Perennial Gardening in Florida

Sydney Park Brown

Flowering perennials can provide color in your landscape during every season of the year. Once established, these plants require less maintenance than annual flowers, and they have the advantage of being a more permanent part of your landscape.

Perennials are plants that grow indefinitely. The shrubs and trees that comprise our landscapes are perennials, but these are referred to as woody perennials. The plants discussed here are herbaceous perennials—plants with little or no woody tissue. However, under the continuous growing conditions of south Florida, some herbaceous perennials become woody shrubs. Likewise, plants that are normally woody shrubs in south Florida behave as herbaceous perennials in north Florida where they are killed to the ground each winter.

Plants which grow from bulbs, corms, tubers, or other types of underground storage systems are also herbaceous perennials. The selection and care of these plants is discussed in Circular 552, “Bulbs For Florida,” here: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/MG029.

Selection and Use

The flowering perennials listed in Table 1 are good performers in Florida gardens or in containers. Many other perennials exist, but they may not be suited to Florida’s climate and soils.

Some perennials are used to best advantage when they are planted in masses. The bold displays of color they provide are much more pleasing than individual plants placed here and there. Evergreen and flowering shrubs provide a beautiful backdrop for masses of small perennials, whereas large-growing perennials can be used as specimen plants.

Note the mature size of each perennial you select. Most large-growing perennials can be maintained as a smaller plant, but it may require frequent pruning to keep them that way. Is the perennial tender or hardy to cold? Tender perennials will need cold protection during frosts or freezes. How much sunlight does it require? When does it flower? Ideally, a garden should have a succession of blooms throughout the year.

When designing a bed, think of plant form and texture. Pleasing foliage combinations (clumping with upright forms; delicate with bold textures) give the garden interest long after the flowers are gone.

Flower and foliage color is another important design consideration. "Warm" colors such as orange,
red and yellow should be grouped together and segregated from the "cool" hues and pastels. White, blue, silver/gray and green go with everything and can be used as transition colors in the garden. Repetition of color and form pulls the eye through the garden and provides a pleasing cohesiveness.

Consider all these factors when determining how and where plants should be used in the landscape or perennial garden. Inexperienced perennial growers may find it challenging to design a garden. Luckily, most perennials transplant well and beds can be easily rearranged if needed.

**Planting and Care**

The most important step in establishing perennials is preparing the planting bed. Because most perennials remain in the bed for several years without being divided or moved, proper soil preparation is essential.

Sandy soils should be amended with organic matter such as manure, peat, or compost. Apply several inches of organic matter to the soil surface and work into the top 10 to 12 inches. A soil pH of 5.5 to 6.5 is recommended. Many county Extension offices test soil and make pH recommendations.

Space the plants in the bed to allow for their future growth and for cultivation between them. Plant them in the soil so that the top of the root ball is slightly above the ground line. Mulch heavily, at least 2 to 3 inches, with an organic mulch such as leaves, pine straw or wood chips. A thick mulch will conserve moisture, insulate roots from heat and cold, and discourage weeds. Do not allow the mulch to touch the base of the plants and re-apply it as needed.

Most flowering perennials require little maintenance other than occasional pruning and fertilizing. Timing of fertilizer applications and amounts may vary with different plants and parts of the state. Let the appearance and growth rate of the plant guide you. Many perennials require little or no fertilizer once established; others benefit from one to four light applications of fertilizer per growing season. A general purpose landscape fertilizer containing equal amounts of nitrogen and potassium and low to no phosphorus (such as 15-0-15) is recommended. Controlled-release fertilizers such as Osmocote, Nutricote or Polycon, can also provide excellent results. Occasional pruning may be needed to remove dead flower spikes or unsightly leaves, or to reduce the size of the plant. Some perennials become top-heavy when in bloom and will need to be staked.

