



# Native Plants



DEPARTMENT OF  
CONSERVATION



*Leafcutter Bee cutting nesting material*

## Why Native Plants?

This garden displays plants native to the ecosystems of Florida, mimicking their natural habitat which is often threatened by the clearing of natural areas for land development. These plants are part of an ecological network of life, providing food and shelter for wildlife. While gardens often contain ornamental and non-native plants, adding native plants to them can provide crucial resources for local pollinators and animals. Oftentimes rare butterflies and bees require specific native plants which are often missing from the average home garden. In addition, grass lawns may be completely lacking in floral resources for pollinators, making suburban landscapes pollinator deserts. The common names of plants are in green, the Latin names in black. Plant family names are in red.



*Brazilian Pepper, an invasive plant introduced as an ornamental*



*Mockingbird eating ripe elderberries*



*Zoysia grass, a popular lawn option lacking nectar*



*A Prescribed Fire, important to maintain habitat quality*



*The toxic white sap of a milkweed*

## Adaptations

The climate of South Florida poses challenges for plants. As a result, they have developed adaptations to survive. These include hairy leaves which reflect light, toxic chemicals to prevent animals from eating their leaves, and the ability to grow rapidly and flower after a fire. Many of these adaptations evolved over the course of millions of years, and so the rapid changes imposed on the landscape today are happening too quickly for the plants to adapt appropriately. Very often, unrelated groups of plants will develop similar adaptations due to being exposed to similar conditions. This process is known as “Convergent Evolution” and can be seen across all forms of life. Look for small details on the leaves and stems of the plants.



