An educational pamphlet of the Lake County Department of Public Resources and the Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) of Lake County

GREENER CHOICES
Alternatives to invasive-exotic plants
CALL to ACTION

Lake County is under attack and needs your help in preserving its unique environment.

Invasive exotic plants threaten to crowd out native species and disrupt Lake County’s distinctive ecosystem processes.

According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), while some non-natives, such as tomato plants, behave nicely and put food on our tables, others, without conditions that control them on their home turf, become invasive — growing and spreading rapidly and aggressively. More than 1.5 million acres of Florida's remaining natural areas have become infested and overwhelmed with non-native plant species.

Invasive plants, such as the Old World climbing fern and Brazilian pepper, cost Floridians millions of dollars annually. Farmers, ranchers, and golf course owners spend more than $30 million each year to eradicate exotic weeds.

The economic costs pale in comparison to the ecological ones. Invasive exotic species are often cited as the number two threat to global biodiversity, second only to habitat loss due to land conversion.
What YOU CAN do to HELP

The first step to control the spread of exotic plants (marked with ‘X’) is to avoid using them.

If you have invasive plants in your landscape, consider removing them by hand pulling or carefully applying herbicide. The Lake County UF/IFAS Extension Office, (352) 343-4101, located at 1951 Woodlea Road in Tavares, can assist in providing detailed removal techniques for various invasive plants.

This brochure was designed to suggest alternatives to invasive exotic plants. Replacing invasive exotic plants with Florida natives creates a more sustainable landscape in your yard that will have lasting benefits.

According to The Florida Native Plant Society, www.fnps.org, one advantage of using native plants is that they add beauty and interest to your landscape. In addition, native plants, which are better adapted to Florida’s soil types and climate, will conserve water by requiring less irrigation once established; provide food and shelter for butterflies, birds, and other wildlife; and save money by reducing maintenance and pest control costs.
Invasive exotic trees are typically introduced as ornamental plants because of their attractive blooms. When many of these trees bloom, seeds fall or are dispersed into the air and carried by birds, animals or the wind into other landscapes.

**Invasive EXOTIC Trees (Blooming)**

- **ORCHID TREE** *(Bauhinia variegata)*
  - **HEIGHT:** Up to 50 feet

- **FLAMEGOLD TREE,** also known as **GOLDEN RAIN TREE** *(Koelreuteria elegans ssp. formosana)*
  - **HEIGHT:** Up to 50 feet

- **CHINABERRY TREE** *(Melia azedarach)*
  - **HEIGHT:** Up to 50 feet

- **DOGWOOD** *(Cornus florida)*
  - **HEIGHT:** Up to 50 feet

**AlterNATIVE Trees**

**OTHER ALTERNATIVES**

- Carolina Silverbell *(Halesia carolina)*
- Loblolly Bay *(Gordonia lasianthus)*
- Sweetbay *(Magnolia virginiana)*
- Southern Magnolia *(Magnolia grandiflora)*
- Sugarberry *(Celtis laevigata)*
- Sparkleberry *(Vaccinium arboreum)*

- **CAROLINA SILVERBELL** *(Halesia carolina)*
  - **日照:** 25

- **LOBLOLLY BAY** *(Gordonia lasianthus)*
  - **日照:** 75

- **WHITE FRINGE TREE** *(Chionanthus virginicus)*
  - **日照:** 25

- **REDBUD** *(Cercis canadensis)*
  - **日照:** 25

- **LOGBLRAL BAY** *(Gordonia lasianthus)*
  - **日照:** 25

- **WHITE FRINGE TREE** *(Chionanthus virginicus)*
  - **日照:** 25
Invasive EXOTIC Trees (Shade)

Some exotic shade trees are able to invade due to fast growth and the ability to produce large amounts of fruit. Birds and other wildlife that eat the prolific fruit become vessels for seed dispersal, thus making it hard to contain and control the spread of these invasive trees.

**AUSTRALIAN PINE**, also known as a **BEACH SHEOAK**
(Casuarina equisetifolia)

HEIGHT: Up to 100 feet

**CAMPHOR TREE**
(Cinnamomum camphora)

HEIGHT: Up to 50 feet

**LONGLEAF PINE**
(Pinus palustris)

**Invasive EXOTIC Trees (Fall Color)**

Many invasive trees and shrubs form dense monotypic (consisting of only one type) thickets that crowd out native vegetation and prevent any other plant species from sprouting.

