

# Bird- and Butterfly- Friendly Plants for Central Florida

Provided by



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Northern Mockingbird  
Florida's State Bird

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Living in Central Florida offers wonderful opportunities to grow native and Florida-friendly plants which provide food and shelter for birds, butterflies and other wildlife. Natives are marked with \*.

## Larvae Trees

**Black Cherry\*** (*Prunus serotina*) attracts fruit- and insect-eating birds and is a host for the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterfly.

**Cabbage Palm\*** (*Sabal palmetto*) is Florida's state tree. It provides nectar for pollinators, fruit for birds and is a larval host for the Monk Skipper butterfly as well as a nectar plant for butterflies.

**Eastern Red Cedar\*** (*Juniperus virginiana*) provides excellent dense cover for birds; the female trees produce fruit which is eaten by many bird species, including Cedar Waxwings.

**Live Oak\*** (*Quercus virginiana*) Oaks are favorites of insect-eating birds. Acorns are eaten by birds and mammals, and they are host trees for numerous butterfly species.

**Longleaf Pine\*** (*Pinus palustris*) supports insect-eating birds and provides nuts for birds and mammals as well as nesting sites.

**Red Maple\*** (*Acer rubrum*) produces early season nectar for pollinators. It provides seeds for birds and mammals and supports insect-eating birds.

**Sugarberry or Hackberry\*** (*Celtis laevigata*) offers fruit for birds and is larval host for several butterfly species.



American Beautyberry

## Small Trees, Shrubs

**American Beautyberry\*** (*Callicarpa americana*) Berries are enjoyed by finches, catbirds, bobwhites, other bird species, and small mammals.

**Deerberry\*** (*Vaccinium stamineum*) Deer, birds, and small mammals eat the berries.

**Flatwoods Plum\*** (*Prunus umbellata*) Prunus species attract insect-eating birds; fruit for birds and small mammals.

**Myrtle Oak\*** (*Quercus myrtifolia*) Caterpillars and other insects are eaten by birds; tree is host for several butterflies.

**Saw palmetto\*** (*Serenoa repens*) Palmetto berries feed small mammals, birds; Palmetto Skipper larvae feed on fronds.

**Southern Wax Myrtle\*** (*Morella cerifera*) The berries are enjoyed by winter birds such as the Yellow-rumped Warbler.

**Walter's Viburnum\*** (*Viburnum obovatum*) This shrub produces early nectar for pollinators and berries which are eaten by several bird species.

**Yaupon Holly\*** (*Ilex vomitoria*) A number of bird species eat the berries; the foliage provides dense cover.

## Vines

**Coral Honeysuckle\*** (*Lonicera sempervivens*) Hummingbirds and butterflies enjoy the nectar this vine provides.

**Corkystem Passionvine\*** (*Passiflora suberosa*) Zebra Longwing and Gulf Fritillary butterflies lay their eggs on this vine.



Zebra Longwing, Florida's State Butterfly

**Avoid and Remove** the following exotic, invasive plants that disrupt Central Florida's ecosystem:

Air Potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*)  
Brazilian Pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolia*)  
Cat's Claw Vine (*Dolichandra unguis-cati*)  
Chinese Tallow (*Sapium sebiferum*)  
Mexican Petunia (*Ruellia simplex*)  
Skunk Vine (*Paederia foetida*)



American Goldfinch

## Flowers and ground cover

**Butterfly Weed\*** (*Asclepias tuberosa*) This is a milkweed host for Monarch and Queen butterflies, providing nectar as well.

**Dune Sunflower\*** (*Helianthus debilis*) In addition to nectar for pollinators, sunflowers provide food for both insect- and seed-eating birds.

**Partridge Pea\*** (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*) This is a host for Cloudless Sulphur and Gray Hairstreak butterflies.

**Seaside Goldenrod\*** (*Solidago sempervirens*) Major food source for migrating Monarchs. Provides food for insect- and seed-eating birds.

**Turkey Tangle Fogfruit\*** (*Phyla nodiflora*) Several butterflies use this as a host plant, including Phaon Crescent, Common Buckeye and White Peacock.

## Florida-friendly Landscaping Plants for Birds and Butterflies

**Simpson's Stopper\*** (*Myrcianthes fragrans*) Also called **Twinberry**.

**Peregrina** (*Jatropha integerrima*) Also called **Spicy Jatropha**. Clusters of red flowers.

**Firebush\*** (*Hamelia patens*) A non-native **Dwarf Fire Bush** is also attractive to butterflies, hummingbirds and pollinators.

**Wild Coffee\*** (*Psychotria nervosa*) Does best in partial to full shade.

**Coontie\*** (*Zamia floridana*) Drought tolerant, cold tolerant to 30 degrees.

**Golden Dewdrop** (*Duranta erecta*) Purple flowers, golden berries eaten by birds.

**Purple Coneflower\*** (*Echinacea purpurea*) Drought-tolerant perennial.

**Blanket Flower\*** (*Gaillardia pulchella*) Blooms year-round.

**Black-eyed Susan\*** (*Rudbeckia hirta*) Annual or short-lived perennial.

**Swamp Sunflower\*** (*Helianthus angustifolius*)

\*Native plant.

## Sources

Center for Aquatic and Invasive Weeds, University of Florida, IFAS Extension: [plants.ifas.ufl.edu](http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu)

Florida Association of Native Nurseries: [fann.org](http://fann.org)

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission *Planting a Refuge for Wildlife*: [myfwc.com/viewing/habitat/refuge](http://myfwc.com/viewing/habitat/refuge)

Florida Native Plant Society: [fnps.org](http://fnps.org)

Florida-Friendly Landscaping: The Smart Way to Grow: [floridayards.org](http://floridayards.org)