*Stiff hairs on a Black-eyed Susan*



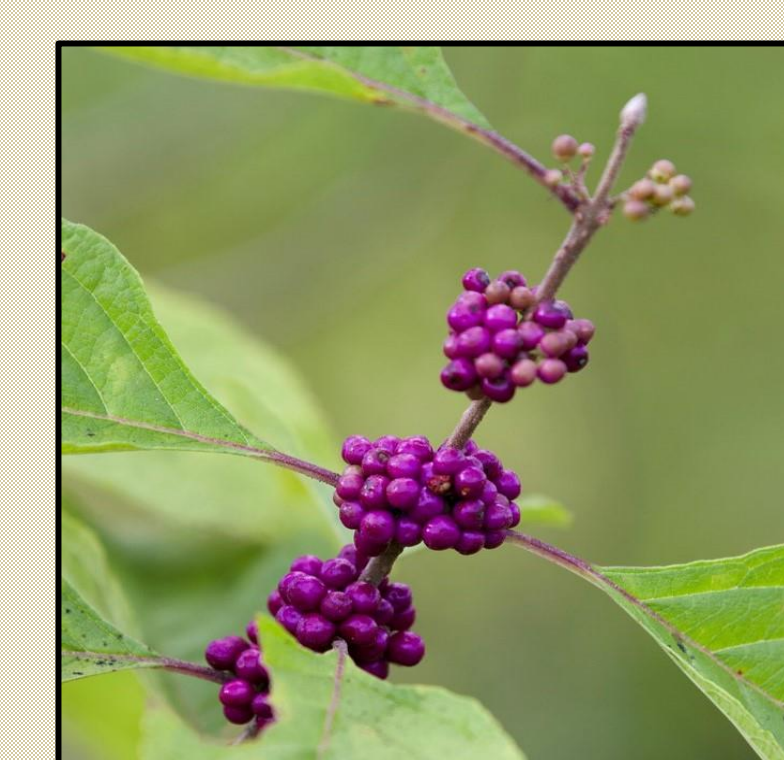
*The thorns on a native dewberry*



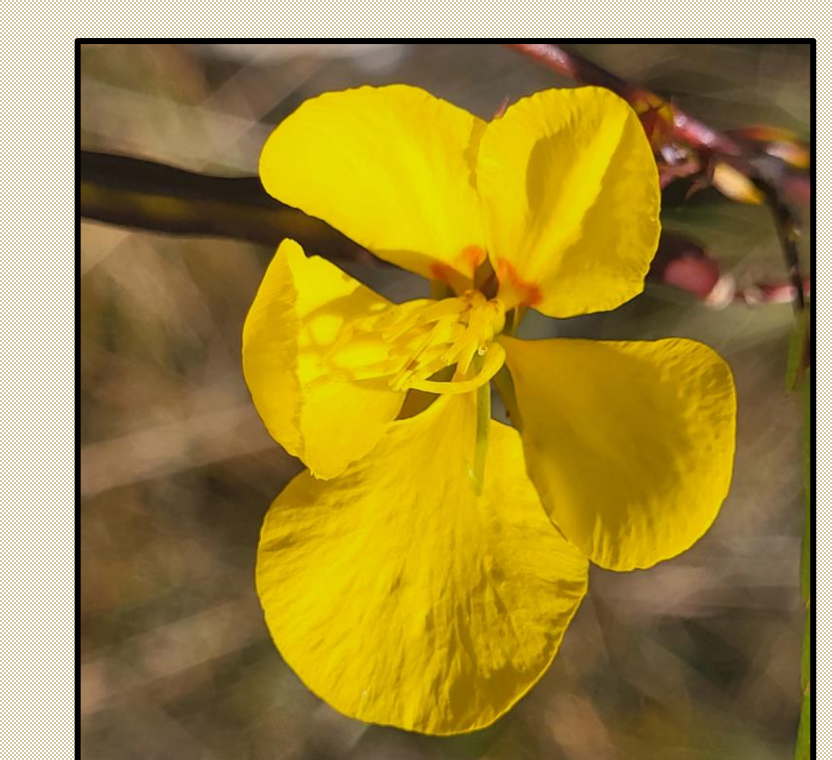
Wiregrass  
*Aristida stricta*  
**Poaceae**



Butterflyweed  
*Asclepias tuberosa*  
**Apocyanaceae**



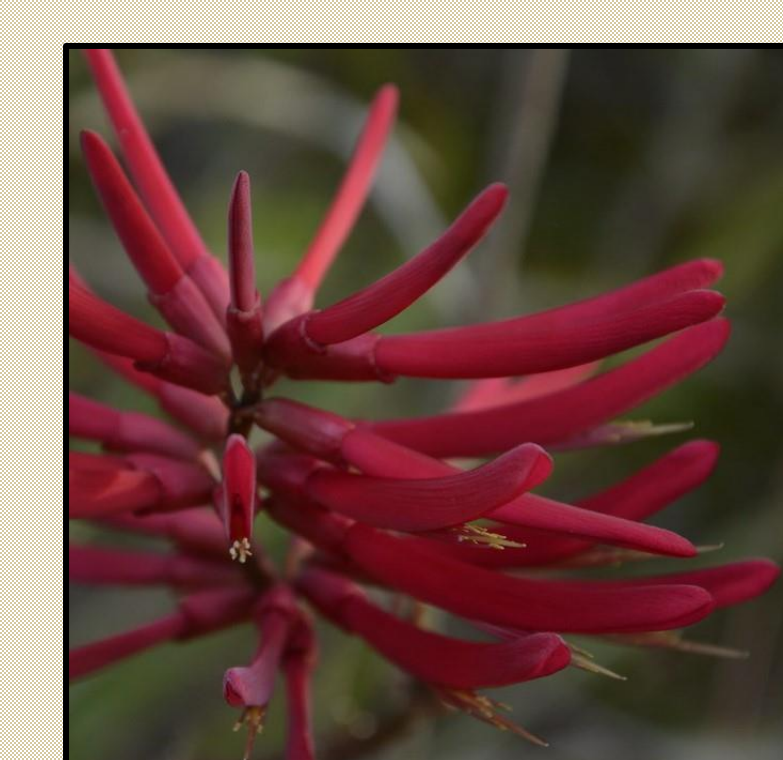
Beautyberry  
*Callicarpa americana*  
**Lamiaceae**



