

Wetland Wildflowers & Wildlife

Aquatic plants nurture biodiversity and promote healthy water conditions by taking up nutrients that might otherwise feed algae. Floating plants, such as water lilies and spatterdock, provide valuable shelter for fish and other creatures, while further reducing algae growth by shading the water below. The seeds and tissues from plants like pickerelweed and arrowhead are important sources of food for many species of waterfowl. Butterflies use wildflowers for nectar, while their caterpillar young feed on many native plants during their development. Frogs, turtles, and many other animals benefit from enhanced diversity in the wetland vegetative community.

Minimizing Maintenance

The use of native plants well-adapted to their environment potentially offers benefits in the form of reduced maintenance requirements. Just as plants vary in height and shape above ground, the roots of plants reach different depths and spread in the soil, each species having its own configuration, often enhancing soil stabilization. Plants adapted to their native soils have little need for supplemental fertilizers; those adapted to local rainfall patterns have scant need for additional irrigation; those that co-evolved with insect populations need not rely on pesticides; and unlike turf, wildflowers do not require frequent mowing.

Site Suitability

As with all landscaping projects, the selection and placement of plant species—including wetland wildflowers—requires careful thought, and may benefit from professional guidance. Soil pH, water salinity, seasonal variations in water depth, foot traffic or the lack thereof, issues of sun and shade, and other matters must be considered. Such determinations can be entrusted to qualified professionals, or interested individuals can use the free resources and guidance available at their local Agricultural Extension Office.

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FLORIDA WILDFLOWER FOUNDATION, INC.
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www.floridawildflowercouncil.org



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WETLAND WILDFLOWERS

For Ponds, Lakesides,
& Other Freshwater Settings



Enhance Beauty
Nurture Environmental Diversity
Reduce Maintenance

Aquatic Plants For Shallow Water



Arrowhead
Sagittaria latifolia
Spring - Summer
Spikes of white blooms

An important food plant for aquatic birds and wildlife



Pickerelweed
Pontederia cordata
Spring - Summer - Fall
Spikes of blue-violet blooms

Spreads vegetatively, very showy, reliable color



Water Lily
Nymphaea odorata
Spring - Summer - Fall
Fragrant white blossoms

Pads provide shelter for fish and help reduce algae

Freshwater aquatic plants are adapted to near constant flooding; they will suffer if subjected to prolonged or frequent droughts.

More Aquatic Wildflowers

American Lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*)
Yellow blooms; circular, emergent pads

Fire Flag (*Thalia geniculata*)
Small purple flowers; lance-like leaves

Spatterdock (*Nuphar luteum*)
Yellow bloom; pads similar to water lily

Yellow Canna (*Canna flaccida*)
Showy, golden flowers; lance-like leaves

Marginal Plants For Moist Soils



Blue-flag Iris
Iris virginica
Spring
Purple & yellow flowers

Lovely flowers, attractive dwarf cattail-like foliage



Swamp Milkweed
Asclepias incarnata
Summer - Fall
Lavender flowerheads

An important food plant for several butterflies



Water Primrose
Ludwigia octovalvis
Summer - Fall
Canary-yellow blossoms

Small, perennial shrub with extended blooming period

Marginals are adapted to seasonal fluctuations in moisture; they are well-suited for transitional conditions along the shoreline.

More Marginal Wildflowers

Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*)
Petite blue flowers; grasslike plant

Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
Spikes of vivid red flowers; upright shrub

Lemon Bacopa (*Bacopa caroliniana*)
Purple flowers; petite groundcover

Swamp Sunflower (*Helianthus angustifolius*)
Prolific yellow blooms; upright shrub

Upland Plants For Dry Slopes



Black-eyed Susan
Rudbeckia hirta
Summer
Large, daisy-like blooms

An old-time favorite, flowers held aloft on stems



Blanketflower
Gaillardia pulchella
Spring - Summer - Fall
Vivid red & yellow blooms

Spawling and carefree, endures harsh conditions



Coreopsis
Coreopsis spp.
Year-round
Stunning in mass plantings

Florida's State Wildflower - many varieties available

Upland wildflowers are poorly equipped to endure flooded conditions; they are suitable for well-drained, dryer soils higher up the bank.

More Upland Wildflowers

Anise Goldenrod (*Solidago odora*)
Yellow flowers; upright herb

Blazing Star (*Liatriis spictata*)
Spikes of purple flowers; low-growing

Spotted Beebalm (*Monarda punctata*)
Pink-purple clusters; small shrub

Summer Farewell (*Dalea pinnata*)
White flowerheads; loose perennial herb