**Propagation**

The propagation method for each perennial is listed in Table 1. Division is the quickest and easiest method of multiplying some herbaceous perennials. Simply dig the plants and shake off the soil. It will be apparent where to separate the plants into smaller units having roots and leaves. The best time to divide plants is after the blooming season or during milder times of the year. Perennials that are frozen back to the ground can be lifted, divided, and reset at that time with good results. Some perennials are easily grown from seed or cuttings as well. Spring and summer are the appropriate seasons for these forms of propagation.

**Pests and Diseases**

Although the plants listed here are relatively pest free, perennials should be inspected frequently for insects and diseases. If pests are detected early enough, they can be managed before other plants become infested. Many problems can be prevented by simply hand-picking the insects or infected leaves. For severe infestations, chemical control may be needed.

Perennials can also be damaged by microscopic, worm-like parasites called nematodes, which live in soil. Nematodes feed on roots and may badly damage the root systems of some perennials when present in sufficient numbers. Severely infested beds should be fumigated or solarized and replanted with new plants. For information on soil fumigants, soil solarization, insecticides and fungicides contact your county’s Extension office, here: http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/map/
Reference


This document was first published as Flowering Perennials for Florida in 1991 by Brown, S. P., Hodyss, L., and Marshall, D.
Table 1. Useful Information for Selecting and Growing Flowering Perennials in Florida

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Zones</th>
<th>Growth Habit</th>
<th>Common Height</th>
<th>Flower Color/ Season</th>
<th>Light Conditions</th>
<th>Soil Type</th>
<th>Salt Spray Tolerant</th>
<th>Cold Hardy*</th>
<th>Method of Propagation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Iris <em>(Dietes species)</em></td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Clumping</td>
<td>3'</td>
<td>White, Yellow/ Year-round</td>
<td>Sun, light shade</td>
<td>Wide range, drought tolerant</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Background, bedding.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Beach Sunflower <em>(Helianthus debilis)</em></td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Ground cover</td>
<td>6-10&quot;</td>
<td>Yellow/ Year-round</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Well drained, wide range, very drought tolerant</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Ground cover, wildflower garden, attracts butterflies. Florida native.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Begonia, Hardy Begonia <em>(Begonia species)</em></td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Upright, rounded, or ground cover</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>White, pinks, reds/ Winter, Spring, some year-round</td>
<td>Light to full shade</td>
<td>Moist, organic</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Stem or leaf cuttings, division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Hosta replacement in the shade garden, best in Central to South Florida. Best performers are Cane, Angel Wing and rhizomatous types (other than Rex). Wax Begonias B. semperflorens are normally treated as annuals, although they can be long-lived in central and south FL.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blackberry Lily <em>(Belamcanda chinensis)</em></td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Upright</td>
<td>3'</td>
<td>Orange-red/ June-October</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Wide range, drought tolerant</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Division, seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Background, massing. Iris-like foliage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blue Daze <em>(Evolvulus glomerata 'Blue Daze')</em></td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Spreading</td>
<td>1-2'</td>
<td>Blue/ Year-round</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Wide range</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Mass plantings, ground cover. Often suffers from a leaf fungal disease in summer. May not survive a hard freeze in north FL.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blue Sage <em>(Eranthemum pulchellum)</em></td>
<td>C,S</td>
<td>Upright</td>
<td>3-5'</td>
<td>Deep blue/ Winter</td>
<td>Light to full shade</td>
<td>Well-drained</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Background, massing. Prune back after flowering.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulbine <em>(Bulbine frutescens)</em></td>
<td>C,S</td>
<td>Clumping</td>
<td>1-2'</td>
<td>Orange, yellow/ Spring, Summer</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Well-drained, drought tolerant</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Division, seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Ground cover, container. 'Hallmark' is a sterile cultivar.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. Useful Information for Selecting and Growing Flowering Perennials in Florida

