

VWCA BOARD APPROVED LIST OF FLORIDA, MAINTENANCE FRIENDLY SHRUBS AND PLANTS

AS RECOMMENDED BY JEFF BECK FROM PRESTIGIOUS LAWNCARE – REVISED 4/13/15

(MOST DESCRIPTIONS ARE FROM SOUTH FLORIDA PLANT GUIDE.COM).

NAME/URL LINK	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	PICTURE
1. Dwarf Allamanda	With exquisite butter-yellow flowers over glossy deep green foliage, the dwarf variety of allamanda stays small and bushy, making it a good shrub for smaller spaces. Watering correctly is the key to keeping these small flowering shrubs at their best. They need regular irrigation but must dry out a bit in between watering. Picturesque in groupings or rows, they can work as a front-of-the-border plants or use them behind annuals, groundcovers or small perennials.	
2. Arborcola (Green or TrINETTE) aka Shefflera	If you're looking for a pretty, easy-to-grow, mid-size shrub, this is it. Plant it anywhere - full sun to full shade - and it will thrive. Forget to water it - it will forgive you. These shrubs grow in a mounded shape and make wonderful accent plants, privacy plants or hedges. They're also useful in hiding the "unmentionables"...like the air-conditioner or those funky above-ground drainage pipes that can spoil the look of a front yard.	
3. Azaela	Blossoming often begins in late February or early March. Dwarf and semi-dwarf varieties blossom on and off all year but the full size plants are content with being classic and beautiful spring flowering shrubs. You might want to plant both sizes for more year round flowers...and they all like similar planting conditions. These are cold-hardy plants that actually prefer the cooler locations of South Florida. They'll flower anywhere - sun or shade - but keep a fuller form when they get at least some sun.	
4. Orange Bird of Paradise	Orange bird of paradise grows in a clumping form with thick, gray-green leaves on graceful, upright stems. It makes an outstanding tropical accent, working well in formal landscapes or more casual designs.	

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5. Blue Daze	A perennial that grows 8 to 10 inches tall and is often used as a groundcover. Full sun to part shade. Bright blue flowers close up for a midday nap.	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
6. Japanese Boxwood	Small, thick leaves, slow rate of growth and a bushy habit make this a dream of a plant for neat freaks and shrub sculptors. This compact shrub works virtually anywhere – mobile home planters, foundation plantings, under trees, you name it.	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
7. Crossandra	This heat-loving tropical plant will bring color to your garden or home during warm months. Crossandra (<i>Crossandra infundibuliformis</i>), sometimes called firecracker flower, can be used as a houseplant or in the landscape. This tropical flower is easy to grow and will bring attention in any setting.	
8. Croton (many varieties)	This easy-care shrub features color and low-maintenance for any size yard. They feature many leaf types and sizes – swirly, narrow ribbons to wide, flat leaves – with fun names like Dreadlocks and Sloppy Painter or more dignified ones such as Eleanor Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan. We’ve included all varieties in the Small Shrubs section because most can be kept at 3 feet...though you can let them grow larger if you prefer.	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
9. Crown of Thorns	This is not your grandmother’s crown of thorns...newer cultivars feature fuller plants, brighter colors, bigger leaves and flowers than the old-fashioned varieties. Color choices run the gamut from the typical red to yellow, pink, salmon, and creamy white. The newer varieties include the Thai Hybrids with the largest leaves and flowers, and smaller plants such as Karolla with its shiny bright green leaves and brilliant red blooms. Like many succulents, this plant’s stems contain a milky sap – avoid the stickiness (and the thorns, too) by wearing gloves anytime you trim. Thorns are “softer” in the morning, according to one grower, so that’s a better time to handle the plant.	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>

