

Water-Wise Demonstration Garden

The Utilities Commission, City of New Smyrna Beach, completed a water-wise demonstration garden in the parking lot of its downtown New Smyrna Beach office as part of continuing efforts to encourage water conservation.

The garden, designed by Lindley's Nursery and Garden Center, features over 25 plants, shrubs, and trees that are well-suited for Florida's climate. The plants featured are either native to Florida or are Florida-friendly, meaning the plants have adapted to the area's climate and require little water for upkeep.

The garden, a year in the making, survived this past winter's chilling temperatures and sprung back to life with little maintenance at the onset of warmer weather, displaying the resiliency of Florida-native and Florida-friendly plants.

The garden features:

- More than 25 Florida-native or Florida-friendly plant, shrubs, and trees.
- Themed beds, including a bed devoted to beachside-friendly plants and two beds featuring a low-water turf replacement.
- Renewable mulches, including pine straw, rubber, and rock mulches also featured.
- A drip-line sprinkler system which uses less water and discourages weeds.
- Information cards throughout the garden about each plant, sun and water needs, as well as bird/butterfly/bee attraction notes (if applicable).

For more information about our demonstration garden, visit www.ucnsb.org.

Autumn Sage

Salvia greggii

- Perennial
- Grows quickly to 4' tall and 3' wide
- In the Mint family and has scented leaves
- Likes dry conditions
- Will not tolerate poorly drained soil or "wet feet"



Baby Sunrose or Ice Plant

Aptenia cordifolia

- Perennial groundcover
- Blooms best in full sun nearly year round
- Requires sandy or well-drained soils
- Will not tolerate overwatering
- Excellent for containers and hanging baskets



Blanket Flower

Gaillardia aristata

- Native
- Evergreen perennial
- Little to moderate water, prefers dry conditions
- Grows to 2-2.5' tall and 2' wide
- Must have good drainage
- Blooms spring to first frost
- High salt and wind tolerance



Blue-Eyed Grass

Sisyrinchium angustifolium Mill.

- Native
- Perennial
- Grows to 15" wide and 8" tall
- Purplish-blue flowers bloom late spring to early summer
- Drought-tolerant
- Good for use in rain gardens and as a bog plant
- Can be used as a border plant or ground cover



Blue Fortune Anise Hyssop

Agastache foeniculum x rugosa

- Perennial
- Low maintenance clumping, grows to 4' tall and 3' wide
- Blooms early spring to late fall
- Prefers dry, well-drained soil
- Leaves have a minty-licorice scent, can be used as an herb



Blue Stokes Astor

Stokesia laevis

- Native to the Southeast
- Perennial
- Low growing to 12" tall and 8" wide
- Blooms summer till first frost
- Excellent cut flower, good border plant



Bulbine

Bulbine frutescens

- Succulent shrubby perennial
- Clumps 1' high and 2-3' wide
- Little to regular water
- Blooms most of the year
- Useful as ground or bank cover



Coreopsis or Tickseed

Coreopsis spp

- Native
- Perennial
- A state wildflower
- Occur in a variety of colors ranging from yellow to pink
- 3 species used in this garden
- Flower heads bear seeds for birds



Dune Daisy or Beach Sunflower

Helianthus debilis

- Native perennial groundcover
- Needs dry, sandy conditions
- Blooms year round
- Used for dune stabilization
- Reproduces through seed germination



Dwarf Blueberry Bush

Vaccinium darrowii

- Native to the Southeast
- Shrub
- Slow growth to 3' tall and 3' wide
- Blooms in early spring, producing edible blueberries during summer
- Prefers acidic soils



Dwarf Firebush

Hamelia patens "Compacta"

- Shrub evergreen
- Moderate growth, 3-4' high and 2-3' wide
- Flowers in spring, summer & fall
- Provides winter interest as leaves change color
- Drought-tolerant



Dwarf Walter's Viburnum

Viburnum obovatum "Mrs. Schiller's Delight"

- Native
- Shrub evergreen
- Low and slow growth to 3' high and 2' wide
- Low maintenance, trim after each blossom
- Blossoms spring and fall, white clusters of flowers
- Excellent plant for winter season



Eco Turf Perennial Peanut

Arachis glabrata "Eco Turf"

- Ground cover, turf replacement
- Grows to 6" tall
- Once established, uses little-to-no water
- Low maintenance, can be mowed just 2x per year
- Makes its own nitrogen, reducing need for fertilizer



