

Creating Wildlife Habitat

Doris Heitzmann
Community Outreach Coordinator
Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program
dheitzmann@pinellascounty.org



UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA
IFAS EXTENSION



Nine Principles of a Florida-Friendly Yard

- Right Plant -
Right Place



- Water
Efficiently



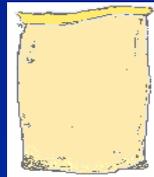
- Mulch



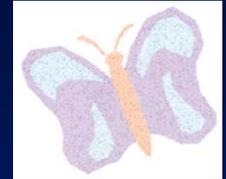
- Recycle



- Use Fertilizer
Appropriately



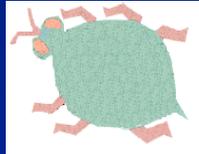
- **Attract
Wildlife**



- Reduce
Stormwater
Runoff



- Manage Yard Pests
Responsibly



- Protect the
Waterfront





Overview

- Reasons for creating Wildlife Habitat
- Design and Plant Selection
- Management

WHERE?

- In your landscape
- HOA common areas



WHERE?

- Lakes and Ponds



Why create Wildlife Habitat?

Habitat loss

Supporting and creating Ecosystems

- Food source for wildlife
- Protective cover for small fish
- Source of nesting material for birds and small mammals
- Shade for fish and humans (trees)
- Living surface for small insects and invertebrates
- Attractive and increases property value

Providing Habitat: Structure and Food by incorporating Native Plants



Terrestrial Birds



Y.-rumped Warbler



Red-tailed Hawk



R.-thr. Hummingbird



Northern Mockingbird



Flycatcher

Freshwater Birds



Great Blue Heron



Snowy Egret



Great White Herons



Ibis



Little Blue Heron



Cranes

Fish, Turtles, Snails, Pollinators: Insects Butterflies Toads, Frogs



Landscaping for Wildlife

- All animals need:

- Food

- Cover/Shelter

- Water

- Space

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graph LR; A[Food] --> B[Habitat]; C[Cover/Shelter] --> B; D[Water] --> B; E[Space] --> B;
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Habitat

Designing and Planting



Shelter

- Vegetation
- Snags
- Logs
- Nesting boxes



Water

- Bird bath
- Fountain
- Pond/lake



Food

- Nectar for insects and hummingbirds
- Berries



Plant layers

Plant diversity

Use Native Plants



How?

POND LANDSCAPING

Native aquatic and terrestrial plants are used as food, hunting grounds, for nest building and for protection



Red Maple



Pickerel weed

Native vs. Exotic

Planting natives:

- Protects Florida's natural heritage
- Increases native pollinator, butterfly, and bird diversity
- Limits future invasions

Eichhornia crassipes

Photo and © by Roger Hammer
Wildflowers of the Everglades



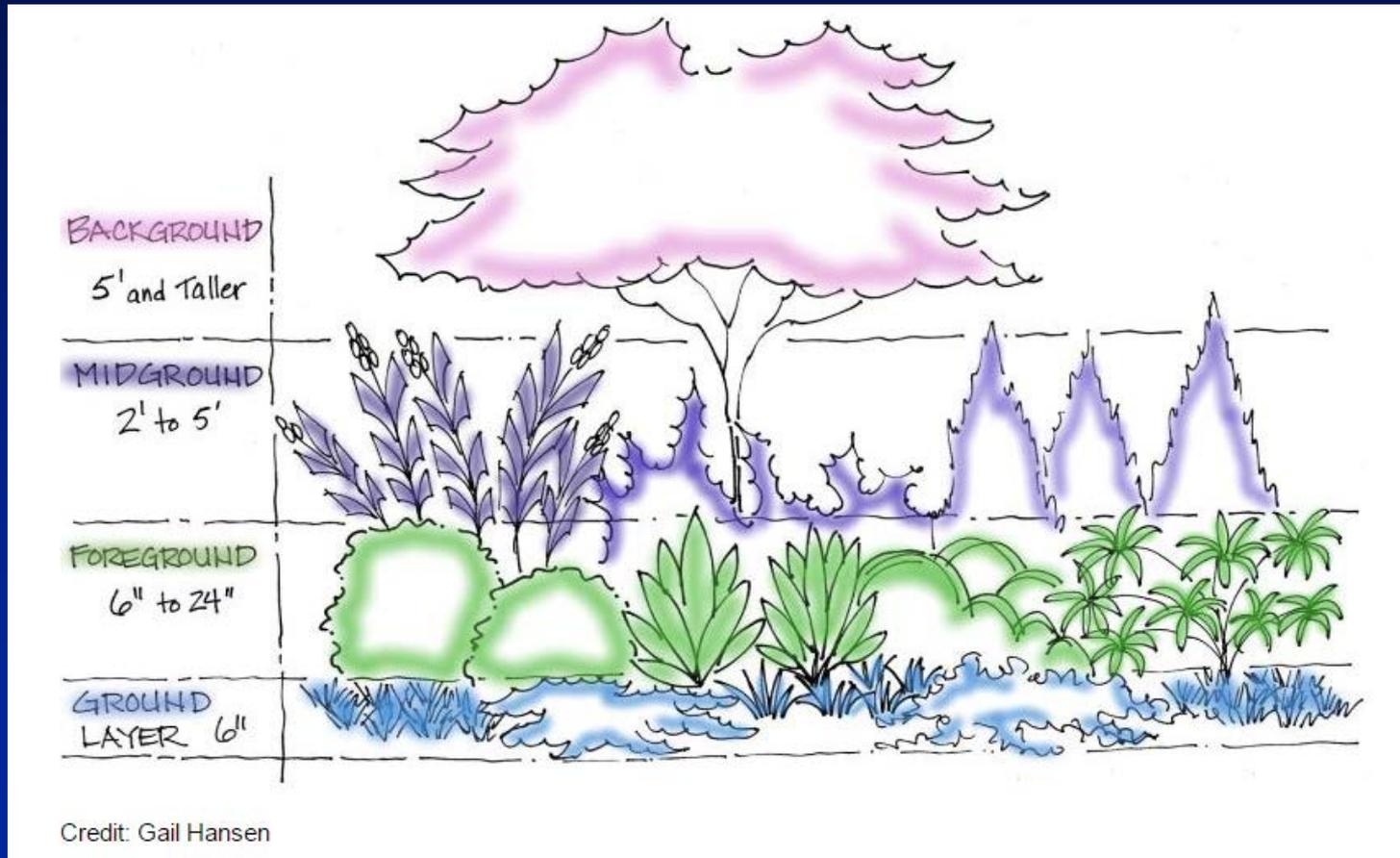
Eichhornia crassipes
(water hyacinth)