| **Bush Daisy,** **African Bush Daisy**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>(Euryops pectinatus)</em></th>
<th>C,S</th>
<th>Erect, bushy</th>
<th>2-3'</th>
<th>Yellow/ Spring, Summer, Fall</th>
<th>Sun to light shade</th>
<th>Well drained, wide range, somewhat drought tolerant</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Semi-hardy</th>
<th>Cuttings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Massing, mid-border, attracts butterflies.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Cat's Whiskers**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>(Orthosiphon aristatus)</em></th>
<th>C,S</th>
<th>Upright</th>
<th>2-3'</th>
<th>White, pale lavender/ Year-round</th>
<th>Sun to light shade</th>
<th>Moist, fertile, organic</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Tender</th>
<th>Cuttings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Mid border, accent plant, attracts butterflies/hummingbirds.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Chrysanthemum,** **Garden Mum**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>(Chrysanthemum grandiflora)</em></th>
<th>N,C</th>
<th>Spreading</th>
<th>1-2'</th>
<th>Many colors/ Fall</th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Fertile, well-drained</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Hardy</th>
<th>Cuttings, division</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Bedding, Pinch once or twice until August 15 to induce branching.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Cigar Flower**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>(Cuphea micropetala)</em></th>
<th>N,C</th>
<th>Upright</th>
<th>3-4'</th>
<th>Yellow, orange/ Fall</th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Drought tolerant</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Tender</th>
<th>Cuttings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Bedding, Attracts hummingbirds.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Daylily**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>(Hemerocallis species)</em></th>
<th>N,C,S</th>
<th>Clumping</th>
<th>1-3'</th>
<th>Many colors/ March-June</th>
<th>Sun, shifting shade</th>
<th>Wide range, drought tolerant</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Semi-hardy</th>
<th>Division, seed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Background, border plantings, massing.</td>
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| **Firecracker Plant,** **Coral Plant**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>(Russelia equisetiformis)</em></th>
<th>C, S</th>
<th>Rounded/ Weeping</th>
<th>3'</th>
<th>Red, pale yellow, coral/Year-round</th>
<th>Sun to light shade</th>
<th>Well drained, somewhat drought tolerant</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Tender</th>
<th>Division, tip cuttings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Back of border, accent plant, attracts butterflies/hummingbirds, Florida native.</td>
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</table>

| **Firebush**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>(Hamelia patens)</em></th>
<th>N, C, S</th>
<th>Rounded</th>
<th>4-6'</th>
<th>Red-orange/ warm months</th>
<th>Sun to light shade</th>
<th>Wide range, very drought tolerant</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Tender</th>
<th>Air layers, cuttings, seed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Back of border, accent plant, attracts butterflies/hummingbirds, Florida native.</td>
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</table>

