Front Yard Initiative

Plant List
About the Urban Conservancy

Since 2001, the Urban Conservancy (UC) has catalyzed equitable practices and policies related to land use and the local economy through education, research and advocacy. We promote sustainable solutions to New Orleans’ distinct land use needs through community, K-12, and neighborhood-level engagement. We work with partners to devise systems (of thought, of engineering, of urban design) that wisely manage the water that falls on our sinking, flood-prone, coastal city and educate the public about ways they can help in efforts to increase New Orleans’ long-term resilience.

Our Projects

The Front Yard Initiative (FYI) is the UC’s paving removal incentive program designed to improve New Orleans’ safety, stormwater management, and aesthetics while growing the green sector.

Building Active Stewardship in New Orleans (BASIN) is the UC’s program for school-aged children to introduce them to the vocabulary, concepts, and skills required to promote the wise stewardship of our urban built environment and participate in our growing network of green sector professionals.

StayLocal (SL) is Greater New Orleans’ independent business alliance. SL Creates an environment for local businesses to thrive through research, education, and advocacy. UC also hosts a 6CE hour workshop, Opportunities for Contractors in Stormwater Management, as well as educational forums.

The Front Yard Initiative (FYI) Plant List is built on a broad base of community knowledge and is intended as a resource for all New Orleans residents.
# Front Yard Initiative (FYI) Plant List

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December 2017
Dear FYIers,

We created this plant list as a guide to help Front Yard Initiative (FYI) participants choose plants best suited for their ‘gray to green’ projects. We saw guide after green infrastructure guide recommending that projects use native plants, but didn’t offer any suggestions. We knew that if we wanted to see more native plants included in our FYI projects, we’d have to make the list ourselves. By driving demand for native plants, we’re able to promote the wise stewardship of the urban built environment, a key part of the Urban Conservancy’s mission.

New Orleans is known for its distinctive architecture. You look around and know exactly where you are, and New Orleanians are happy to contribute to that sense of place with their brightly painted shotgun houses, ornate cast iron fences, and other unique design details. We take pride in our individuality. Shouldn’t residents be given the option to communicate this sense of place through their choice of landscaping as well?

The trouble is, you can’t get many of these native options at big box stores; their selection is dictated by national trends, and their quality is questionable (think pollinator plants sprayed with pesticides). Instead we rely on our local businesses to supply something special, something that gives back to our urban fabric. Native plants are well suited to respond to our specific environment: immense amounts of rain mixed with intense heat. New Orleans’ year-round growing season means plants that seem tame elsewhere grow wild and lush here; it also means invasive plants grow out of control. Hyacinth takes over waterways; Cat’s Claw can tear down buildings. Many of us have experienced fighting with a neighbor’s bamboo or a stand of banana trees taking over the yard. Nature doesn’t respect fence lines! To keep the balance, we must be good stewards and thoughtfully work with our environment.

Recent flooding and a rapidly changing climate have shown us we need to make smarter, more sustainable choices to keep New Orleans livable. When it comes to water, we have to slow it down, spread it out, and soak it in. Choosing the right plants goes a long way toward creating a hard-working, low maintenance landscape that can help us do just that. Most plants on our list love ‘wet feet’ and thrive in an environment meant to hold water for periods of time (though not for more than 72 hours: sorry, mosquitos!). These same plants are also favored by wildlife. Native plants like the Pawpaw tree and Milkweed are the only food source for the Zebra Swallowtail and Monarch butterflies, respectively. Mulberry is a birder’s best friend. We welcome you to dive a little deeper into your gardening choices and discover the multifaceted benefits native plants offer our fragile ecosystem. Turn the page to discover beautiful, attainable options for your own front yard!

Happy planting!

Felice Lavergne
FYI Project Manager
**SHADE TREES**

**Prickly Ash**
*Zanthoxylum clava-herculis*
*Light:* Full Sun
*Height:* 36 - 72 Feet
*Maintenance:* Medium

**Pond Cypress**
*Taxodium ascendens*
*Light:* Full Sun
*Height:* 70 - 80 Feet
*Maintenance:* Low

**American Beech**
*Fagus grandiflora*
*Light:* Partial Shade - Shade
*Height:* 50 - 80 Feet
*Maintenance:* Medium

**White Oak**
*Quercus alba*
*Light:* Full Sun - Partial Shade
*Height:* 100+ Feet
*Maintenance:* Medium

**Bald Cypress**
*Taxodium distichum*
*Light:* Sun - Partial Shade
*Height:* 50 - 75 Feet
*Maintenance:* Low

**American Sycamore**
*Platanus occidentalis*
*Light:* Full Sun - Shade
*Height:* 75 - 100 Feet
*Maintenance:* Low

**Southern Catalpa**
*Catalpa bignonioides*
*Light:* Partial Shade
*Height:* 25 - 40 Feet
*Maintenance:* Medium

**Swamp Red Maple**
*Acer rubrum drummondii*
*Light:* Full Sun - Partial Shade
*Height:* 40 - 60 Feet
*Maintenance:* Low
SMALL TREES

Yaupon
*Ilex vomitoria*
Light: Full Sun - Shade
Height: 12 - 45 Feet
Maintenance: Medium

Two-wing Silverbell
*Halesia diptera*
Light: Partial Shade
Height: 3 - 15 Feet
Maintenance: Medium

American Hornbeam
*Carpinus caroliniana*
Light: Partial Shade - Shade
Height: 20 - 35 Feet
Maintenance: Low

River Birch
*Betula nigra*
Light: Partial Shade
Height: 30 - 50 Feet
Maintenance: Low

Roughleaf Dogwood
*Cornus drummondii*
Light: Partial Shade - Shade
Height: 12 - 16 Feet
Maintenance: Medium