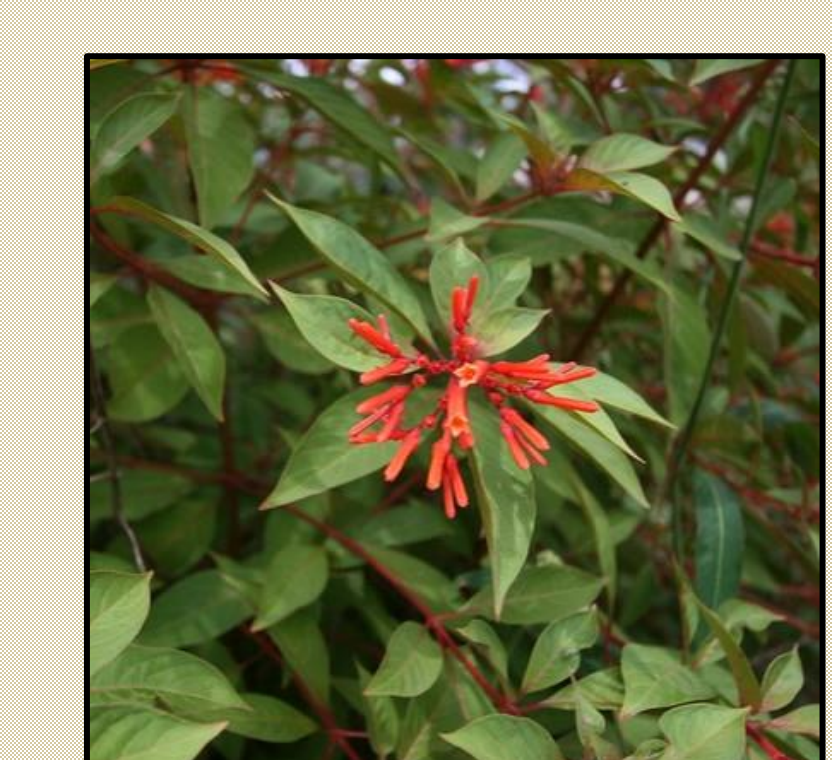
Partridge Pea  
*Chamaecrista fasciculata*  
**Fabaceae**



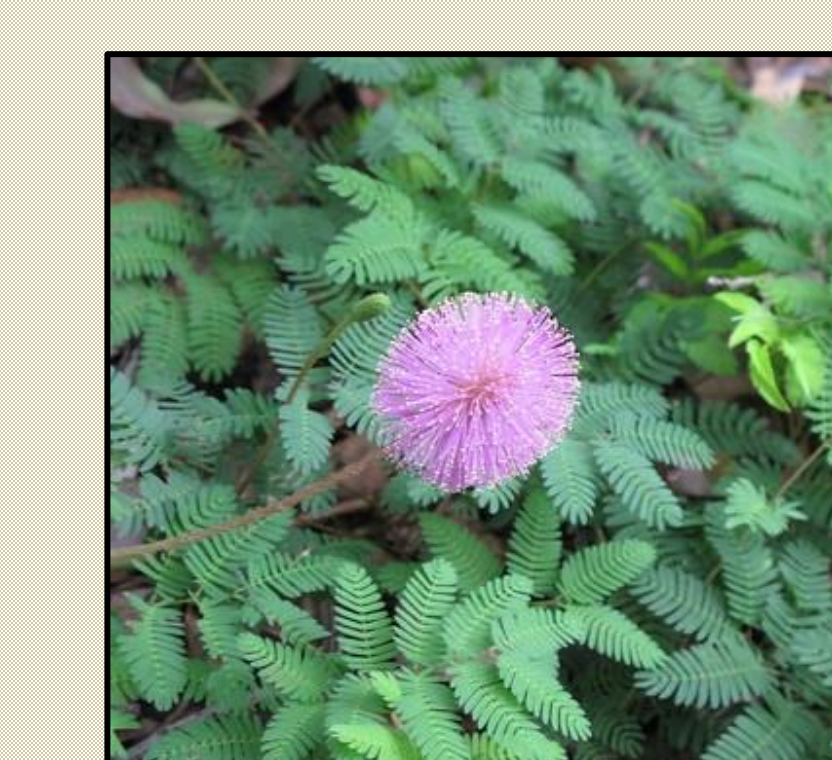
Tickseed  
*Coreopsis leavenworthii*  
**Asteraceae**



