



Staying Green While Conserving Water in Miami-Dade: A Selection of both Native and Non-Native Drought Tolerant Shrubs and Trees

The list below is a selection of some highly drought-tolerant trees and shrubs for full sun exposure that should be amenable to growing in Miami-Dade and is based on three articles [available on-line](#). Given south Florida’s seasonally wet/dry climate none of the listed trees/shrubs, once established, should need supplemental water. Both the familiar and unfamiliar, native and non-native species have been selected. If you are unable to find plants in local garden centers try specialist nurseries (Florida native, flowering trees/shrubs), mail order sources or area plant societies, fairs and rambles.

TYPE: growth habit (shrub and/or tree, usual form shown first)

SIZE: locally expected height in feet.

USE:

- shade (**sh**)
- ornamental interest (**or**)
- specimen (**sp**)
- screen/hedge (**sc**)

SALT:

- **high** or **low** tolerance
- **coastal**, combination of wind tolerance and moderate to high salt tolerance make these suited to coastal locations.

Leaf loss:

- **x** (evergreen, but locally some species [**xx**] can exhibit noticeable leaf loss in winter)
- **y** (deciduous)
- **z** (brevi-deciduous – leaf drop is rapidly followed by emergence of new leaves.)

Asterisk* = native to South Florida; **b** = usually grown as climbers (need support);

	TYPE	USE	SIZE	SALT
<i>Acacia pinetorum</i> ^{*x} (Pineland Acacia)	shrub	or, sc	5–8	high
<i>Alvaradoa amorphoides</i> ^{*x} (Mexican Alvaradoa)	tree/shrub	or, sp	10-25	

<i>Argusia gnaphalodes</i> ^{**x} (Sea Lavender)	shrub	or, sp	3- 6	coastal
<i>Bonellia macrocarpa</i> ^x (Cudjoewood)	shrub/tree	or, sp	6–15	coastal
<i>Bougainvillea glabra</i> & hybrids ^x (Paper Flower)	shrub ^b	or, sp, sc	8 (+)	high
<i>Boussieria succulenta</i> ^{**x} (Bahama Strongback)	shrub/tree	or, sp	20	high
<i>Brya ebenus</i> ^x (Jamaican Ebony)	tree/shrub	or, sp	15–30	
<i>Bulnesia arborea</i> ^x (Verawood)	tree	or/sh	30	low
<i>Bursera simaruba</i> ^{*z} (Gumbo Limbo)	tree	sp/or	20-50	high
<i>Byrsonima lucida</i> ^{**x} (Locustberry)	shrub/tree	or, sp	18	
<i>Caesalpinia cassioides</i> ^x (Cassia-leafed Caesalpinia)	shrub/tree	or/sp	6-15	low
<i>Caesalpinia pulcherrima</i> ^x (Pride of Barbados)	shrub/tree	or/sp/sc	10	
<i>Caesalpinia vesicaria</i> ^x (Indian Savin)	tree/shrub	or/sp	10-20	coastal
<i>Caesalpinia violacea</i> ^x (Brasiletto)	tree	or/sh	40-50	
<i>Callicarpa americana</i> ^{**x} (Beautyberry)	shrub	or/sp	6-8	low
<i>Calotropis gigantea</i> ^x (Giant milkweed)	shrub	or/sp/sc	8-12	coastal
<i>Capparis cynophallophora</i> ^{**x} (Jamaican Caper)	shrub/tree	sp/or/sc	18	coastal

