



## Gopher Tortoise Forage Plants

### Native Plants to Landscape Your Florida Yard



Common Name	Scientific Name	Tree, Shrub, Herb, Vine, Cactus	Climate N=North C=Central S=South	Forage Quality VH=Very High H=High M=Mid	Desired for Landscaping	Water BW WK	Care O P
Beautyberry	<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	WK	O
Spanish Needles	<i>Bidens spp.</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	VH	Attractive S	BW	P
Blackberry	<i>Rubus spp.</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	VH	Attractive S	BW	P
Blanket Flower	<i>Gaillardia spp.</i>	Herb	N,C,S	H	Attractive S	BW	P
Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium darrowii</i> <i>Vaccinium myrinites</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	H	Low Key S	BW	P
Butterfly Pea	<i>Centrosererna spp.</i>	Vine	N,C,S	M	Attractive S	WK	O
Coco Plum	<i>Chrysobalanus icaco</i>	Shrub	S	M	Attractive YR	WK	O
Coral Bean	<i>Erythrina Herbacea</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive S	BW	O
Gopher Apple	<i>Licania michauxii</i>	Herb	N,C,S	H	Attractive S	WK	O
Hibiscus	<i>Hibiscus spp.</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	WK	O
Lantana	<i>Lantana spp.</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	WK	O
Mulberry	<i>Morus rubra</i>	Tree	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	WK	O
Pawpaw	<i>Asimina spp.</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	L-M	Low Key S	WK	O
Portulacca	<i>Portulacca spp.</i>	Herb	N,C,S	VH	Attractive S	BW	O
Prickly Pear	<i>Opuntia spp.</i>	Cactus	N,C,S	M-VH	Attractive YR	WK	O
Railroad vine Morningglory	<i>Ipomoea spp.</i>	Vine	N,C,S	L-M	Attractive S	WK	O
Saw Palmetto	<i>Serenoa repens</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	WK	O
Seagrape	<i>Coccoloba uvifera</i>	Tree	S	M	Attractive YR	WK	O
Sea Oxeye	<i>Borrichia frutescens</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive YR	BW	O
Sunflower	<i>Helianthus spp.</i>	Herb	N,C,S	L-M	Attractive S	WK	O
Sumac, Winged	<i>Rhus copallina</i>	Shrub	N,C,S	M	Attractive S	WK	O
Verbena	<i>Verbena spp.</i>	Herb	N,C,S	H	Attractive S	BW	P
Wild Grape	<i>Vitis spp.</i>	Vine	N,C,S	VH	Attractive S	WK	O

#### LEGEND:

1. Climate requirements - Northern Florida, Central Florida, South Florida
2. Quality of forage - Very High, High, Moderate, Low
3. Desirability for landscaping - Attractive, Low Key, Seasonal, Year Round
4. Required Water - Bi-Weekly (twice), Weekly (once) - If not getting regular rainfall
5. Care Required - Periodically, Occasionally



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Scrub Garden planting plan is ideal for the rear of a property.

Remember when selecting tortoise forage species to plant in a school yard or for home landscaping to consider these key points:

80% of a tortoise's diet is grass - native and non-native (Bahia, St. Augustine, Alexander grass and even crabgrass are good) and tortoises frequently eat the flowering species "weeds" and sedges found throughout grassy areas - herbaceous species provide important nutrients but are used in smaller amounts compared to grasses.

Tortoises will eat fern fiddleheads, smilax (green briar) shoots and many wetland plants like pennyworts and rushes.

Tortoises will eat any garden plant you would eat. Keep in mind if there are tortoises and they like a plant, then they would at some point consume a great deal or all of that plant. Plants attractive to butterflies are also often species eaten by tortoises.

Fruit producing trees should be along edges or infrequent so as not to shade out the grass and herbaceous species needed by tortoises if you wish to encourage them. Do not use weed killers or insecticides

Scrub garden plan provided by: **Suncoast Ecological Services**  
<http://www.suncoasteco.com>

To find out more about the FWC Gopher Tortoise Yard Recognition Program  
[myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/wildlife/gopher-tortoise/yard-recognition/](http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/wildlife/gopher-tortoise/yard-recognition/)

Learn more about the gopher tortoise: [www.gophertortoisecouncil.org](http://www.gophertortoisecouncil.org)