

CENTRAL FLORIDA NATIVE PLANTS FOR POND RESTORATION

By Peggy Gretchen,
Florida Master Gardener, Pasco County

Retention ponds may be developed and maintained as functioning wetland systems for both aesthetic and wildlife value, as well as serving their purpose of stormwater management. While there exists no exact natural system with analogous conditions, there are many native species that will adapt well to these sites, despite the often inhospitable conditions which may include infertile and compacted soils, lime spill from paving, temperature extremes, water level extremes, and contaminated runoff. Perhaps the closest natural parallels to retention ponds are Cypress Swamp Forests, Wetland Forests (hydric hammock, floodplain forest), and Freshwater Marshes. Many of the plant species found in these natural communities tolerate a wide range of conditions and are adaptable and suitable for pond restoration. They contribute to improved water quality, provide aesthetic beauty, as well as provide food and cover for wildlife.

Vegetation zones in natural wetland systems are determined by water depth and will guide your pond landscape design. Wetland and aquatic species may be particular about water depths, so determine the requirement of your plants before design and installation. Also, determine the average water level of your pond over the course of a year. Then, choose native plants appropriate for the depth of water or the degree of soil moisture from the pond edge and up the bank. Planting zones include: 1) deep water, 2) shallow water, 3) shoreline or littoral zone between high and low waterlines (pond edge and low bank), 4) high bank and top of bank. Follow a layered approach beginning with your deep water aquatics, then your shallow water aquatics and littoral zone plants, then your shoreline groundcovers and small woody shrubs and small trees (understory), and finally your larger woody shrubs and canopy trees as you progress up the bank. Some non-wetland species such as saw palmetto may thrive high up on the bank where the soil is well drained (drier).

Research the native plant species you are interested in using to determine their requirements for soil, light, and moisture. Some may prefer a more acidic soil such as the native wild azaleas. Some may require at least partial shade and should be used in the understory such as Hornbeam (*Carpinus* sp.). Resources include books (often available at the library), websites, and your local nursery professional. Also, contact your local chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS), the Association of Florida Native Nurseries (AFNN), as well as your local Cooperative Extension Service. Included in this packet are resource and contact information.

CAUTION: Please avoid the use of non-native (exotic) invasive species, which are difficult to control, may cause environmental damage, and are not adapted to our native wildlife. Contact above resources for more information on what plants to avoid or that may need to be removed from your pond prior to restoration. Also, the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council is a good resource for more information. Go to www.fleppc.org for a current list of invasive species to avoid and remove from your pond restoration project.

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Following is a list of some of the wetland and aquatic native plant species suitable for use in pond restoration and beautification projects or aquascaping in central Florida.

TREES (Canopy and Understory)

Bay, Swamp (*Persea palustris*)
Boxelder (*Acer negundo*)
Cypress, Bald (*Taxodium distichum*)
Cypress, Pond (*Taxodium ascendens*)
Dahoon Holly (*Ilex cassine*)
Dogwood, Swamp (*Cornus foemina*)
Elm, American (*Ulmus americana*)
Hickory, Water (*Carya aquatica*)
Hornbeam or Blue Beech (*Carpinus caroliniana*)
Loblolly Bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*)
Oak, Laurel (*Quercus laurifolia*)
Oak, Swamp Chestnut (*Quercus michauxii*)
Parsley Haw (*Crataegus marshallii*)
Palm, Cabbage (*Sabal palmetto*)
Palm, Paurotis (*Acoelorrhapha wrightii*)
Pine, Pond (*Pinus serotina*)
Pine, Slash (*Pinus elliottii*)
Pine, South Florida Slash (*Pinus elliottii* var. *densa*)
Pop Ash (*Fraxinus caroliniana*)
Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)
River Birch (*Betula nigra*)
Simpson Stopper (*Myrcianthes fragrans*)
Snowbell (*Styrax americanus* and *Styrax grandifolia*)
Sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*)
Sweetbay Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*)
Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)
Tupelo, Swamp (*Nyssa sylvatica* var. *biflora*)
Tupelo, Water (*Nyssa aquatica*)
Viburnum, Walter's (*Viburnum obovatum*)
Willow, Coastal Plain (*Salix caroliniana*)