| **R. sarmentosa** is another nice garden perennial with red flowers. |
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EC</th>
<th>Habit</th>
<th>Ht</th>
<th>Bloom</th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Soil Needs</th>
<th>Cold Tolerance</th>
<th>Propagation</th>
<th>Use/Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Firespike</strong></td>
<td>N,C</td>
<td>Upright</td>
<td>6'</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Fertile, well-drained</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings, division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Odontonema cuspidate</em> - syn. <em>O. strictum</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Summer-Fall</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Flax Lily</strong></td>
<td>N,C</td>
<td>Clumping</td>
<td>1-2'</td>
<td>Small blue/White</td>
<td>Sun or shade</td>
<td>Moist, well-drained</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dianella tasmanica</em> 'Variegata'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Winter, Spring</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fleabane, Mexican Daisy</strong></td>
<td>N,C</td>
<td>Spreading</td>
<td>6&quot;</td>
<td>White/White</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Well-drained, drought tolerant</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Cuttings, seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Erigeron karvinskianus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gaura</strong></td>
<td>N,C</td>
<td>Clumping</td>
<td>2-4'</td>
<td>White or pink/White</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Well-drained, drought tolerant</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings, seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gaura lindheimeri</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gerbera Daisy</strong></td>
<td>N,C</td>
<td>Clumping</td>
<td>12-18&quot;</td>
<td>Many colors/Many colors/</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Fertile, well-drained</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Division, seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gerbera jamesonii</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Golden Dewdrop</strong></td>
<td>C,S</td>
<td>Upright</td>
<td>4-6'</td>
<td>Blue, white, purple/Blue, white, purple/</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Well-drained, drought tolerant</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings, seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Duranta erecta</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Summer, Fall</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Golden Shrimp Plant</strong></td>
<td>C,S</td>
<td>Upright</td>
<td>3-4'</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>Light to deep shade</td>
<td>Wide range</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pachystachys lutea</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>warm months</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Background.</td>
<td><strong>Heliotrope, Scorpion Tail or Butterfly Heliotrope</strong> <em>(Heliotropium angiospermum)</em></td>
<td><strong>C</strong>, <strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rounded</strong></td>
<td><strong>3’</strong></td>
<td><strong>White/ Year round</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sun to light shade</strong></td>
<td><strong>Drought and flood tolerant</strong></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Mid-border, transition plant, wildflower garden, attracts butterflies. Florida native.</td>
<td><strong>Jacobinia</strong> <em>(Justicia carnea)</em></td>
<td><strong>C</strong>, <strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>Erect, bushy</strong></td>
<td><strong>2-4’</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rose, white/ warm months</strong></td>
<td><strong>Light to full shade</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fertile, moist</strong></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tender</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Background, massing. Frequently remove old blooms.</td>
<td><strong>Jewels of Opar</strong> <em>(Talinum paniculatum ‘Variegata’)</em></td>
<td><strong>C</strong>, <strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rounded to upright</strong></td>
<td><strong>3’</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pink/ Summer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Light to deep shade</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rich, moist</strong></td>
<td><strong>Unknown</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tender</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Mid-border, massing. Green form of this plant re-seeds and becomes very weedy.</td>
<td><strong>Lantana</strong> <em>(Lantana species)</em></td>
<td><strong>N</strong>, <strong>C</strong>, <strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ground cover, rounded, upright</strong></td>
<td><strong>Varies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Red, pink, orange, yellow, white/ warm months</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sun</strong></td>
<td><strong>Well-drained, wide range, very drought tolerant</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tender</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Massing, ground cover (depending on type); attracts butterflies/hummingbirds. Native species exist. <em>Lantana camara</em> is considered invasive in south and central Florida and is not recommended; use with caution in north FL. Purple Weeping Lantana (<em>L. montevidensis</em>) is not considered invasive in Florida. Further assessment of potentially pollen- and seed-sterile cultivars of <em>L. camara</em> in 2007 may result in different conclusions; check the IFAS Assessment website at: <a href="http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/assessment/">http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/assessment/</a> for updated recommendations.</td>
<td><strong>Leopard Plant</strong> <em>(Farfugium japonicum)</em></td>
<td><strong>N</strong>, <strong>C</strong>, <strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ground cover</strong></td>
<td><strong>2’</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yellow/ Fall, Winter</strong></td>
<td><strong>Light shade</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rich, moist</strong></td>
<td><strong>Unknown</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hardy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Ground cover, container. Most cultivars have cream or yellow leaf markings.</td>
<td><strong>Lily of the Nile</strong> <em>(Agapanthus species)</em></td>
<td><strong>N</strong>, <strong>C</strong></td>
<td><strong>Clumping</strong></td>
<td><strong>2-3’</strong></td>
<td><strong>Blue, Lavender, White/ Summer, Early Fall</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sun to light shade</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fertile, well-drained</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Semi-hardy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Massing, mid-border, cut flowers.</td>
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Table 1. Useful Information for Selecting and Growing Flowering Perennials in Florida