Fakahatchee or Gamma Grass

Tripsacum dactyloides

- Native to the Southeast
- Grows 5' tall and 4' wide
- Tolerates dry to wet areas like bogs and marshes
- Excellent for rain gardens



Flax Lilly or Dianella

Dianella tasmanica variegata

- Prefers part to full shade
- Grows to 3' tall and forms clumps up to 20'
- Very drought tolerant
- Excellent container plant
- Moderate salt tolerance



Live Oak

Quercus virginiana

- Large hardwood tree
- Reaches heights of 65-85'
- Produces edible acorns, excellent food for wildlife
- Survives in a wide variety of conditions from dry to wet soil
- Salt and wind tolerant



Needle Palm

Rhapidothymum hystrix

- Native shrubby palm
- Full sun to full shade
- Grows slowly to 6' tall and 4' wide
- Rugged palm and one of the most cold-hardy
- Tolerates dry to moist conditions



Oakleaf Hydrangea

Hydrangea quercifolia

- Native to the Southeast
- Grows up to 6' tall
- Blooms late spring through fall
- Excellent for dry or cut flowers
- Prefers alkaline soil



Railroad Vine

Ipomoea pes-caprae

- Native
- Evergreen perennial
- Sprawling vine grows to great lengths
- Roots at leaf joints as it runs
- Useful as a groundcover on sandy or saltwater beaches



Red-Tip Cocoplum

Chrysobalanus icaco

- Native
- Tropical shrub, reaches heights of 10'
- Must have good drainage, requires regular water
- Tolerates salt spray
- Produces edible fruit



Sea Oats

Uniola paniculata

- Native perennial grass
- Low to regular water
- Grows to 2' wide and 2-5' tall
- Extremely salt and wind tolerant
- Needs fresh water which is stored in the core of coastal dunes



Sea Oxeye Daisy

Borrichia arborescens

- Native
- Performs well as a low hedge or ground cover near the ocean
- Grows to 2-4' tall
- Yellow flowers year round
- Full sun to light shade



Silver Buttonwood

Conocarpus erectus var. sericeus

- Native
- Evergreen shrub
- Use as informal hedge or small ornamental tree
- Tolerates just about any soil
- Drought tolerant, but can handle occasional wet soil



Simpson Stopper

Myrcianthes fragrens

- Native
- Shrub evergreen
- Slow growth to 15' high, can be maintained at 8-10'
- Fragrant white flowers periodically throughout the year
- Flowers develop into edible berries
- Suitable for shaping into a small tree



Thryallis

Galpimia glauca

- Evergreen flowering shrub
- Easily maintained at 3-4' tall and wide
- Requires well-drained or sandy soils
- Blooms most of the year
- Prune heavily in spring



Wild Coffee

Psychotria nervosa

- Native
- Shrub evergreen
- Moderate growth, 4-10' high and 3-6' wide
- Flowers in spring and summer
- Attracts spicebush swallowtail butterflies
- Red berries in winter attract cardinals and catbirds
- Sensitive to cold, trim off cold damage in early spring



Mulches

Pine Straw Needles

A great mulch alternative!

- Pine straw is a **renewable resource** that can be harvested yearly in Florida. Trees do not have to be cut down to collect pine needles.
- Pine straw **conserves moisture**, will not wash away and will not attract termites.
- Pine straw creates an **acidic soil**. Most plants prefer slight acidic-to-neutral soil. The acidic soil also **impedes weed growth**.



Red Cypress Mulch

- From slow-growing trees in swampy areas of the southeast, including Florida
- Not a renewable resource like pine straw
- Long-lasting
- Great water retention
- Insect repellent
- Other effective mulches:
 - Pine bark
 - Wood chips
 - Pine straw



Rock Mulch

- Good for permanent landscape features, such as trees
- Good at controlling weeds when applied in thick layers—using a plastic underlayment can help further control weeds
- Available in many different colors
- Unlike wood chips or bark, rock mulch doesn't wash away in rainstorms, attract termites or carpenter ants, or rot



Rubber Mulch

An alternative to wood mulch!

- Rubber mulch has high shock absorption, making it a great material for paths and playgrounds
- Made from recycled shredded tires
- Available in many different colors
- Unlike wood chips or bark, rubber mulch doesn't wash away in rainstorms, attract termites or carpenter ants, or rot
- Great for alkaline soil