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<p>10. Dipladenia (Mandevilla)</p>	<p>No matter where it's planted, this vine takes center stage with large trumpet-shaped flowers and deep green foliage. Probably the best-known variety is a pink mandevilla called 'Alice duPont' mandevilla with romantic pink blossoms. This vine is sometimes referred to as pink allamanda. There is also a popular white-flowering variety (<i>Mandevilla boliviensis</i>) as well as other color choices. The most common yellow-flowering variety is actually not a mandevilla at all (<i>Urechites lutea</i> or <i>Pentilnon luteum</i>) – and a common name for this vine is Wild Allamanda. It's no wonder people confuse the terms mandevilla and allamanda. To add to the confusion... ..Gaining in popularity is a group with more compact growth – dipladenia (the name we'll use here to keep the varieties straight) – which has had its name changed to mandevilla.</p>	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
<p>11. Dracena</p>	<p>These colorful foliage plants come in almost endless varieties and provide colors like pink, cream, bronze, lime-green, and red to areas with some shade. Though they're in different plant families, both are easy-care plants that look very similar and have almost identical landscape uses, so we've grouped them together here.</p>	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
<p>12. Gold Mound Durante</p>	<p>The shrub's brilliant golden color makes it one of the most valued colorful foliage plants. It beautifully complements other landscape colors (including green).</p>	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
<p>13. Eugenia</p>	<p>As hedge bushes go, this one is stellar for sculpting in a narrow-depth space – and shearing for a very tidy, manicured look. In other words, a neat freak's garden nirvana. It's so easy to shape that this plant is used for topiaries. Other than trimming (which is optional), this Florida native plant is one of the best low maintenance shrubs. It blossoms in spring with creamy white flowers, followed by small red berries. The berries (and sometimes the flowers) are usually removed by regular trimming. The foliage is fine-textured and new growth is an attractive reddish color. This is an excellent plant for hedging, camouflage or privacy because the foliage will grow very dense, hiding well</p>	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>

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	whatever is behind it.	
14. Gardenia	These plants flower profusely (more so as they mature) in spring and early summer (usually March through June), and then bloom on and off the rest of the warm months of the year. Plant where you'll be able to enjoy their heavenly aroma, but, as with all heavily fragrant plants, don't over-do it. A large hedge of these wonderful shrubs may be too much to bear for some people when the plants are blooming madly.	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
15. Indian Hawthorne	A very low maintenance plant, this small shrub is the perfect plant for the armchair gardener. It goes almost anywhere – sun to partial shade – and puts up with cold weather and dry conditions. Most of the year, hawthorne is a handsome plant that grows in a full, mounded form...but in spring it's decorated with small white flowers, followed by little blue-black berries that attract birds.	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
16. Heather	A perennial that likes full to part sun and grows to a foot tall. Plant for front of the border, planter boxes, or grow in "drifts." Cut it back several times a year. Attracts butterflies.	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
17. Hibiscus	It's one of the most commonly used Florida flowering plants, but with good reason - gorgeous blooms. There are so many varieties to choose from...blossoming in red, pink, white, orange, yellow, and even violet and lavender, with hundreds of exotic color combinations. Flowers range from saucer-sized singles to ruffled double blooms, multi-colored ornate to strikingly simple blossoms.	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
18. Dwarf Ixoria	You see them everywhere...and for good reason. These plants are dependable bloomers, love the sun, and fit nicely into any size landscape. Often planted in groups or rows for maximum color, ixoras work well with informal gardens, tropical beds, or more formal and manicured landscape designs. Clustered blooms that attract butterflies come in a variety of colors, with the texture and shape of a fat, coconut-covered cookie.	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>

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19. Jatropha Bush	A delightful shrub for a sunny spot in any size South Florida landscape, this pretty plant grows full and lush with regular trimming, and makes an excellent accent or anchor for a garden bed with other butterfly attracting plants. Not well-suited for sheared, manicured hedges, these plants are better in a more natural form. But with frequent "haircuts" (minor trimming back of branches) they can be kept nicely rounded for a formal landscape.	
20. Jatropha Tree	The dwarf jatropha tree (<i>Jatropha integerrima</i> 'Compacta') is the one to buy...it stays smaller and denser and is the one most commonly sold at nurseries. Versatile and showy, the clusters of tiny but vivid flowers stand out against deep green leaves and the small size makes it the perfect accent tree for sunny areas. This red flowering tree is actually a jatropha shrub trained to a single trunk...or you can grow it as a bush, and, as it matures, keep the base cleaned up for a multi-trunk tree look. One of South Florida's most consistent butterfly attracting plants, Jatropha is also a favorite with hummingbirds.	
21. Junipers	These are supremely simple-to-grow plants that don't get too tall, spread wide, and are often used for low-maintenance groundcover plants. Their silvery or blue-green color fades to more of a soft green as the plants mature, and they play an effective, understudy role in landscaping - often surrounding a focal point such as a showy palm or small flowering tree. Builders landscape many new homes in Florida with these plants because of their hardy nature and easy of care. The most common variety - ' Parsonii ' - is sometimes called "Parsons Juniper." This shrub can eventually grow about 2-1/2 feet tall. Its foliage is somewhat prickly, making it a good plant under windows to deter burglars. An even smaller variety that's commonly grown is Blue Pacific - and a look-alike known as Dwarf Shore . These shrubs are softer to the touch than parsonii and stay about a foot tall.	

