

# “My Journey to Creating a Native World Inside an HOA”

by Saumya Sivaram VanderWyst



“The first house going native”  
or  
“How to smooth it over with your neighbors”

- Know your **legal hammers**: statutes and watershed regulations
- **FULL** paperwork submission for all proposals
- Leave adequate time for bureaucracy
  
- Attend HOA meetings & talk about natives (ex: white paper)
  
- **Keep landscaping neat & bordered in front**
- Let people spray their own lawn and protect your property lines
- Offer free seedlings to neighbors

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## 4e. example white paper on native plants

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### Native Plants for Pineda Springs' Common Areas White Paper May 9, 2021

#### Background

With the constant and heavy use of irrigation and fertilizer in Florida lawns, there is a distinctly negative effect caused by runoff into waterways. In order to protect our ecosystem, we need to mitigate fertilizer usage, watering demands and invasive plantings. Native plants require little to no fertilizer or irrigation beyond natural rainfall and will often be able to prevent erosion, filter runoff and/or support native fauna (animals, birds, insects).

For our needs in the Pineda Springs' common areas, reducing water and fertilizer results in savings for the entire subdivision. Additionally, many of the native plants require minimal maintenance throughout the year, thereby eliminating mowing and trimming expenses.

#### Locations

There are two types of plantings required: the first will flank the gate to minimize pedestrian entrance into the subdivision and the second would replace or be interspersed among the Bahiagrass as a groundcover in the common areas.

#### Plants

The plants were chosen based on availability, maintainability and feature consistency throughout the year. Preference was given to plants with hurricane wind resistance and drought tolerance.

1. *Citharexylum spinosum*: Fiddlewood. Tree. 15-25ft tall by 12ft wide. Evergreen with showy flowers, aroma and hurricane wind resistance.



2. *Dyschoriste oblongifolia*: Twinflower. Groundcover. 3-4in high. Lovely lavender flowers distributed along planting.



## 8a. literature references

- Legalese on FL statutes:  
1) <https://www.floridabar.org/the-florida-bar-journal/application-of-the-florida-friendly-landscaping-stature-to-homeowner-disputes-regarding-violation-of-restrictive-covenants/>  
2) [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0373/Sections/0373.185.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0373/Sections/0373.185.html)
- Florida Native Plant Society: <https://www.fnps.org/plants>
- Florida Association of Native Nurseries: <https://www.fann.org>
- UF-ILAS: <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/lawn-and-garden/native-plants/>

## 8b. sources: Ginny Stibolt & Marjorie Shropshire

Author & botanist

<https://greengardeningmatters.blogspot.com>

Author & visual artist concentrating on Florida conservation

<https://www.fannseminar.com/speakers/marjorie-shropshire/>

- Stibolt, G. *“Adventures of a Transplanted Gardener: Advice for Gardeners New to Florida”*. Univ Press of Florida. ISBN 978-0-81306-864-0 (2022).
- Stibolt, G and M Shropshire. *“A Step-by-Step Guide to a Florida Native Yard”*. Univ Press of Florida. ISBN 978-0-81306-463-5. (2018).
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## 8b. sources: Doug Tallamy

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<https://homegrownnationalpark.org/doug-tallamy/>

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- Tallamy, DW. *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard*. Timber Press. ISBN 978-1-60469-900-5. (2020)
- Tallamy, DW. *The Nature of Oaks: The Rich Ecology of Our Most Essential Native Trees*. Timber Press. ISBN 978-1-64326-044-0. (2021)

## 8c. vendors

- Change of Greenery <https://www.changeofgreenery.org>
- Palm Bay Aluminum <https://palmbayaluminum.com>
- Elite Pavers <https://321pavers.com>
- Viking Fence & Decks <https://www.vikingfenceanddeck.com>
- Urban Composter <https://www.urbancomposter.com.au>
- Subpod <https://subpod.com>
- Florida Custom Aquatics <https://www.flcustomaquatic.com/about-us>