

Rare, Uncommon or Interesting Trees, Shrubs and Plants that may be found along the Florida Trail in the Econfina Creek Water Management District.

1) These may be found within the Steepheads, near or along the upper parts of Econfina Creek.



Mountain Laurel
(*Kalmia latifolia*)

The genus *Kalmia* L. consists of about 6 species of evergreen or deciduous shrubs native to North America and Cuba (LHBH 1976). Of these species, mountain laurel *Kalmia latifolia* L. has for a number of reasons attracted the most attention. Mountain laurel is a broad-leaved, evergreen shrub that is dense and symmetrical when young but develops an open, loose habit with age. Typically, the shrub reaches a height and spread of 1.5 to 2 m. However, heights of 4.6 to 9 m have been reported. The species has a wide range, from coastal Maine to northwestern Florida, primarily along the Appalachian Mountain range, westward to Louisiana and northward into southern Ohio and Indiana. This range includes USDA Hardiness Zones 4 to 9. Mountain laurel is often found in rocky or gravelly woods and clearings, typically on acid or sterile soils.

Source: <http://www.nsl.fs.fed.us/wpsm/Kalmia.pdf>

Florida Azalea
(*Rhododendron austrinum*)



Each year, for several weeks in early Spring, the Florida flame azalea dominates the landscape with its breathtakingly brilliant golden blossoms. This deciduous shrub is composed of compact clusters of slender, sparsely branching stems that grow 6-8 ft (1.8-2.4m) in height and about 2 ft (0.6 m) wide. The showy flowers are golden yellow trumpets, often blushed red or peach at the base, and held in radially symmetric clusters at the stem tips. The flowers are about 1.5-2 in (3-5 cm) long and 1.5 in (3 cm) across. The pistil and red stamens extend about 1 in (2.5 cm) beyond the mouth in a graceful upward curve.

The flame azalea produces a delightful honeysuckle-like fragrance that is enjoyed by butterflies, hummingbirds and humans alike. The flowers appear in early Spring at about about the same time as the leaves appear. The oval (elliptic) leaves are alternate, 2-5 in (5-13 cm) long. These are medium green and covered with a soft fuzz on both the top and especially on the lower surface.

Source: www.floridata.com



Bigleaf Magnolia
(*Magnolia macrophylla*)

Ashe magnolia is an understory shrub or small tree with huge leaves and huge flowers. *Magnolia macrophylla* (there are two subspecies) has the largest leaves and the largest flowers of any North American tree. Ashe magnolia has deciduous leaves that are 12-24 in (30-60 cm) long and 6-12 in (15-30 cm) across at their widest point. The saucer shaped flowers are 10-12 in (25-30 cm) across and sweetly fragrant. They are creamy white with purplish stains at the bases of the nine petals. Flowers begin blooming when the leaves are about half grown and continue for several weeks. The fruits are borne in aggregates (look like cones) that are a beautiful shade of pink-purple. As befits a tree with huge leaves, the winter buds are amazingly large (up to 3 in or 7.5 cm long) and actually quite attractive.

Source: www.floridata.com

Fringe Tree or Old Man's Beard
(*Chionanthus virginicus*)

Fringetree is a large shrub or small tree that grows to about 20 ft (6.1 m) high, with one or a few short trunks and a rounded crown. It has opposite, deciduous, elliptical dark green glossy leaves. In spring the fringetree produces very showy, white flowers with narrow straplike petals that appear at the same time as the foliage. This tree is famous for its lovely sweet fragrance that is potent but never overpowering. Fringetree bears brownish, oval drupes about 1 in (2.5 cm) long in late summer.

Source: www.floridata.com





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Florida Anise (*Illicium floridanum*)

Florida anise is a broad-leaved evergreen shrub or small tree with a compact stature and a maximum height of 10 ft (3 m). The leaves are leathery, smooth and shiny, 2-6 in (5-15 cm) long and an inch or two wide. When crushed, they emit a characteristic anise-like odor, obnoxious to some, but pleasant to others. The flowers, about 2 in (5 cm) in diameter with 20-30 slender maroon petals, are attractive but tend to be overlooked in the lush shiny foliage. The flowers also have a peculiar odor - like that of a live fish! When ripe, the shiny, jewel-like seeds literally explode out of the papery star-shaped fruits. Several cultivars, including one with white flowers, are available.

Source: www.floridata.com

Trillium or Purple Toadshade (*Trillium underwoodii*)

Trilliums (from the Latin for "three") have all their parts in threes: three "leaves" (actually bracts), three sepals, three petals, three stigmas on the pistil, and six stamens. Trilliums have a single 8-12 in (20.3-25.4 cm) stem (technically a peduncle) that arises from a perennial rhizome and bears a single whorl of three leaflike bracts, and just above them, a single flower. One of the most common and widespread trilliums in the southeastern US is *T. cuneatum*, or purple toadshade. Most authorities recognize *T. underwoodii* as a distinct, but closely related species. The two are very similar and their ranges are adjoining without overlapping, so we treat them together. The "leaves" of purple toadshade are mottled dark and light green, with most of the light green down the center. The leaves are 2-4 in (5.1-10.2 cm) long and droop down almost to the ground. The greenish-maroon (sometimes brown or yellow) flower petals stand straight up and never open fully. The flowers have a peculiar spicy fragrance that some find unappealing. Purple toadshade blooms in very early spring. Source: www.floridata.com



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2) These may be found within the Longleaf Pine/ Wiregrass sandhill areas.



Smooth-Barked St. John's-Wort – "Threatened" (*Hypericum lissophloeus*)

A very rare St. John's-wort. This species is endemic to Bay and Washington counties in Florida, and is currently listed as endangered. Woodlanders Nursery describes it as: "Rare tree-like hypericum. Graceful evergreen to 10'. Needle-like leaves. Well-drained sandy soil or occasionally flooded sandy pond margins." In Florida, it forms a shrub to 13' tall with bright yellow flowers in June to October.

Source: Various.

False Rosemary (*Conradina canescens*)

False Rosemary is adapted to dunes and open, scrubby areas. It is a woody perennial shrub, often with masses of white to lavender blooms in the early spring or fall. These blooms attract several species of bees. *Conradina* often has a scrubby appearance; however some plants seem to have a denser habitus. *Conradina* is found growing in association with sand pines and oaks, and may be a pioneer species in disturbed areas. Terpenes released from False rosemary are allelopathic, and suppresses the growth of grasses. This is thought to help prevent wildfires. The plants are commonly up to 1 m (3.3 ft) in height. Source: Various.