<i>Carissa macrocarpa</i> ¹ (Natal Plum)	shrub	sp/or/sc	5-15	coastal
<i>Cassia afrofistula</i> ¹ (Dwarf Golden Shower)	tree	or/sp	15-20	high
<i>Cassia fistula</i> ^y (Golden Shower Tree)	tree	or/sp	30-40	
<i>Coccoloba uvifera</i> ^{*x} (Sea Grape)	tree/shrub	sp/sc	12-30	coastal
<i>Conocarpus erectus</i> ^{*x} (Buttonwood)	tree/shrub	sp/sc	10-30	coastal
<i>Cordia boissieri</i> ^x (Texas Wild Olive)	tree	or/sp	20	
<i>Cordia dodecandra</i> ^x (Sircote)	tree	or/sh	30-50	coastal
<i>Cordia gerascanthus</i> ^x (Huizache)	tree	sh/or	50	
<i>Cordia lutea</i> ^x (Yellow Cordia)	tree/shrub	or/sp	10-25	
<i>Cordia sebestena</i> ^x (Geiger Tree)	tree	or	25	coastal
<i>Cordia subcordata</i> ^x (Sea trumpet)	tree	or/sh	15-30	coastal
<i>Crescentia alata</i> ^{xx} (Mexican Calabash)	tree	or/sp/sh	20	
<i>Crossopetalum ilicifolium</i> ^{*x} (Quailberry)	shrub	or	2	low
<i>Crossopetalum rhacoma</i> ^{*x} (Rhacoma)	shrub	or/sp	2-6	low
<i>Delonix elata</i> ^x (Creamy Peacock Flower)	tree	or/sh	12-30	
<i>Delonix regia</i> ^y				

(Royal Poinciana)	tree	or/sh	40	
<i>Dodonea viscosa</i> ^{**x} (Varnish Leaf)	shrub/tree	or/sp/sc	18	coastal
<i>Enterolobium cyclocarpum</i> ^y (Ear Pod Tree)	tree	sh/or	35-60	low
<i>Euphorbia punicea</i> ^x (Jamaican Poinsettia)	tree/shrub	or/sp	10-15	high
<i>Ficus citrifolia</i> ^{**x} (Short-leaf Fig)	tree	sh/sp	45	
<i>Forestiera segregata</i> ^{**x} (Florida Privet) ¹	shrub/tree	sh/sc/sp	15	high
<i>Gliricidia sepium</i> ^y (Madre de cacao/Quick Stick)	tree/shrub	or/sp/sc	20	
<i>Guaiacum sanctum</i> ^{**x} (Lignum Vitae)	tree/shrub	or/sp	6-25	coastal
<i>Hamelia cuprae</i> ^{xx} (Bahamas Firebush)	tree/shrub	or/sp	15	coastal
<i>Hamelia patens</i> ^{**xx} (Firebush)	shrub/tree	or/sp/sc	5-15	
<i>Ilex krugiana</i> ^{**x} (Krug's Holly)	tree	sp/or	30	high
<i>Jacquinea arborea</i> ^x (Braceletwood)	shrub/tree	or/sp	5-15	coastal
<i>Jacquinia keyensis</i> ^{**x} (Joewood)	shrub/tree	or/sp	10	coastal
<i>Jatropha integerrima</i> ^x (Peregrina)	shrub	or/sp	8	
<i>Jatropha podagrica</i> ^x (Gout Plant)	shrub/tree	or/sp	8-10	

¹ Pineland privet, *Forestiera segregata* var. *pinetorum*^{*} is a low growing shrub less tolerant of salt

