

The GreenVine

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The Big Debate: Native vs. Exotic

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On a recent tour of an Orlando nursery, I found that almost none of the vegetation being sold were native Florida plants. I asked the owner why this was and his answer was simple: "They don't sell." Most gardeners and horticulturalists turn rigid at the mention of 'exotic,' associating 'invasive' with the term. But what is really native? Can plants that were once foreign to a region but that have adapted and become part of natural areas still be considered exotic? According to Dr. Carl E. Whitcomb, author and plant identification guru,

"A study of fossils reveals that many plants were "native" to locations far removed from



Elephant ear - originally native to Asia, is now "native" to Florida.

where they are currently "native"." With soil composition constantly shifting under a multitude of variables (construction, logging, weather, erosion, agriculture), adaptation is

key to a native or exotic plant's survival. When landscaping, one should consider both natives and "exotics" that are adapted well to the site so as to use the resources available without too much outside help. Choosing plants that are compatible and perform numerous functions decrease the amount of human labor necessary to maintain them and allow nature's broad back to carry the load. Floridayards.org is a wonderful resource for finding native plants and provides tons of useful information for the Florida landscaper.



A Note on Chinch Bugs from Fert & Pest Manager, Randy Anderson:

"Chinch bugs are about the size of a pin head, thrive in hot and dry conditions and usually affect drought stressed areas along sidewalks and parking lots. Turf will grow in irregular shapes and the borders will turn yellow-orange when these critters are present. To prevent loss of greenery, ensure turf is receiving adequate moisture and begin treatment at the first sign of damage."

"Hunker Down!"

As Tom Terry, local news personality, would say. Hurricane season is upon us. If you have not filled out your Hurricane/Emergency Cleanup Approval—please do so before it's too late!

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Southern Magnolia



With summer in full swing, magnolia trees are brimming over with deliciously creamy white flowers, one of the biggest flowers of all North American trees. Native to Florida, this tree has reached max heights of 114 feet in some

places. Magnolia is a strong, wind tolerant tree, often weathering severe conditions. With a bark that is less flammable than most trees and a resilient nature, this magnolia has become known as the Southerner's tree.



The Arbitrary Quote:
 *People from a planet without flowers would think we must be mad with joy the whole time to have such things about us."
 - Iris Murdoch

Questions or comments about our newsletter? We'd love to hear from you! Send us an email at info@bakerlandscaping.com.