Coral Bean  
*Erythrina herbacea*  
**Fabaceae**



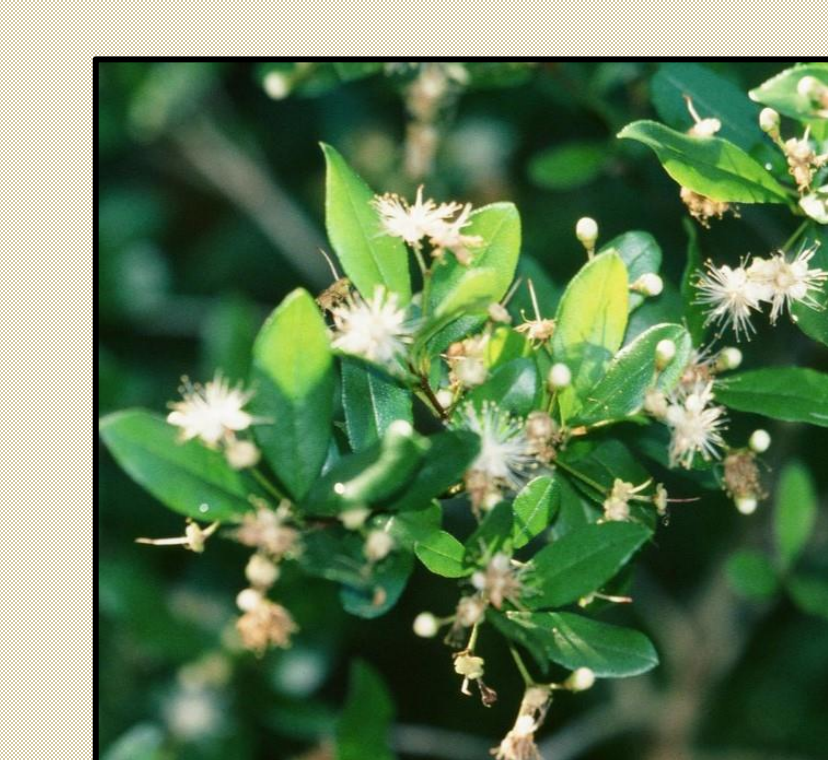
Firebush  
*Hamelia patens*  
**Rubiaceae**



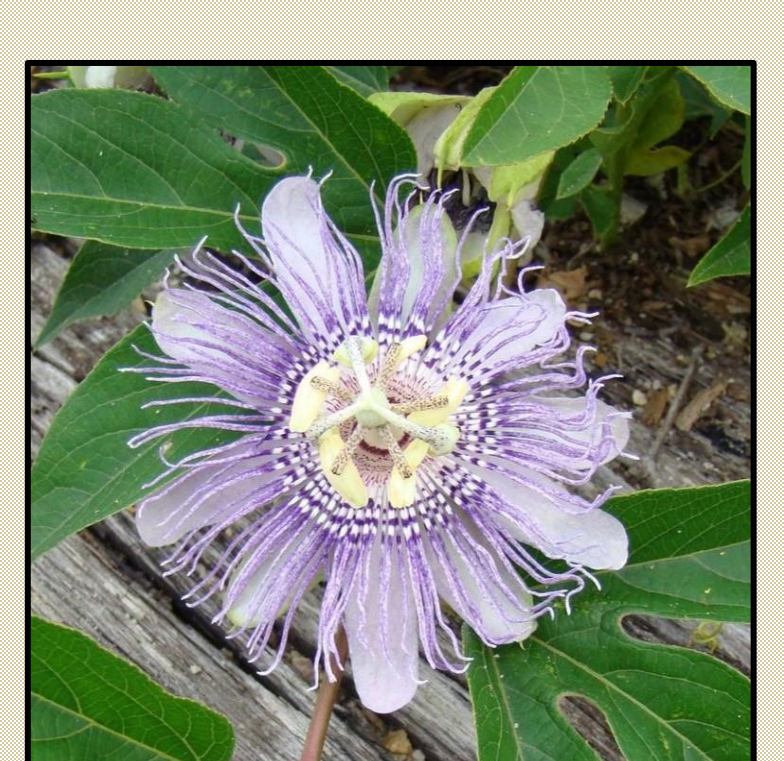
Sunshine Mimosa  
*Mimosa strigilosa*  
**Fabaceae**