**BRAZILIAN PEPPER**, also known as a **FLORIDA HOLLY**
(Schinus terebinthifolius)

HEIGHT: Up to 30 feet

**CHINESE TALLOW TREE**, also known as a **POPCORN TREE**
(Sapium sebiferum)

HEIGHT: Up to 50 feet

**SWEETGUM**
(Liquidambar styraciflua)

**AlteNATIVE Trees (Shade)**

**OTHER ALTERNATIVES**

- Bluejack Oak (Quercus incana)
- Pond Pine (Pinus serotina)
- Red Bay (Persea borbonia)
- Red Cedar (Juniperus virginiana)
- Sand Live Oak (Quercus geminata)

**LIVE OAK**
(Quercus virginiana)

**60**

**AlteNATIVE Trees (Fall Color)**

**OTHER ALTERNATIVES**

- American Elm (Ulmus americana)
- American Holly (Ilex opaca)
- Dahoon Holly (Ilex cassine)
- Persimmon (Diospyros virginiana)
- Pignut Hickory (Carya glabra)
- Red Maple (Acer rubrum)
- River Birch (Betula nigra)
- Turkey Oak (Quercus laevis)

**YAUPON HOLLY**
(Ilex vomitoria)

**20**
A mechanism used by certain plants to successfully invade is their release of allelochemicals—chemical compounds that can have harmful effects on the surrounding plant community. Allelochemicals can negatively influence growth, survival and reproduction of other plant species.
Invasive **EXOTIC** Vines

**Coral Honeysuckle**, (Lonicera sempervirens)

**Japanese Honeysuckle**, (Lonicera japonica)

**Height**: Up to 15 feet

**Coral Vine**, (Antigonon leptopus)

**Height**: Up to 25 feet

**Flame Vine**, (Pyrostegia venusta)

**Height**: depends upon supporting structure

**Yellow Jessamine, Carolina Jessamine**, (Gelsemium sempervirens)

**Chinese Wisteria**, (Wisteria sinensis)

**Height**: Up to 65 feet

**Invasive vines shade out native flora and kill trees by weighing down the canopy until it topples, or by destroying the protective bark, also known as girdling. Invasive vines can climb and completely cover trees, shrubs, and structures; form extensive ground covers; or exhibit both habits.**

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**AlterNATIVE Vines**

**Other Alternatives**

- **Crossvine** (Bignonia capreolata)
- **Native grapes** (Vitis spp.)
- **Passion Flower, Maypop** (Passiflora incarnata)
- **Virginia Creeper** (Parthenocissus quinquefolia)

**Passion Flower** (Passiflora incarnata)

**American Wisteria** (Wisteria frutescens)

**Trumpet Vine, Trumpet Creeper** (Campsis radicans)
Invasive EXOTIC Groundcovers

Most invasive plants used in landscapes as groundcover are capable of aggressively reproducing by either an underground mass of roots (rhizomes), aboveground runners, or both. New plants can sprout from broken-off fragments of roots or runners, which makes total removal of these exotic plants difficult.

**WEDELIA**, also known as a CREEPING OXIEYE
(Sphagneticola trilobata)
**HEIGHT:** Up to 1 foot

**BOWSTRING HEMP SNAKEPLANT**, also known as a MOTHER-IN-LAW’S TONGUE
(Sansevieria hyacinthoides & Sansevieria trifasciata)
**HEIGHT:** Up to 3 feet

**ADAMS NEEDLE**
(Yucca filamentosa)

**PARTRIDGE BERRY**
(Mitchella repens)

**DUNE SUNFLOWER**
(Helianthus debilis)

**1.5**

**FAKAHATCHEEGRASS, EASTERN GAMA GRASS**
(Tripsacum dactyloides)
**6**

AlterNATIVE Groundcovers

**OTHER ALTERNATIVES**
- Gopher Apple (Licania michauxii)
- Frogfruit, Turkey Tangle Frogfruit, Capeweed (Phyla nodillora)
- Powderpuff (Mimosa strigillosa)
- Narrowleaf Blue-Eyed Grass (Sisyrinchium angustifolium)
- Partridge Berry (Mitchella repens)

**FOUNTAIN GRASS**
(Pennisetum setaceum)
**HEIGHT:** Up to 3 feet

**MUHY GRASS**
(Muhlenbergia capillaris)

Invasive EXOTIC Grasses

These grasses take up more water and nutrients, and produce more seeds than native plants. They can eventually take over gardens, yards, and natural areas and displace native plants, animals and pollinators such as bees and butterflies.

