

NATIVE TREES SUITABLE FOR BAY COUNTY, FLORIDA

From Florida Native Plant Society web site: www.fnps.org and UF/IFAS handout: *Trees for Home Landscaping in Northwest Florida*

Other sources: Eastern Trees, a Peterson Field Guide, Trees of Florida, Gil Nelson

Provided by Sweetbay Chapter of Florida Native Plant Society and Bay County Audubon Society.

These native trees listed below are selected for moderate to high wind resistance and to be wildlife-friendly providing both cover and food for birds and other wildlife. A separate list of less wind-resistant species is also included. These trees have beneficial qualities to wildlife also but care must be taken not to plant these trees close to structures. Properties and requirements of each tree are included, including size, light and soil requirements, water needs and salt tolerance.

Deciduous trees, wind resistant

River Birch (*Betula nigra*) 50-80 feet. Long lived. Tolerant of most soils but not prolonged flooding. Sun to part shade. Not salt tolerant. Interesting flaky bark.

Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*) An understory tree to 25 feet. Average to loamy acid, dry soil. Not salt tolerant. Can be challenging to grow in home landscapes. Requires shade.

Blackgum Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) 30-50 feet. Good fall color. Sun to part shade. Average to dry soils. Not salt tolerant. Seeds eaten by birds and other wildlife. A source of tupelo honey. Also: Ogeechee and Water Tupelos. These two species prefer wetter soils.

Winged Elm (*Ulmus alata*) To 70 feet. Can grow in medium to wet soils, sun to part shade. Medium to fast growing. Yellow fall foliage.

Pignut Hickory (*Carya glabra*) 50-80 feet. Good wildlife tree, yellow fall foliage. Moderately wind resistant. Fast growing. Average well-drained soils. Abundance of hard nuts may be a landscaping problem. Sun to part shade. Other hickory species are available.

Red Mulberry (*Morus rubra*) To 40 feet or more. Attractive to birds and other animals for its red, delicious fruit but may stain hard surfaces. Sun to part shade, average medium to well-drained soils.

Musclewood, American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*) To 25 feet. Long lived tree with interesting trunk and bark. Umbrella-like canopy provides dappled shade. Tolerates average to moist soils and short periods of flooding. Not salt tolerant. Shade to full sun. Good understory tree.

Fringe Tree, Grancy Grey beard (*Chionanthus virginicus*) An understory tree to 25 feet with white, showy fringe-like flowers. Average to dry soils. Tolerates shade but flowers best in full sun. Not salt tolerant.

Two-Winged and Carolina Silverbells (*Halesia* sp.) To 25 feet. Excellent understory trees with similar growth requirements as Flowering Dogwood. Prefers moist, rich, well-drained acidic soil. Sun to shade but part shade is best. Features showy bell-shaped white flowers in the spring.

Pond Cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*) To 50 feet. Long lived. Wind resistant. Average to wet soils. Sun to part shade. Sandy to mucky acid soils. "knees" may be a problem in mowed yards.

Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) 50-75 feet. Long lived. Wind resistant. Sun to part shade. Average to wet sandy to mucky soils. “knees” may be a problem in mowed yards.

Evergreen or semi-evergreen, wind resistant trees

Sweetbay Magnolia, Silverbay (*Magnolia virginiana*) To 80 feet. Common in fresh water wetlands, this evergreen tree will tolerate average to moist soils. High salt tolerance and wind resistance. Sun to part shade. Features fragrant white flowers and silvery leaf undersides.

Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*) A large native pine to 80 feet or more that is vital to various birds and other wildlife species. It is moderately wind resistant. Tolerates average to dry acidic soils. Sun to part shade. Not salt tolerant. Fairly slow growing.

Cabbage (Sabal) Palm To 80 feet. Wind resistant. Shade to full sun. Moist to dry soils. Salt tolerant. Sand to loamy soils. Florida’s state native tree. Provides food and nesting for various wildlife species.

Dahoon holly (*Ilex cassine*) To 25 feet. Commonly seen in wetlands but tolerates average soils. Female plant produces red berries that are eaten by many bird species. Long-lived. Full sun to part shade, sandy to loamy soil. Not salt tolerant. Acid to neutral soil. A good landscape plant.