| **Lion's Ear**  
*(Leonotis leonurus)* | N,C,S | Upright | 4-5' | Orange/ Fall-Spring | Sun | Well-drained | Yes | Tender | Cuttings |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Background. Prune to keep plant bushy.</td>
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| **Marble Leaf**  
*(Peristrophe hyssopifolia)* | C,S | Ground | 1' | Lavender/ Winter | Sun to light shade | Well-drained | Unknown | Tender | Cuttings |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Ground cover.</td>
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| **Mexican Heather**  
*(Cuphea hyssopifolia)* | N,C,S | Rounded | 18" | Purple, white/ Year-round | Sun to light shade | Well-drained | No | Tender | Cuttings |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Massing, edging, ground cover. Prune frequently.</td>
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| **Ornamental Sweet Potato**  
*(Ipomoea batatas)* | N,C,S | Ground cover | 6-12" | Flowers not showy | Sun | Well-drained, wide-range | Unknown | Tender | Cuttings |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Ground cover (seasonal), container. Vigorous plants grown for their attractive foliage. Chartreuse, purple-black, variegated, and copper-colored cultivars exist. Give Ornamental Sweet Potato plants plenty of growing space.</td>
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| **Peacock Ginger**  
*(Kaempferia species)* | N,C,S | Ground cover | 6-36" | Lavender, white/ Spring, Summer | Light to full shade | Wide range, prefers enriched soil | No | Hardy | Division, seed |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Ground cover, Hosta replacement. Dormant in winter (except in south FL).</td>
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| **Pentas**  
*(Pentas lanceolata)* | N,C,S | Rounded to sprawling shrub | 4' | Red, pink, white, lilac/ year-round | Sun to light shade | Well-drained, drought tolerant | No | Tender | Cuttings |
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<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Background plantings, cut flower. Attracts butterflies.</td>
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| **Persian Shield**  
*(Strobilanthes dyerianus)* | C,S | Rounded | 4' | Pale blue/ Winter | Light to full shade | Wide range | Yes | Tender | Cuttings |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use/Comments:</strong> Mid-border, massing, accent plant. Winter blooms are unattractive; prune back plants at this time.</td>
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</table>
Table 1. Useful Information for Selecting and Growing Flowering Perennials in Florida

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perennial</th>
<th>Growth Form</th>
<th>Height/Spread</th>
<th>Bloom Season</th>
<th>Sunlight</th>
<th>Water Needs</th>
<th>Hardiness</th>
<th>Propagation</th>
<th>Use/Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pinks</strong> (<em>Dianthus</em> species)**</td>
<td>N,C</td>
<td>Rounded</td>
<td>6-18&quot;</td>
<td>Reds, pinks, white/ Fall-Spring</td>
<td>Light shade</td>
<td>Well-drained, drought tolerant</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Massing, edging. Short-lived, unsightly in summer.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Philippine Violet</strong> (<em>Barleria cristata</em>)</td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Upright</td>
<td>4'</td>
<td>Lavender, white/ October-April</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Wide range</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Background. Reseeds and may become weedy in the garden. B. <em>oenotheroides</em> (syn. B. <em>micans</em>) is a 3 foot, upright perennial with yellow flowers fall through early winter.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Plectranthus</strong> (<em>Plectranthus</em> species)**</td>
<td>C,S</td>
<td>Rounded, upright, or ground cover</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>White, purple, pink/ Summer, Fall or intermittent</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Rich, organic, moist</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Semi-hardy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Front or mid-border, ground cover, container. Many are grown solely for their attractive variegated or silver foliage.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Plumbago</strong> (<em>Plumbago auriculata</em>)</td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Sprawling shrub</td>
<td>3-6'</td>
<td>Blue, white/ year-Round</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Wide range</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Background, massing.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Porterweed</strong> (<em>Stachytarpheta</em> species)**</td>
<td>C,S</td>
<td>Upright</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Blues, coral, red, purple/ warm months</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Well drained, drought tolerant</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Massing or accent plant, attracts butterflies/hummingbirds. May re-seed. S. <em>urticifolia</em> may escape cultivation. S. <em>jamaicensis</em> is a FL native.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ruellia</strong> (<em>Ruellia</em> species)**</td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Clumping to upright</td>
<td>2-3'</td>
<td>Blue, violet, red, pink/ May-November</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Well-drained, drought tolerant</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Semi-hardy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Background, bedding. <em>R. brittoniana/R. tweediana</em> is considered invasive in north and central Florida and is not recommended; use with caution in south FL. Further assessment in 2007 may result in different conclusions for the sterile cultivar ‘Purple Showers’; check the IFAS Assessment website at: <a href="http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/assessment/">http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/assessment/</a> for up-dated recommendations.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. Useful Information for Selecting and Growing Flowering Perennials in Florida