SHRUBS

Anise, Yellow (*Illicium parviflorum*)
Azaleas, Wild: Florida Flame (*Rhododendron austrinum*)
 Pinxter (*Rhododendron canescens*)
 Swamp (*Rhododendron viscosum* var. *serrulatum*)
Blue-Stem Palmetto (*Sabal minor*)
Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)
Dog-Hobble (*Leucothoe axillaris* and *Leucothoe racemosa*)
Dogwood, Swamp (*Cornus foemina*)
Fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*)
Gallberry (*Ilex glabra*)
Gallberry, Large Sweet (*Ilex coriacea*)
Holly, Possumhaw (*Ilex decidua*)
Indigo, Wild (*Amorpha fruticosa*)
Needle Palm (*Rhapidophyllum hystrix*)
Pipestem (*Agarista populifolia*)
Pond-Spice (*Litsea aestivalis*)
Simpson's Stopper (*Myrcianthes fragrans*)
St. John's-Worts, St. Andrew's-Crosses (*Hypericum* species)
Swamp Rose (*Rosa palustris*)
Sweet Pepperbush or Summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*)
Titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*)
Titi, Black (*Cyrilla monophylla*)
Viburnums: Arrowwood (*Viburnum dentatum*)
 Possumhaw Viburnum (*Viburnum nudum*)
 Walter's Viburnum (*Viburnum obovatum*)—many dwarf cultivars also
Virginia Willow (*Itea virginica*)
Wax Myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*)

GROUNDCOVERS (GRASSES, FERNS) & WILDFLOWERS

Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium atlanticum*)
Cinnamon Fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*)
Climbing Aster (*Aster carolinianus*)
Chain Ferns (*Woodwardia areolata*, *Woodwardia virginica*)
Cordgrass, Saltmeadow (*Spartina patens*)
Cordgrass, Sand (*Spartina bakeri*)
Dwarf Fakahatchee Grass (*Tripsacum floridanum*)
Eastern Gamagrass or Fakahatchee Grass (*Tripsacum dactyloides*)
Giant Cutgrass (*Zizaniopsis miliacea*)
Leather Ferns (*Acrostichum aureum*, *Acrostichum danaeifolium*)
Loosestrife (*Lythrum alatum*)
Meadow Beauty (*Rhexia* species)
Milkweed, Swamp (*Asclepias incarnata*)
Milkweed, White Swamp (*Asclepias perennis*)
Muhly Grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*)
Rosegentians (*Sabatia* species)
Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*)
Saltmarsh Mallow (*Kosteletzkya virginica*)
Sea-Oxeye Daisy (*Borrchia frutescens*)
Shield Fern or Wood Fern (*Thelypteris kunthii*)
Shield Fern, Southern (*Dryopteris ludoviciana*)
Smartweeds (*Polygonum* species)
Swamp Fern (*Blechnum serrulatum*)
Swamp Sunflower (*Helianthus angustifolius*)
Tickseed (*Coreopsis* spp.)
Wood Sage (*Teucrium canadense*)

FRESHWATER AQUATICS

Alligator Flag (*Thalia geniculata*)
American Lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*)
Bulrushes (*Scirpus* species): Giant Bulrush (*Scirpus californicus*)
Softstem Bulrush (*Scirpus tabernaemontani*, *S. validus*)
Bur-marigold (*Bidens laevis*)
Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
Common Arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*)
Duck Potato (*Sagittaria lancifolia*)
Golden Canna (*Canna flaccida*)
Golden Club (*Orontium aquaticum*)
Hibiscus, Pink Swamp (*Hibiscus grandiflorus*)
Hibiscus, Scarlet (*Hibiscus coccineus*)
Iris, Prairie Blue Flag (*Iris hexagona*)
Iris, Southern Blue Flag (*Iris virginica*)
Knotgrass (*Paspalum distichum*)
Lemon Bacopa (*Bacopa caroliniana*)
Lizard's Tail (*Saururus cenuus*)
Maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*) + other Panic grasses (*Panicum* species)
Pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata* and *Pontederia lanceolata*)
Red Ludwigia (*Ludwigia repens*)
Red Root (*Lachnanthes caroliniana*)
Sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*)
Skyflower (*Hydrolea corymbosa*)
Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*)
Spatterdock (*Nuphar luteum*)
Spikerushes (*Eleocharis celloso*)
Spider Lily (*Hymenocallis latifolia*)
String Lily (*Crinum americanum*)
Water Hyssop (*Bacopa monnieri*)
Water Lily, Fragrant White (*Nymphaea odorata*)
Water Lily, Yellow (*Nymphaea mexicana*)

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