<i>Krugiodendron ferreum</i> ^{**x} (Black Ironwood)	tree	sp/or	30	
<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i> ^y (Crepe Myrtle)	shrub/tree	or/sp	5-20	low
<i>Lantana involucrata</i> ^{**x} (Buttonsage)	shrub	or	4-5	low
<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> ^x (Henna)	shrub/tree	or/sp/scr	6-10	
<i>Lysiloma latisiliqua</i> ^{**x} (Wild Tamarind)	tree	sp/sh	30	high
<i>Lysiloma sabicu</i> ^x (Sabicu/Horseflesh)	tree	sh/sp	25	high
<i>Markhamia lutea</i> ^x (Mgambo)	tree	or/sp/sh	40	low
<i>Mimusops caffra</i> ^x (Coastal Milkwood)	tree/shrub	or/sp/sh	10-30	coastal
<i>Nectandra coriacea</i> ^{**x} (Lancewood)	tree/shrub	or/sh	15-25	
<i>Noronhia emaginata</i> ^x (Madagascar Olive)	tree	sp/or	15-25	coastal
<i>Oncoba spinosa</i> ^{xx} (Spiny Oncoba)	tree/shrub	or/sc	12-25	low
<i>Pentalinon luteum</i> ^{**x} (Wild Allamanda)	shrub ^b	or	15	low
<i>Piscidia piscipula</i> ^{*y} (Jamaica Dogwood)	tree	or/sp	30	high
<i>Pithecellobium keyense</i> ^{**x} (Blackbead)	shrub/tree	or	10-20	high
<i>Plumeria pudica</i> ^x (Bridal Bouquet)	tree/shrub	or/sp	12-15	coastal
<i>Plumeria hybrids</i> ^y				

(Frangipani)	tree/shrub	or/sp	12-20	high
<i>Poitea carinalis</i> ^z (Caribwood)	tree	or/sp	15-20	low
<i>Pyrostegia venusta</i> ^x (Flame vine)	shrub ^b	or	25-100	low
<i>Reynosa septentrionalis</i> ^{**x} (Darling plum)	shrub/tree	sp/or	15-20	coastal
<i>Rondeletia leucophylla</i> ^x (Bush Pentas)	shrub/tree	or/sc/sp	6-15	
<i>Russelia equisetiformis</i> ^x (Fountain Plant)	shrub	or/sc/sp	4-5	high
<i>Samanea saman</i> ^x (Rain tree)	tree	sh/sp/or	50-80	
<i>Sapindus saponaria</i> ^{**z} (Soapberry)	tree	sh/sp	20-45	high
<i>Senna mexicana var. chapmanii</i> ^{**x} (Bahama Senna)	shrub	or	3-5	high
<i>Senna polyphylla</i> ^x (Desert Cassia)	shrub/tree	or/sp	9-15	high
<i>Sideroxylon foetidissimum</i> ^{**x} (False Mastic)	tree	sh/or	50-75	coastal
<i>Sideroxylon salicifolium</i> ^{**x} (Willow Busic)	shrub/tree	sp/or/sh	10-30	high
<i>Simarouba glauca</i> ^{**x} (Paradise Tree)	tree	sh/or	30-50	high
<i>Suriana maritima</i> ^{**x} (Bay Cedar)	shrub/tree	or/sp	6-12	coastal
<i>Tabebuia aurea</i> ^{2z} (Silver Trumpet Tree)	tree	or	20-25	

² Synonyms: *Tabebuia caraiba*, *T. argentea*

<i>Tabebuia bahamensis</i> ^y (Five Fingers)	tree	or	20	
<i>Tabebuia berteroi</i> ^y (Hispaniolan Rosy Trumpet Tree)	tree	or	20-30	
<i>Tabebuia haemantha</i> ^y (Roble Cimarón)	tree/shrub	or	25	
<i>Tabebuia heterophylla</i> ^{xx3} (White Cedar)	tree	or/sh	20-25	
<i>Tabebuia impetiginosa</i> ^{y4} (Ipe)	tree	or	20-30	
<i>Tamarindus indica</i> ^x (Tamarind)	tree	sh/or	50	coastal
<i>Tecoma castanifolia</i> ^x (Chestnut Leaved Trumpet Tree)	shrub/tree	or/sp	15-20	
<i>Tecoma stans</i> ^x (Yellow elder)	shrub/tree	or/sp	15	
<i>Tetrazygia bicolor</i> ^{*x} (Florida tetrazygia)	shrub/tree	or/sp/sc	6-12	

³ Synonym: *Tabebuia pentaphylla*

⁴ Some authorities assign the name *Handroanthus impetiginosus* to this taxon