suitable for multi-stemmed specimens or clipped hedges
 no pests, altractive to birds for tood and cover
 showy red berries in fall/winter

#### Non-Native (remove)



Ligustrum sinense Chinese Ligustrum

#### AlterNatives (plant these instead)

Forestiera segregata Florida Privet



any size

• small yellow fragrant flowers (no petals) in early spring

• a fine specimen plant

Myrcianthes fragrans Simpson's Stopper



photo by Shirley Denton O Shirley Denton

reliable dense evergreen shrub
 beautiful white flowers followed by red-orange fruits
 attractive to birds for load and

cover • drought tolerant

#### llex vomitoria Yaupon Holly



photo by Shirley Denton O Shirley Denton

L

versetile evergreen suitable or multi-stemmed specimens or

for multi-seriment specified for clipped hedges
- no pests, attractive to birds for food and cover
- showy red berries in fall/winter

#### these instead) Lyonia ferruginea Rusty Lyonia



acto by Shirley Denton Inst, for Systematic Botsny

upright evergreen shrub 6° - 12° Hi small, drooping bell-like withe lowers in spring new follage with rusty brownish rest

ast very drought-telerant

#### Psychotria nervosa Wild Coffee



photo by T. Ann Wilkams © hist, for Systematic Botany

- evergreen, rounded shrub 4'- 8'
  with showy red berries in fall.
   attractive leaf texture, shade
  tolerant

#### Non-Native (remove)



Colocasia esculenta Wild Taro, Elephant Ear

uticto by Asit K. Ghosh Clinat, for Systematic Botany

#### AlterNatives (plant these instead)

Canna flaccida Southern Marsh Canna



photo by Betty Wargo © Inst. for Systematic Botany

deciduous parennial that occurs in wellands naturally but will survive in upland siles with uniformly moist soik will grow in shallow water
 great accent plant with bold color and tropical foliage, grows fast
 fruit eaten by wildlife



photo by Ann Murray © 2001 Univ. of Florida

this hish, evergreen fern prefers acidic soils and is typically found in harmnocks and swarms its upright leaves can grow over 5 long spreads via underground rhizomes and can quickly colonize.

Gelsemium sempervirens Yellow Jessamine

### Hibiscus coccineus Scarlet Hibiscus



photo by Mary Keim © Inst, for Systematic Betany

excellent 5'-7' tall perennial with striking crimson flowers in summer through early fall
 very attractive and great in damp sites

#### t these instead) Tradescantia chiensis Spiderwort



Zamia pumila Coontie

peright growth habit to about 3' purple-blue three-petated flowers ypically open in the recording beargrass-like leaves spring from to to 8 nodes around succulent

low growing (to 3) evergreen deptable to most conditions sall tolerant small orange fruits in summer good in masses or as specimen tant poisonous

# • prefers well-drained soil • birds and other wildlife consume ils berries



photo by Albert http://gommons.wiklmedia.org

- grows to 4' tall and slightly wider
   deep blue flowers attract
- deep blue flowers attract byttelfiles
   foliage is shiny and dark, with a nice textural quarty
   readily reseeds and appreciates pruning

#### Non-Native (remove)



Lonicera japonica Japanese Honeysuckle

#### AlterNatives (plant these instead)

### Bignonia capreolata Cross Vine



photo by Shirley Denton O Shirley Denton

- excellent evergreen climbing vine beautiful foliage and granger apricot flowers late spring drought folerant once established folerates wide range of scrils

photo by Shirley Denton & Shirley Denton

- excellent evergreen climbing vine
   beautiful follage and fragrent
  yellow flowers
   fast growth, 30 ft. or more

#### Lonicera sempervirens Coral Honeysuckle



photo by Shirley Denton © Shirley Benton

- twining, climbing vise w showy foliage, bright red flowers
   attracts hummingbirds and butterflies
- non-aggressive growth habit
   fruit and leaves can be loxic
   prefers well drained to dry soils

#### Non-Native (remove) t these instead)



photo by Allen Boatman Sinst, for Systematic Bolary

- semi-evergreen profusely-illowering shrub
   show, white, flat topped clusters of flowers in early spring good reage/screen plant
   attracts birds



Sphagneticola trilobata Wedelia, Creeping Oxeve

photo by Walter K. Paylor & Inst. for Systematic Betany

#### AlterNativeS (plant these instead)



evergreen groundcover that spreads vigorously
 attractive when planted to ramble over the edges of boulders and containers
 salt tolerant

## Dyschoriste oblongifolia Oblongleaf Twinflower



photo by Donnis Girard Sinst for Systematic Botany

pale lavender flowers, usually in pairs at the lips of 8"-12" sterns
 spreads slowly by underground ritzomes or self-sown seed
 grow in large groups for effect

#### Key to Symbols







## The Wisdom of Landscaping with Native Plants

The Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS) defines a native plant as one present in Florida prior to European contact, which means prior to 1513.

### Why plant natives?

- Native plants provide food, shelter, and areas of reproduction for our native wildlife, including butterflies, birds and bees.
- Native plants provide a sense of place they remind us of our heritage and the specific part of Florida in which we live.
- Native plants have adapted to regional climate conditions over hundreds of thousands of years.
   As such, they can tolerate our heat, humidity, rain (or lack thereof), and cold snaps.
- Native plants conserve water, time and energy (and can save you money as a result).
- · Native plants protect our waterways and ground water by filtering chemicals out of runoff.

You can locate and/or purchase any of the plants listed in this brochure with the search feature on either <a href="http://www.plantant.com/">http://www.plantant.com/</a> or <a href="http://www.plantant.com/">http://www.plantant.com/</a>

For more information, consult the Florida Native Plant Society at **www.fnps.org** and consider becoming a member. Your membership supports the preservation and restoration of wildlife habitats and biological diversity through the conservation of native plants.

A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.

- Aldo Leopold

serenoa repens