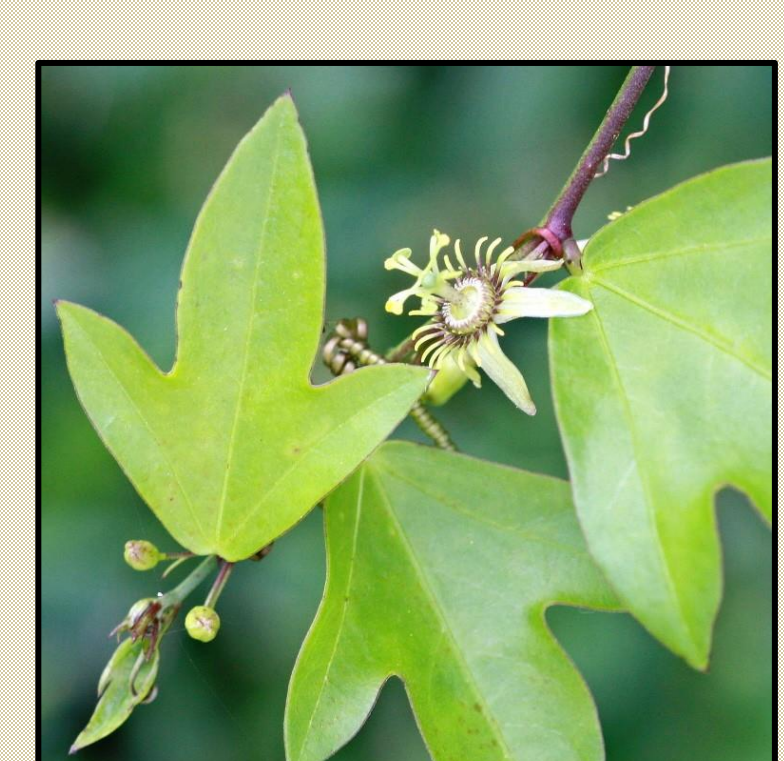
Sweetbay  
*Magnolia virginiana*  
**Magnoliaceae**



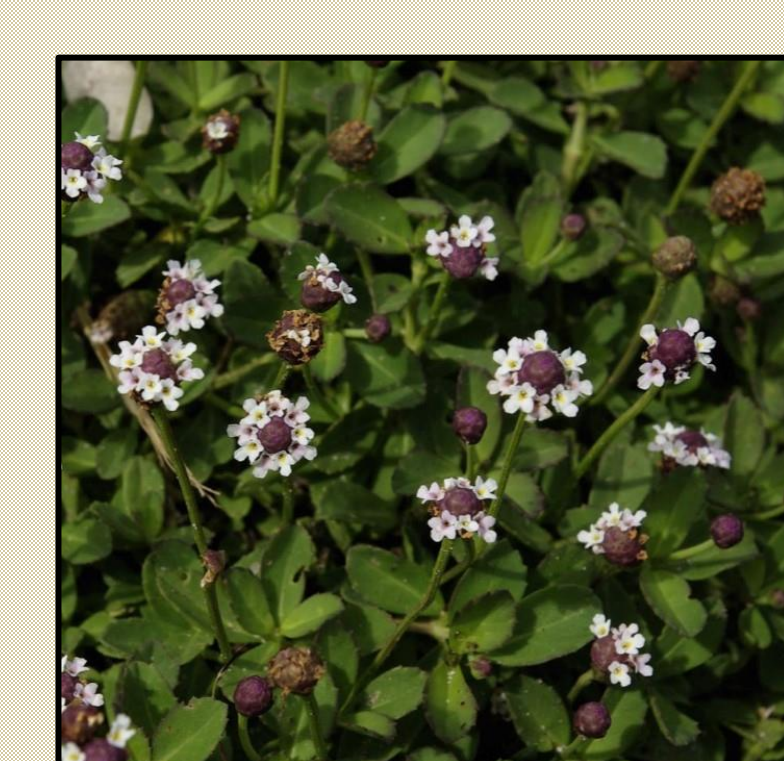
Simpson's Stopper  
*Myrcianthes fragrans*  
**Myrtaceae**