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perennials</th>
<th>Zones</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Flower Color</th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Water Requirement</th>
<th>Hardyiness</th>
<th>Propagation</th>
<th>Use/Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salvias, Sages</strong> (Salvia species)</td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Upright, bushy</td>
<td>2-5'</td>
<td>Blues, red, pink, yellow, white/Species dependent</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Well-drained, drought tolerant</td>
<td>Generally no</td>
<td>Variable by species</td>
<td>Division, cuttings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Background, massing. Many species exist.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sanchezia</strong> (Sanchezia nobilis)</td>
<td>C,S</td>
<td>Upright</td>
<td>3-8'</td>
<td>Yellow/ Summer</td>
<td>Sun, shade</td>
<td>Rich, well drained</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Back of border, massing, accent plant, container.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shrimp Plant</strong> (Justicia brandegeana)</td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Sprawling</td>
<td>4-6'</td>
<td>Reddish-brown and other colors/Spring, Summer</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Wide range</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings, division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Mass plantings, background. Attracts hummingbirds. 'Flava' (yellow), 'Jambaleya' (red) and 'Fruit Cocktail' (chartreuse and pink) are popular cultivars.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>St. Bernard’s Lily</strong> (Anthericum liliago)</td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Upright, clumping</td>
<td>2'</td>
<td>White/ Year-round</td>
<td>Sun, shade</td>
<td>Moist, well-drained</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Division, seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Mixed or mass plantings, container, specimen.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trailing Wishbone Flower</strong> (Torenia hybrids)</td>
<td>C,S</td>
<td>Ground cover</td>
<td>3-6”</td>
<td>Deep blue, purple, pink, white/warm months</td>
<td>Light to full shade</td>
<td>Fertile, moist, well-drained</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings, seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tropical Jasmines</strong> (Cestrum species)</td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Rounded to upright</td>
<td>up to 15'</td>
<td>Varies by species/Fall, Winter, Spring</td>
<td>Sun to light shade</td>
<td>Wide range</td>
<td>Depends on type</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Cuttings, seed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Back of border, accent plant. Prune to maintain a smaller size. Caution: C. diurnum may escape cultivation.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Verbena</strong> (Verbena species and hybrids)</td>
<td>N,C,S</td>
<td>Sprawling</td>
<td>6-8”</td>
<td>Red, pink, white, lavender/March-October</td>
<td>Fertile, drought tolerant</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Semi-hardy</td>
<td>Cuttings, seed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Massing, ground cover. ‘Sissinghurst’, a rose-pink cultivar, appears reliable in south FL.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow Alder</strong> (Turnera ulmifolia)</td>
<td>C,S</td>
<td>Upright</td>
<td>2’</td>
<td>Yellow or cream Year-round</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Wide range</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Cuttings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use/Comments: Attracts butterflies.</td>
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<td>Table 1. Useful Information for Selecting and Growing Flowering Perennials in Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hardy</strong>—Frost and freeze hardy. <strong>Semi-hardy</strong>—Some plant damage from frost or freeze. <strong>Tender</strong>—indicates that the plant is killed to the ground by frost or freeze, but recovers quickly.</td>
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