

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.



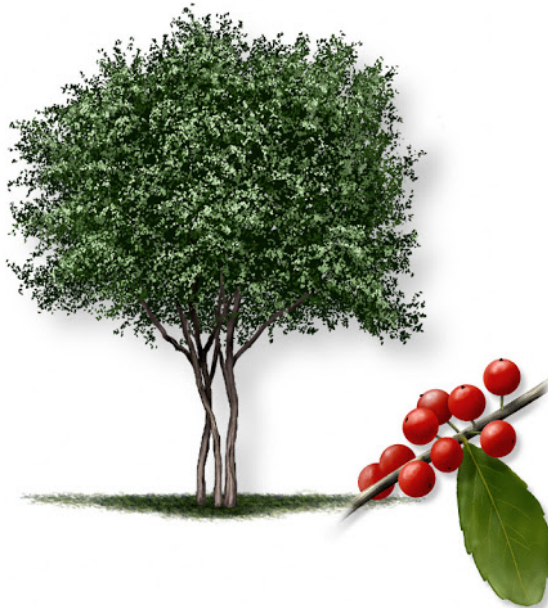
2. *Dyschoriste oblongifolia*: Twinflower. Groundcover. 3-4in high. Lovely lavender flowers distributed along planting.



3. *Eragrostis elliottii*: Elliott's Lovegrass. Grass. 1-3ft tall by 1-2ft wide. While winter dormant, it does have interesting foliage.



4. *Ilex vomitoria*: Yaupon Holly. Tree. 8-25ft tall by 5-8ft wide. Evergreen with lovely red fruit, handles dry conditions very well and is hurricane wind resistant.



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5. *Mimosa strigillosa*: Sunshine Mimosa. Groundcover. 6-12in tall by 100ft wide. Evergreen, can be mowed but does not cover well from late fall to early spring.



6. *Morella cerifera*: Wax Myrtle. Shrub. 10-15ft tall by 8ft wide. Evergreen with hurricane wind resistance. Can be used as a hedge plant and will handle wet to dry conditions easily.



7. *Muhlenbergia capillaris*: Muhly Grass. Grass. 2-3ft tall by 1-3ft wide. Bears pink/purple flower heads in late fall and early winter, very drought-tolerant.



8. *Myrcianthes fragrans*: Simpson's Stopper. Shrub. 5-20ft tall by 3-15ft wide. Evergreen, beautiful showy flowers, aroma and hurricane resistance.



9. *Myrsine cubana*: Colicwood. Shrub. 8-15ft tall, 3ft wide. Evergreen, known for its interesting foliage, tolerance for difficult environments and use as a hedge.



10. *Phyla nodiflora*: Frogfruit. Groundcover. 3-4in high. Evergreen, great turf substitute, easy to mow and does not require watering after established.



11. *Senna ligustrina*: Privet Senna. Shrub, 4-8ft tall, 3-6ft wide. Evergreen, showy yellow flowers



12. *Sideroxylon tenax*: Tough Buckthorn. Tree. 12-30ft tall, 20ft wide. Evergreen, interesting foliage, thorns. Will grow into a small tree



13. *Spartina bakeri*: Sand Cordgrass. Grass. 3-4ft tall, 2-3ft wide. Evergreen, great along ponds



14. *Viburnum obvatum*: Walter's Viburnum. Shrub/Small tree. 10-15ft tall, 10-15ft wide, evergreen with showy flowers, great for hedges, fast-growing. Con – can spread outwards, will need to be cut back to maintain shape



Recommendation

For the gate area, a gradation of heights will provide visual interest. I would suggest one or two trees, surrounded by hedge plants in a line towards the water and with a mass of grasses in front of the hedges. As an example, Tough Buckthorn as the tree, with Walter's Viburnum as a hedge plant, and Muhly Grass in front. The brightest coloration would be (from top), green, white and pink/purple. Another example could be Yaupon Holly (red), Simpson's Stopper (white) and Elliott's Lovegrass (green).

For the common areas, I would suggest a mixture of Twinflower, Sunshine Mimosa and Frogfruit. These groundcovers would intersperse pale lavender and pink flowers along the common areas while being easily identifiable if they begin to extend into homeowners' lawns. Also, due to their minimal irrigation requirements (watering only needed when first established), they will easily exist with rainfall. These plants are all easy to mow, do well with a semi-annual cutting and are capable of handling light foot traffic without developing bare spots.