



Meeting Your Native Neighbors

Children's Activities, by the Florida Native Plant Society - Naples Chapter

Introduction - What is a Florida native plant?



A plant is a living thing that makes its own food using the sun. Trees, bushes, and flowers are all plants. A Florida native plant is a plant that naturally grows in Florida. This means that the plant probably lived in Florida before people moved in! You can find these plants in places like forests, prairies, and wetlands. Many people love Florida native plants, so they plant them in their gardens, too.

Why do we care about Florida native plants? Since these plants have lived in Florida for so long, there are many animals that use them for food and shelter. Florida native plants are part of natural systems that do very important things for people, like clean water and hold soil in place. We hope you grow to love Florida native plants as much as we do! Have fun getting to know our native plants in the activities that follow.

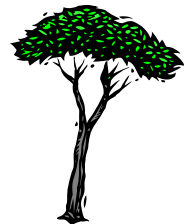
Activity #1 - Word Search



Circle the names of Florida native plants (listed in the word bank below). You may find the names by reading from left to right, up to down, or on a diagonal.



B	C	P	R	I	C	K	L	Y	P	E	A	R	O	B	S
P	A	D	H	R	W	A	G	S	X	C	I	P	A	U	A
U	B	L	S	L	A	S	H	P	I	N	E	W	C	T	W
S	B	P	D	D	X	C	O	C	O	P	L	U	M	T	P
G	A	I	E	C	M	V	S	E	A	G	R	A	P	E	A
M	G	N	R	O	Y	R	T	N	W	E	E	O	A	R	L
W	E	E	B	R	R	P	O	A	I	T	J	V	B	F	M
R	P	L	K	A	T	F	R	G	L	I	I	N	F	L	E
E	A	I	N	L	L	T	C	E	D	C	S	Y	T	Y	T
D	L	L	C	B	E	S	H	P	S	K	H	M	K	O	T
M	M	Y	J	E	T	B	I	L	A	S	E	A	M	R	O
A	L	N	P	A	X	L	D	Y	G	E	O	R	C	C	K
P	K	F	O	N	I	T	G	P	E	E	U	M	R	H	S
L	V	A	Y	D	H	A	K	R	V	D	J	S	F	I	E
E	E	O	B	T	T	N	S	I	S	G	D	E	L	D	U
S	T	W	I	M	X	U	L	F	I	R	E	B	U	S	H



Word Bank



Bald Cypress	Ghost Orchid	Tickseed	Slash Pine	Butterfly Orchid	Firebush
Cabbage Palm	Red Maple	Wax Myrtle	Sea Oats	Coral Bean	Prickly Pear
Live Oak	Coco Plum	Saw Palmetto	Sea Grape	Pine Lily	Wild Sage









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Activity #2 - Matching & Drawing

Draw a line to connect the name of each Florida native plant on the left with the correct part of its life story on the right. In the space below, draw a picture of your favorite plant acting out its life story.

Alligator Flag		Monarch butterflies seek me out to drink nectar from my flowers and lay eggs on my leaves.
Butterfly Milkweed		Gopher tortoises don't mind my thorns - they still eat my fleshy pads.
Live Oak		Florida panthers raise their kittens inside thickets of my fan-shaped leaves.
Prickly Pear		People gave me my name because big reptiles like to rest in the water under my leaves.
Saw Palmetto		Woodpeckers love looking for insects in my bark and making homes for their babies inside my trunk.
Slash Pine		Squirrels like to gather the acorns I make on the ends of my branches.



Draw your picture here!



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Activity #3 - Scavenger Hunt at Home



With your parents, go on a walk around your yard or local park and check off as many plants as you can from the list(s) below. Don't forget to answer the questions at the bottom of the page when you're done!



Use List A if you have a field guide of native plants, like *National Audubon Society Field Guide to Florida*. Try to match pictures in the field guide with the plants you see outside.

Use List B if you don't have a field guide yet. Look closely at the plants you see outside to figure out if they match the descriptions.

List A

Trees



- Bald Cypress
- Live Oak
- Red Maple
- Royal Palm
- Slash Pine

Shrubs (Bushes)



- Beautyberry
- Coco Plum
- Firebush
- Saw Palmetto
- Sea Grape

Wildflowers



- Black-eyed Susan
- Dune Sunflower
- Scarlet Sage
- Spanish Needles
- Tickseed

List B



A tree with reddish bark that makes woody cones



A tree with rough, gray bark and needles that fall off in winter



A tree with a smooth, gray trunk and big palm fronds



A shrub with orange, tube-shaped flowers



A shrub with big, round leaves that makes clusters of round fruits



A shrub with small, round leaves that makes black fruits



A wildflower with white petals that grows along roads/paths



A wildflower with yellow petals that spreads along the ground



A wildflower with red, tube-shaped flowers

1) What was your favorite plant? Write its name or what it looked like.

2) Was it easy or hard to find these plants? Why?