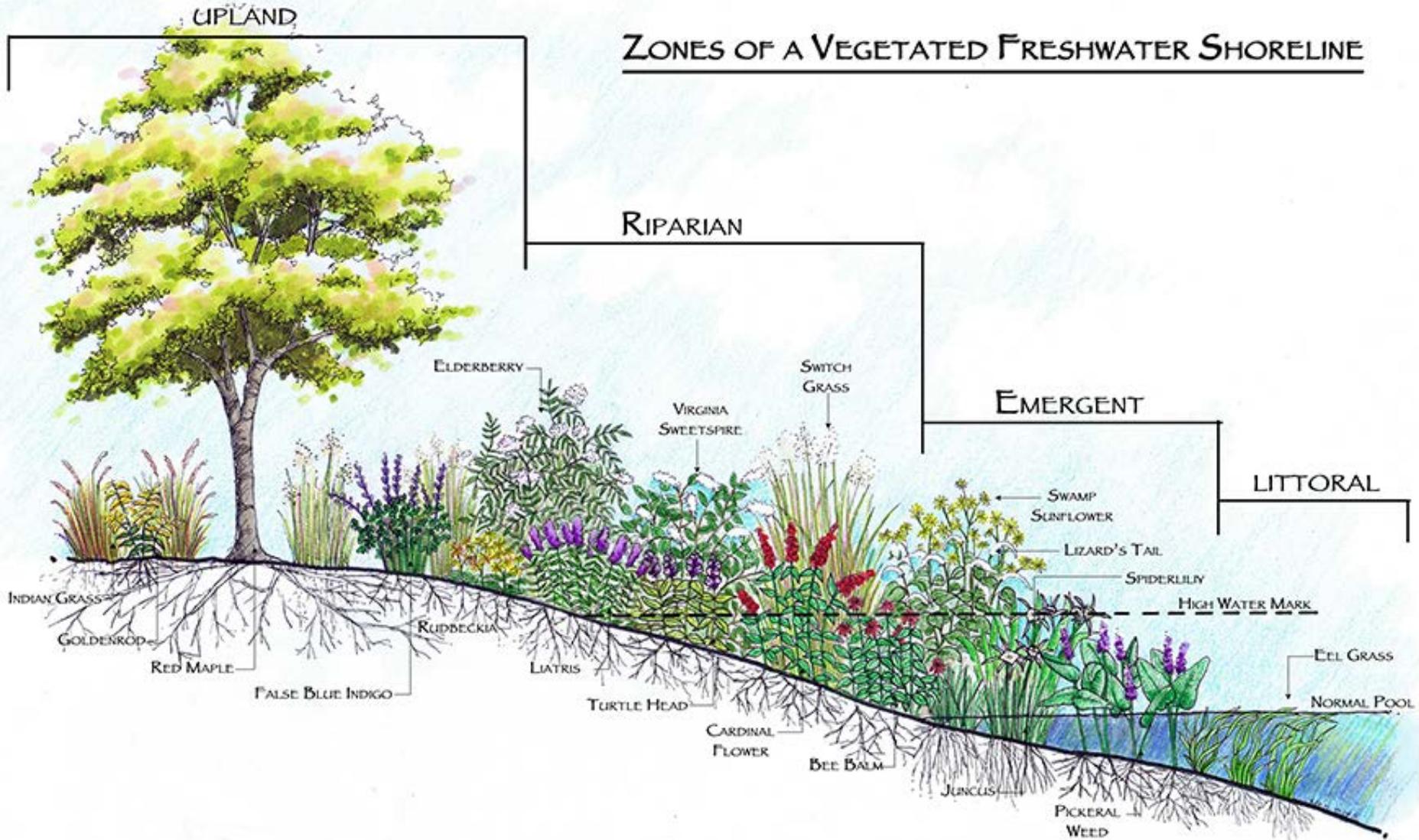
Michauxia crassipes
Photo by Karen Stone
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HOW?