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22. Lantana	A perennial that comes in a rainbow of colors and likes full to part sun. Some tend to grow leggy - cut back regularly to stay full and bushy at about 2 feet. The white and the purple lantanas stay lower, and multi-colored Anne Marie (pictured) grows in a well-behaved mound. Excellent butterfly plant. Accent or groundcover.	
23. Liriope	Of all the grass like plants, liriope is a huge favorite for South Florida. Sometimes known as "Lilyturf," it's commonly available in varieties which grow about 18" to 24" tall. A moderate grower with purple flower spikes, liriope is cold-tolerant and does well in Zone 9B or Zone 10. This plant is equally at home in sun or shade. Water regularly but with time to let the plant dry out a bit between waterings.	
24. Dwarf Oleander	This smaller size makes oleanders available to homeowners who don't have the large space it takes to grow full-size varieties. 'Petite Pink' is the most commonly available dwarf variety, with pastel pink blossoms that can blanket the entire shrub.	
25. Podocarpus Bush	The soft, fine-textured foliage is great-looking when sheared as a formal hedge or left to grow more naturally as a large accent with minimal trimming required. Because of its moderate growth rate it won't work as a hedge-in-a-hurry. But given enough time these shrubs become thick, luxurious, full to the ground – and large enough to work as hedge bushes, privacy screens, or plants to camouflage unsightly things around the house. These plants are also too large to use as foundation shrubs – although you see a lot of them used that way and they must be cut to within an inch of their lives. For a smaller version, use dwarf podocarpus .	
26. Knock Out Roses	The award-winning Knock Out is a remarkable advance in rose breeding, a shrub rose that flowers with beautiful roses on and off all year but requiring no special care...even here in South Florida. A shrub rose is not grafted to a different rootstock, is hardier, and generally blooms most of the year. These landscape roses are easy care, low maintenance plants, and Knock Outs are the best of the best. They're the most	

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	disease-resistant rose on the market today, thrive in an amazing number of planting zones, and work well for any homeowner - avid gardener or not.	
27. Society Garlic	Likes full sun to part shade and looks its best when planted in groups several deep. Grows about 2 feet overall.	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>
28. Tri-Star Stromanthe (Stromanthe Sanguinea "Tricolor")	<i>Stromanthe sanguinea</i> "Tricolor" is a stunning selection of a tropical herbaceous perennial in the maranta or prayer plant family (Marantaceae) with dramatic, multicolored leaves. Native to rain forests of Brazil, it requires high humidity and warm temperatures to thrive. Once just an uncommon landscape plant in zones 9-11 (or a curiosity for greenhouse growers), this relative of the prayer plant (<i>Maranta</i> species) is becoming more common as an unusual houseplant or seasonal annual in the Midwest grown for its fabulous foliage.	
29. Tibouchina Bush	Both the gorgeous tibouchina urvilleana and the velvety-leaved grandifolia are landscape show-stoppers for their luscious purple flowers. Though the bloom color is similar, these two mid-size varieties have distinctly different looks. Urvilleana's large blooms are made up of five wide open petals, on slightly downy, elliptical leaves. Grandifolia's leaves are rounded and so velvety soft you'll want to pet them, and the flowers are spiky upright clusters of small blossoms. These plants are so breathtaking you can expect passersby to come knocking at your door.	 <p>South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com</p>