“It’s different out here,” is sometimes the comment from Sarasota County residents who live inland from the coast and find many landscaping differences and challenges. Here you will find the fascinating pine flatwoods, shady oak hammocks, and wetlands that many believe are the real Florida.

To landscape successfully in the east county, residents must be aware of two major inland differences:

It’s Wetter

It’s Colder

What’s the Difference?

Landscaping in Eastern Sarasota County

For additional landscaping ideas and information, visit the Florida House Learning Center demonstration landscape on the campus of the Sarasota County Technical Institute at Beneva and Proctor Roads in Sarasota, or call 316-1200. Also, call the University of Florida/IFAS Sarasota County Extension Service at 961-9800 for any questions about landscaping.

Sarasota County

Florida Native Plant Nursery

This project supported by the Manasota Basin Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

Flamingo Darter, ejaguar, and Florida scrub.-juncie (aka sandhill pine and scrub pine) are just a few of the many species that thrive in palm hammocks, pine flatwoods, and wetlands.

Florida long legged bat, horseshoe crab, and the native dogwood, dogwood, and saw palmetto are just a few of the many species that can be found in the area.

Florida scrub.-juncie, Florida long legged bat, and the native dogwood are just a few of the many species that can be found in the area.

Florida scrub.-juncie, Florida long legged bat, and the native dogwood are just a few of the many species that can be found in the area.
Visit the Fruitville Library Reading Garden

Located just east of I-75 at 100 Coburn Road, the Friends of the Fruitville Library created a Reading Garden as a place for visitors to retreat and read, children to attend library programs, and everyone to enjoy. This garden is evolving into a delightful prime example of a cold-hardy, wetlands garden, demonstrating what can be expected when gardening east of I-75. Stop, sit, enjoy, and take home some landscape ideas to try.

What to Do?
Be aware of the cold hardiness of plants in your landscape, particularly those that are perennials and those which are both investments, such as trees, palms, and shrubs. There are many wonderful, cold-hardy plants available, especially Florida natives. It’s smart to plant the majority of your property with hardy natives and use tropicals and annuals sparingly as colorful, annual fillers.

What About Irrigation?
You don’t need to install an irrigation system if you consider your surroundings and plant the “right plant in the right place.” Use drought-tolerant plants in areas that are high and dry. Use plants that crave water in low, damp areas of your property. Think about the Top Seven Questions list below when shopping at your local nursery. For about a month, hand-water all new plants daily until they are well established.

Whether you are building a new home in eastern Sarasota County or you are moving into an existing one, keep as much of the natural greenery around your house as possible. If building, place barricades around existing trees, palms and shrubs to protect their roots from construction equipment. If you save what’s already growing, it is easier, less expensive, and will provide shade and buffering sooner than replanting. Using existing native plants will also acquaint you with the beauty of natural Florida.

The Top Seven Questions to Ask at Your Nursery

1. Is this plant cold hardy to USDA Zone 9a?
2. Will it survive very wet conditions?
3. What are the light and water requirements?
4. How large will it grow?
5. How much does it spread?
6. How fast does it grow?
7. Is it susceptible to pests or disease?
This is not usually a problem with Florida native plants.

Suggestions for Cold-Hardy Plants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S = Shrub</th>
<th>T = Tree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G = Groundcover</td>
<td>M = Massing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F = Focal Point</td>
<td>ST = Subtree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Red maple | T
Southern and sweet bay magnolias | T
Laurel and live oaks | T
Slash and longleaf pines | T
Florida and winged elm | ST/T
Red bay | T
Loblolly bay | T
Red cedar | ST
Bald cypress | T
Dahoon and East Palatka hollies | T
Sycamore | T
Wax myrtle | S/ST
Simpson stopper | S/ST
Florida privet | S/ST
Walter’s viburnum | S/ST
Yaupon holly | G/S
Coontie | G

Suggestions for residence landscaping using plants suitable for properties east of I-75

Concept | Suggestion
--- | ---
A Edible/Subtree | Loquat or Citrus
B Low Texture | Ficus or Grasses
C Accent/Diversity | Cinnam or Beautyberry
D Screening/Backdrop | Myrtle or Marlberry
E Screening/Backdrop | Beautyberry or Walter’s Viburnum
F Edible/Color | Herbs or Annuals
G Tree/Smaller Scale | Myrsine or Marlberry
H Texture/Color | Gallberry or Dwarf Firebush
I Screening/Backdrop | Myrtle or Palmetto
J Screening | Simpson Stopper or Firebush
K Screening | Eugenia spp. or Viburnum spp.
L Accent Palm | Wax Myrtle or Palmetto
M Edible/Color | Myrtle or Palmetto
N Low Texture/Color | Myrtle or Palmetto
O Low Foundation | Myrtle or Palmetto
P Corner Accent | Perennials or Ferns
Q Color | Fens or Low Perennials
R Corner Accent | Fens or Low Perennials
S Medium Foundation | "Little Gem" Magnolia or Florida Privet
T Groundcover | Galberry or Dwarf Firebush

Plans for small neighboring properties

- **Concept**
  - A Edible/Subtree
  - B Low Texture
  - C Accent/Diversity
  - D Screening/Backdrop
  - E Screening/Backdrop
  - F Edible/Color
  - G Tree/Smaller Scale
  - H Texture/Color
  - I Screening/Backdrop
  - J Screening
  - K Screening
  - L Accent Palm
  - M Edible/Color
  - N Low Texture/Color
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  - T Groundcover

- **Suggestion**
  - Loquat or Citrus
  - Ficus or Grasses
  - Cinnam or Beautyberry
  - Myrtle or Marlberry
  - Beautyberry or Walter’s Viburnum
  - Herbs or Annuals
  - Myrsine or Marlberry
  - Gallberry or Dwarf Firebush
  - Myrtle or Palmetto
  - Myrtle or Palmetto
  - Perennials or Ferns
  - Fens or Low Perennials
  - Fens or Low Perennials
  - "Little Gem" Magnolia or Florida Privet
  - Galberry or Dwarf Firebush
  - Muhly Grass or Bacopa app.

- **Notes**
  - The location of your house is crucial. During cold periods the temperatures east of I-75 are generally six to ten degrees lower than along the coast, and many tropical plants can suffer damage ranging from loss of leaves, dieback of twigs, or even death.

- **Visits**
  - Your visit with the beauty of natural Florida.

- **Reasons**
  - Existing native plants will also acquaint you with the beauty of natural Florida.

- **Temperatures**
  - Sarasota County has relatively mild winters, with an average nighttime low temperature in January of around 50 degrees. We also average several days each winter when the temperature is around or below freezing for a few hours at night.

- **Cold Periods**
  - During cold periods the temperatures east of I-75 are generally six to ten degrees lower than along the coast, and many tropical plants can suffer damage ranging from loss of leaves, dieback of twigs, or even death.

- **Questions**
  - Is it susceptible to pests or disease?
  - How fast does it grow?
  - How much does it spread?
  - Will it survive very wet conditions?
  - What are the light and water requirements?
  - How large will it grow?

- **Suggestions**
  - Loquat or Citrus
  - Ficus or Grasses
  - Cinnam or Beautyberry
  - Myrtle or Marlberry
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