American holly (*Ilex opaca*) 15-25 feet. Similar characteristics to Dahoon but prefers slightly drier soils. Moderate salt tolerance. Wind resistant. Also consider East Palatka and Savannah Holly a natural cross between American and Dahoon Hollies.

Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) A large tree to over 80 feet. Large, fragrant white flowers, red seed cones that are eaten by birds. Evergreen, leathery leaves. Any light conditions. Average to dry soils. Not salt tolerant. Large leaves can be a problem in the landscape. Best used in a natural setting.

Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*) A large, semi-evergreen tree to 80 feet tall, spreading to over 150 feet. Any light conditions. Average to dry sandy or loamy soils. As with other oaks, it hosts many insect species, which attract large numbers of migrating birds. Very long-lived tree.

Sand Live Oak (*Quercus geminate*) Similar to Live Oak but shorter, at 40 feet tall, 30 feet wide. Tolerates average to dry sandy soils. Full sun to part shade.

Other oak species to consider: Nuttall Oak, White Oak, Swamp Chestnut Oak, Myrtle Oak, Southern Red Oak, Scarlet Oak, Cherrybark Oak, Chapman’s Oak and others. These species may not be wind resistant so choose planting site carefully.

Less wind-resistant deciduous native trees

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) 35-80 feet. A fast-growing tree with shallow root system. Provides both spring and fall red color. Good for wildlife. Sun to part shade. Tolerates dry to wet soils. Not salt tolerant.

Florida Maple (*Acer saccharum* subsp. *floridanum*) Similar to Red Maple but is a subspecies of the Sugar Maple. 25-50 feet. Part sun to shade. Can tolerate wet to dry sandy or loamy soils.

American Elm, (*Ulmus Americana*) is a large, stately tree to 80-100 feet but is susceptible to Dutch Elm Disease. Trunk normally divides into two large limbs at ground level, giving the tree a distinctive, vase shape. Normally found in rich, deciduous bottomlands but can grow in average soil. Sun to part shade.

Chickasaw Plum (*Prunus angustifolia*) To 20 feet. Prefers sun to part shade, well-drained soil. Features profusion of white spring flowers followed by reddish edible fruits. May sucker. "Guthrie" cultivar does not sucker. Plant 2-3 for best pollination and fruit production. Great tree for wildlife.

Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) 25-30 feet. Showy early spring flowers. Prefers sandy or loamy soils. Average to dry conditions. Full sun to shade. Not salt tolerant. Medium growth rate.

Ashe Magnolia (*Magnolia ashei*) To 20 feet or more. Endangered. Found on slopes and ravines in deciduous woods as an understory tree. Features very large leaves and huge, fragrant white flowers. Grows best in rich, well-drained soil under partial shade. Does not tolerate flooding.

White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*) A large, stately tree to 75 feet. Deciduous. Found in a rich woodland setting. Long-lived and sturdy. Sun to part shade.

Southern Crabapple (*Malus angustifolia*) To 20 feet. Has fragrant white to pink flowers and small green to reddish edible fruit. Nice small tree for the landscape but is thorny. Sun to part shade. Average well drained soil. Tolerates short periods of flooding.

Shumard Oak (*Quercus shumardii*) Large (to 100 feet) member of the red oak family. Nice fall color. Fairly fast growing. Found in moist bottomlands but tolerates average landscape soil.

Less Wind Resistant Evergreen Trees

Wax Myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*) To 25 feet. A spreading, multi-trunked large shrub or small tree that provides cover and food for birds and other wildlife. Forms thickets and suckers. High salt tolerance but low wind resistance. Tolerates full sun to shade. Average to wet well-drained soil. Dwarf and weeping varieties are available.

Loblolly Bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*) To 60 feet. Found in moist to wet soil. Beautiful, conical evergreen tree for the appropriate landscape. Features fragrant white flowers and shiny green leaves. Part shade to sun.

Southern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) To 80 feet, usually much smaller in coastal areas. Good for wildlife. Grows in a wide range of soil and light conditions.

Other native tree species to consider: Sweetgum, Green Ash, Serviceberry, Red Buckeye, Sugarberry (Hackberry), Red Bay, Pawpaw, Sassafras, Sparkleberry, Sycamore and Tulip Poplar (in large landscapes).