Sweetbay Magnolia
*Magnolia virginiana*
Light: Full Sun - Partial Shade
Height: 12 - 35 Feet
Maintenance: Low

White Fringetree
*Chionanthus virginicus*
Light: Partial Shade
Height: 15 - 30 Feet
Maintenance: Medium

Eastern Red Cedar
*Juniperus virginiana*
Light: Full Sun
Height: 30 - 65 Feet
Maintenance: Low
**SHRUBS**

### Scarlet Hibiscus
*Hibiscus coccineus*
- **Light:** Full Sun
- **Height:** 3 - 6 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium

### Soldier Mallow
*Hibiscus militaris*
- **Light:** Full Sun - Partial Shade
- **Height:** 4 - 6 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium

### American Beautyberry
*Callicarpa americana*
- **Light:** Partial Shade
- **Height:** 3 - 6 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Low

### Muhly Grass
*Muhlenbergia capillaris*
- **Light:** Full Sun
- **Height:** 1 - 3 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Low

### Turk’s Cap
*Malvaviscus arboreus var. Drummondii*
- **Light:** Partial Shade - Shade
- **Height:** 3 - 6 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium

### Dwarf Palmetto
*Sabal minor*
- **Light:** Full Sun - Shade
- **Height:** 3 - 6 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Low

### Arrowwood
*Viburnum dentatum*
- **Light:** Full Sun - Partial Shade
- **Height:** 5 - 12 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Low

### Dwarf Waxmyrtle
*Morella cerifera*
- **Light:** Full Sun - Partial Shade
- **Height:** 3 - 6 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Low
## SMALL FLOWERING PLANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Light</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spider Lily</strong></td>
<td><em>Hymenocallis liriosme</em></td>
<td>Full Sun - Partial Shade</td>
<td>1 - 3 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Louisiana Iris</strong></td>
<td><em>Iris louisiana</em></td>
<td>Full Sun - Partial Shade</td>
<td>0 - 1 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blue-eyed Grass</strong></td>
<td><em>Sisyrinchium angustifolium</em></td>
<td>Full Sun</td>
<td>1.5 - 2 Feet</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crinum Lily</strong></td>
<td><em>Crinum americanum</em></td>
<td>Partial Shade</td>
<td>2 - 3 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cardinal Flower</strong></td>
<td><em>Lobelia cardinalis</em></td>
<td>Full Sun - Shade</td>
<td>3 - 6 Feet</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coneflower</strong></td>
<td><em>Rudbeckia maxima</em></td>
<td>Full Sun - Partial Shade</td>
<td>3 - 6 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swamp Milkweed</strong></td>
<td><em>Asclepias incarnata</em></td>
<td>Full Sun</td>
<td>4 - 5 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stokes Aster</strong></td>
<td><em>Stokesia laevis</em></td>
<td>Full Sun - Partial Shade</td>
<td>1 - 3 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**EDIBLES**

**Wild Plum**
*Prunus americana*
- **Category:** Small Tree
- **Light:** Full Sun - Partial Shade
- **Height:** 15 - 25 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium

**Pecan**
*Carya illinoinensis*
- **Category:** Large Tree
- **Light:** Full Sun
- **Height:** 70 - 100 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium

**Black Walnut**
*Juglans nigra*
- **Category:** Large Tree
- **Light:** Full Sun - Partial Shade
- **Height:** 72 - 100 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Low

**Persimmon**
*Diospyros virginiana*
- **Category:** Large Tree
- **Light:** Partial Shade
- **Height:** 36 - 72 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium

**Mexican Plum**
*Prunus mexicana*
- **Category:** Small Tree
- **Light:** Full Sun - Partial Shade
- **Height:** 15 - 25 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium

**Sand Blackberry**
*Rhus cuneifolia*
- **Category:** Shrub
- **Light:** Partial Shade
- **Height:** 3 - 4 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium

**Elderberry**
*Sambucus nigra*
- **Category:** Shrub
- **Light:** Full Sun - Partial Shade
- **Height:** 5 - 12 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium

**Red Mulberry**
*Morus rubra*
- **Category:** Small Tree
- **Light:** Full Sun - Full Shade
- **Height:** 12 - 36 Feet
- **Maintenance:** Medium
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Light</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maypop Vine</td>
<td><em>Passiflora incarnata</em></td>
<td>Full Sun - Partial Shade</td>
<td>up to 25 Feet</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Fern</td>
<td><em>Thelypteris kunthii</em></td>
<td>Partial Shade - Shade</td>
<td>1 - 3 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawpaw</td>
<td><em>Asimina triloba</em></td>
<td>Full Sun</td>
<td>15 - 20 Feet</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinnamon Fern</td>
<td><em>Osmunda cinnamomea</em></td>
<td>Full Sun - Shade</td>
<td>3 - 6 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soapwort</td>
<td><em>Saponaria officinalis</em></td>
<td>Full Sun - Partial Shade</td>
<td>1 - 2 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Fern</td>
<td><em>Osmunda regalis</em></td>
<td>Partial Shade - Shade</td>
<td>2 - 5 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Chain Fern</td>
<td><em>Woodwardia virginica</em></td>
<td>Partial Shade</td>
<td>2 - 3 Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive Fern</td>
<td><em>Onoclea sensibilis</em></td>
<td>Partial Shade - Shade</td>
<td>1 - 3 Feet</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GET INVOLVED

The Front Yard Initiative (FYI) is an incentive program that reimburses eligible homeowners for removing pavement from their property.

The Urban Conservancy can connect you with professionals, volunteers, and other resources that can help make the gray-to-green transformation as affordable and effective as possible.

Contact Us:
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