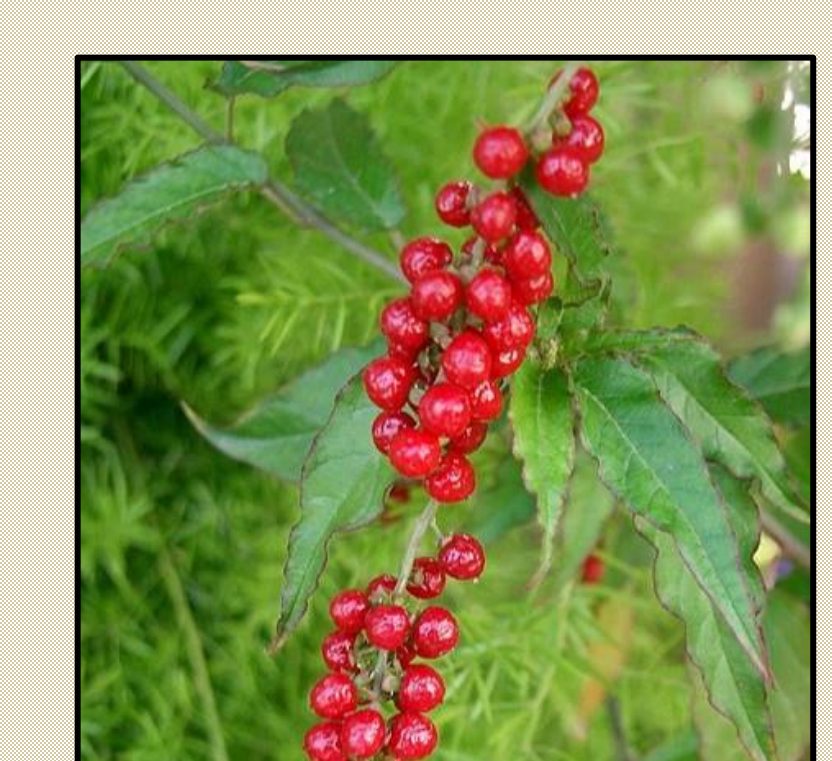
Maypop  
*Passiflora incarnata*  
**Passifloraceae**



Corkystem  
*Passiflora suberosa*  
**Passifloraceae**



Frogfruit  
*Phyla nodiflora*  
**Verbenaceae**



Rougeplant  
*Rivina humilis*  
**Petiveriaceae**



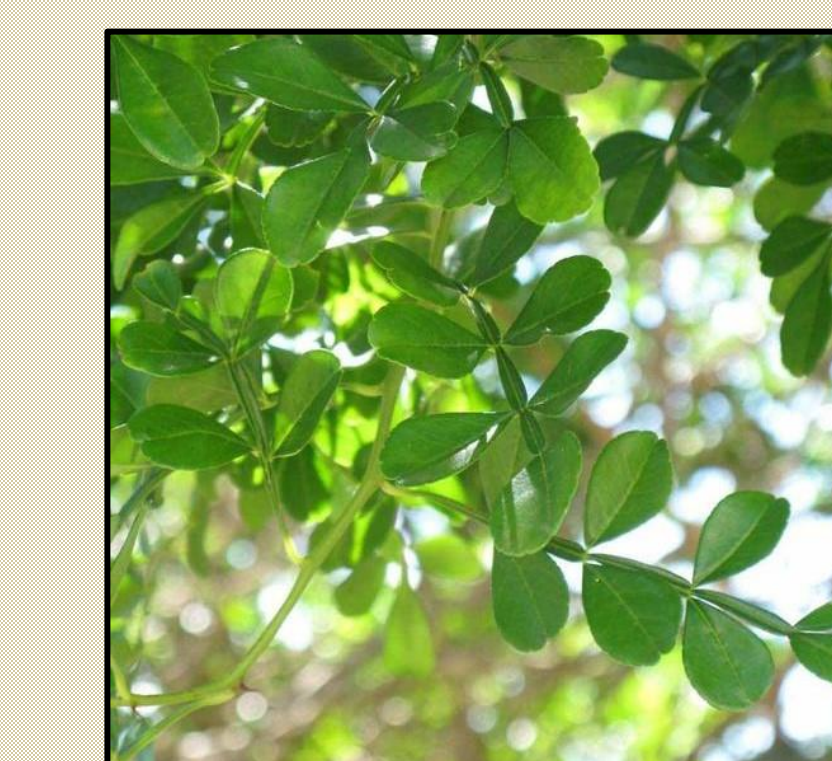
Blue-eyed Grass  
*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*  
**Iridaceae**