- Vertical layering



Trait diversity-multifunctional Ecosystem



Planting Zones

- Littoral (Deep Zone): Spatterdock
 - Emergent (Mid Zone): Arrowhead, Pickerel Weed
 - Riparian (Shallow Zone): Sand cord grass, Blue Flag Iris, Golden Canna
- Upland plantings merge into home landscapes:
Trees, shrubs, ornamental grasses, wildflowers



Three categories of Wetland Plants

- Submersed wetland plants
- Floating wetland plants
- Emergent wetland plants
 - emerging aquatic plants
 - short stemmed marginal plants
 - marginal plants



Spatterdock

HOW?

- **Plants: Plant-eating (herbivorous) animals**



becomes food for flesh-eating (carnivorous) animals

- **Wetland plants increase wildlife habitat in the urban landscape**
 - = seed source**
 - = foraging areas for waterfowl and wading birds**
 - = cover for aquatic life**

Plant diversity can help to attract more species



Provide Fruit and Seeds

- Plant native fruit species
 - Many different plant species produce fruit (hollies, cedar trees, beauty berries, wax myrtles)



Beautyberry



Mark Hostetler

Holly spp.

Provide Nectar

- Plant species with red, tubular flowers attract hummingbirds
- Plant for pollinators



Tropical Sage



Dotted Horsemint

Provide Meat

Insects, small Fish, Frogs, Toads,
small mammals





Design and Implementation

- **Remove invasive exotics**
- **Identify the average water level or shoreline**
- **Identify the planting zone in and around the pond**
- **Develop a plan with types and quantity of plants for each zone**
- **Keep plant palette simple**
- **Don't overplant**
- **Increase habitat size (space)**
- **Planting: Start from the deepest zone and plant toward the shoreline**
- **Plant in clumps**

Landscape Management

- Decrease turfgrass
- Decrease mowing (no-mow zone)
- Manage nuisance plants
- Avoid herbicides, especially on young plants
- Limit or avoid pesticides
 - Spot treat
 - Use alternative methods of insect control
- Pet management



Resources

- **Plants for Lakefront Vegetation**
https://www.pinellascounty.org/environment/watershed/pdf/adoptapond/Lakefront_Revegetation.pdf
- **Landscaping Backyards for Wildlife**
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw175>
- **Florida-Friendly Plants for Freshwater Shorelines**
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/EP/EP47600.pdf>
- **Creating Wildlife Habitat with Florida Freshwater Wetland Plants**
<https://agrifecdn.tamu.edu/fisheries/files/2013/09/Creating-Wildlife-Habitat-with-Native-Florida-Freshwater-Wetland-Plants.pdf>

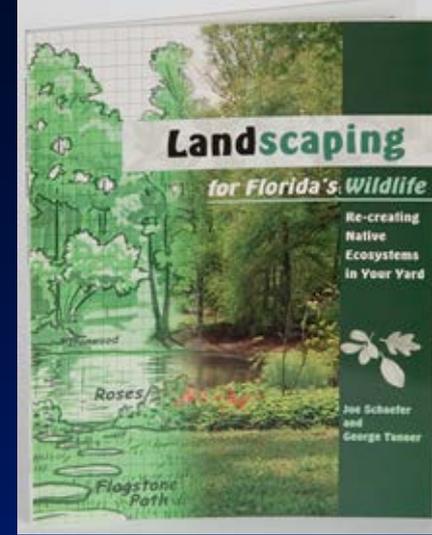


More Resources

- Web site: www.wec.ufl.edu/extension
 - Print on demand
 - Links and information
 - Educational programs
- Call your local extension office
- Call Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission or visit www.state.fl.us/fwc

Books

- *Landscaping for Florida's Wildlife*, Joe Schaefer and George Tanner



- *Your Backyard Woods & Wildlife*, Chris Demers, et al.
- Can both be found at:
<http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/>

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