**ARUNDO**, also known as a GIANT REED
(Arundo donax)
**HEIGHT:** Up to 20 feet

**FAKAHATCHEEGRASS, EASTERN GAMA GRASS**
(Tripsacum dactyloides)
**6**

**OTHER ALTERNATIVES**
- Pineland Dropseed (Sporobolus junceus)
- Purple Love Grass (Eragrostis spectabilis)
- Splitbeard Bluestem (Andropogon ternarius)
- Wiregrass (Aristida stricta var. beyrichiana)
Invasive EXOTIC Tropical Plants

Tropical-looking invasive plants will readily form dense growth along river and lake shores, displacing native shoreline vegetation. Many of these plants have been purposely introduced into a landscape, but may also have spread via fruit or vegetative fragments floating though waterways.

Queen Palm
(Syagrus romanzoffiana)
HEIGHT: Up to 40 feet

Golden Bamboo
(Phyllostachys aurea)
HEIGHT: Up to 40 feet

MEXICAN PETUNIA
(Ruellia brittoniana)
HEIGHT: Up to 3 feet

CORAL BEAN
(Erythrina herbacea)

MIMOSA
(Albizia julibrissin)
HEIGHT: Up to 25 feet

TROPICAL-LOOKING INVASIVE PLANTS

• Bluestem Palmetto, Dwarf Palmetto (Sabal minor)
• Coontie (Zamia floridana)
• Necklace Pod (Sophora tomentosa)
• Pipestem (Agarista populifolia)
• Scrub Palmetto (Sabal etonia)
• Sea Grape (Coccoloba uvifera)
• Swamp Fern (Blechnum serrulatum)
• Switch Cane, Giant Cane (Arundinaria gigantea)

AlterNATIVE Tropical Plants

OTHER ALTERNATIVES

• Sabal Palm, Cabbage Palm (Sabal palmetto)
• Everglades Palm, Paurotis Palm (Acoelorrhaphe wrightii)
• Tulip Poplar (Liriodendron tulipfera)

COONTIE
(Zamia floridana)

EVERGLADES PALM, PAUROTIS PALM
(Acoelorrhaphe wrightii)

SABAL PALM, CABBAGE PALM
(Sabal palmetto)

TULIP POPLAR
(Liriodendron tulipfera)

CORAL BEAN
(Erythrina herbacea)
Invasive EXOTIC Tropical Plants (Wetland)

**PERUVIAN PRIMROSE WILLOW**

*Ludwigia peruviana*

**HEIGHT:** Up to 12 feet

**WILD TARO**

*Colocasia esculenta*

**HEIGHT:** Up to 4 feet

**SANDWEED**

*Hypericum fasciculatum*

**HEIGHT:** Up to 2 feet

**UMBRELLA FLAT SEDGE**

*Cyperus involucratus*

**HEIGHT:** Dwarf plant can grow up to 2 feet. Regular plant can grow up to 6 feet.

**CAESAR’S WEED,** also known as **CAESARWEED**

*Urena lobata*

**HEIGHT:** Up to 10 feet

**Cardinal Flower**

*Lobelia cardinalis*

**STRING-LILY**

*Crinum americanum*

**SALT MARSH MALLOW**

*Kosteletzkya virginica*

**DIXIE IRIS, PRAIRIE IRIS**

*Iris hexagona*

**OTHER ALTERNATIVES**

- **Alligator Flag** *(Thalia geniculata)*
- **Crimson-eyed Rosemallow** *(Hibiscus moscheutos)*
- **Dixie Iris, Prairie Iris** *(Iris hexagona)*
- **Lizard’s Tail** *(Saururus cernuus)*
- **Scarlet Rosemallow** *(Hibiscus coccineus)*
- **String-lily** *(Crinum americanum)*
- **Swamp Rosemallow** *(Hibiscus grandiflorus)*

Some invasive tropical plants have seeds that cling to animal fur, human clothing, vehicles and equipment and are then transported to new locations, where they eventually fall off, and may then start a new infestation.
For MORE INFORMATION about invasive-exotic plants:

- Florida Invasive Species Partnership
  www.floridainvasives.org
- The Nature Conservancy
  www.nature.org/floridainvasive
- The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council
  www.fleppc.org
- UF Center for Aquatic & Invasive Plants
  http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu
- Lake County Water Authority
  www.lcwa.org
- Lake County Horticultural Learning Center
  http://lake.ifas.ufl.edu/discovery-gardens/index.shtml
- Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
  http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/habitat/invasive-plants/

For MORE INFORMATION about native plants:

- Florida Native Plant Society
  www.fnps.org

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For more information, call (352) 253-4950, or log on to www.lakecountyfl.gov/parks.

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