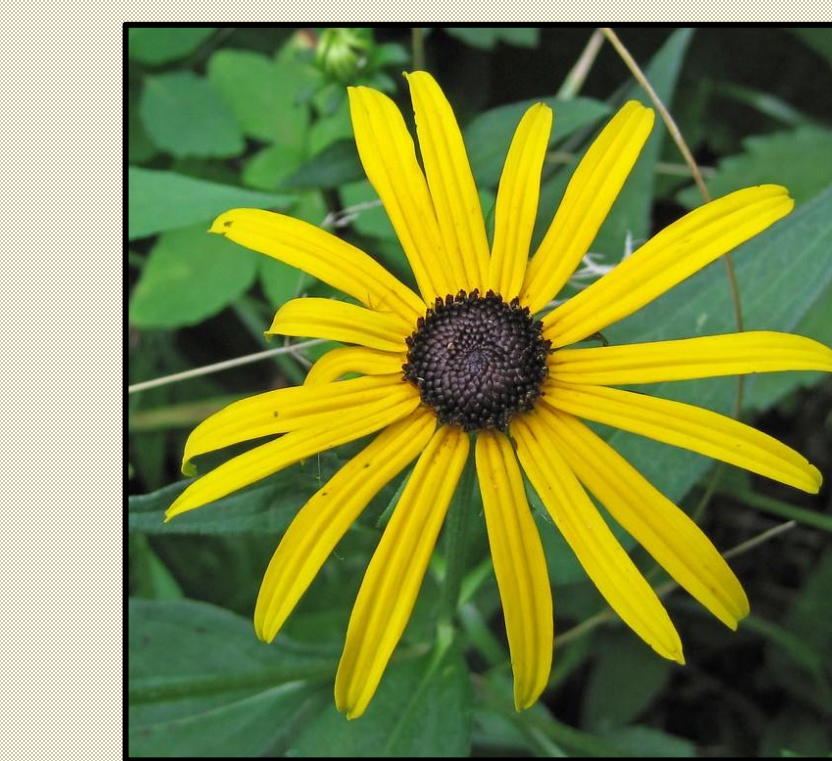
Goldenrod  
*Solidago spp.*  
**Asteraceae.**



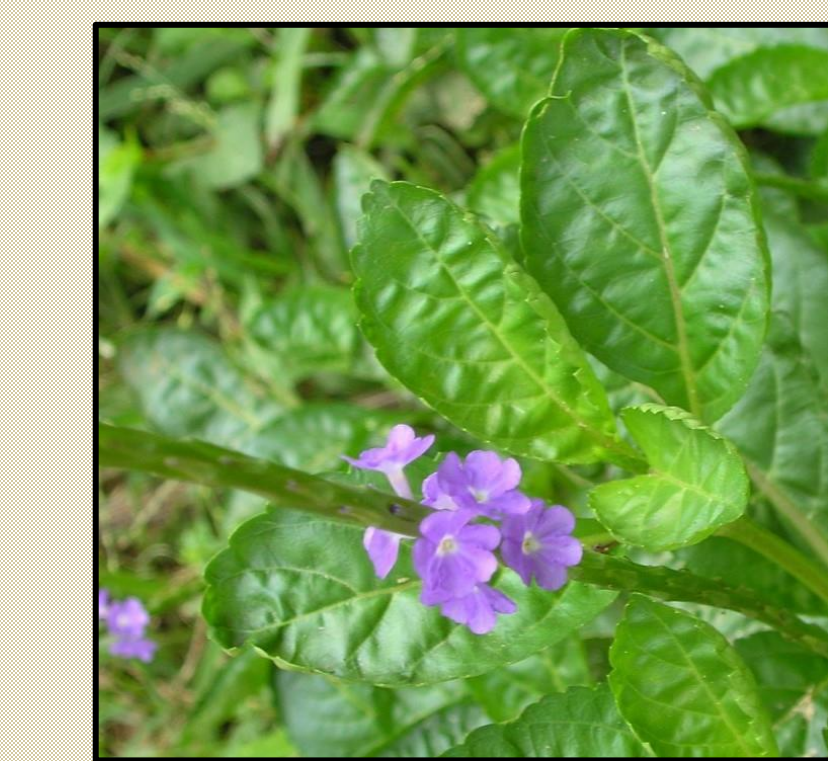
Coontie  
*Zamia integrifolia*  
**Zamiaceae**



Wild Lime  
*Zanthoxylum fagara*  
**Rutaceae**



Black-eyed Susan  
*Rudbeckia hirta*  
**Asteraceae**



Blue Porterweed  
*Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*  
**Verbenaceae**