

# Creating Wildlife Habitat

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# Nine Principles of a Florida-Friendly Yard

- Right Plant -  
Right Place



- Water  
Efficiently



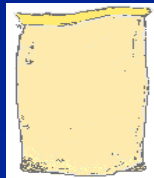
- Mulch



- Recycle



- Use Fertilizer  
Appropriately



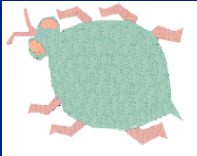
- **Attract  
Wildlife**



- 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**



**Northern Mockingbird**



**Red-tailed Hawk**



**R.-thr. Hummingbird**



**Flycatcher**



# Freshwater Birds



Great Blue Heron



Little Blue Heron



Great White Herons



Snowy Egret



Ibis



Cranes



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





# Landscaping for Wildlife

- All animals need:

- Food
- Cover/Shelter
- Water
- Space



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

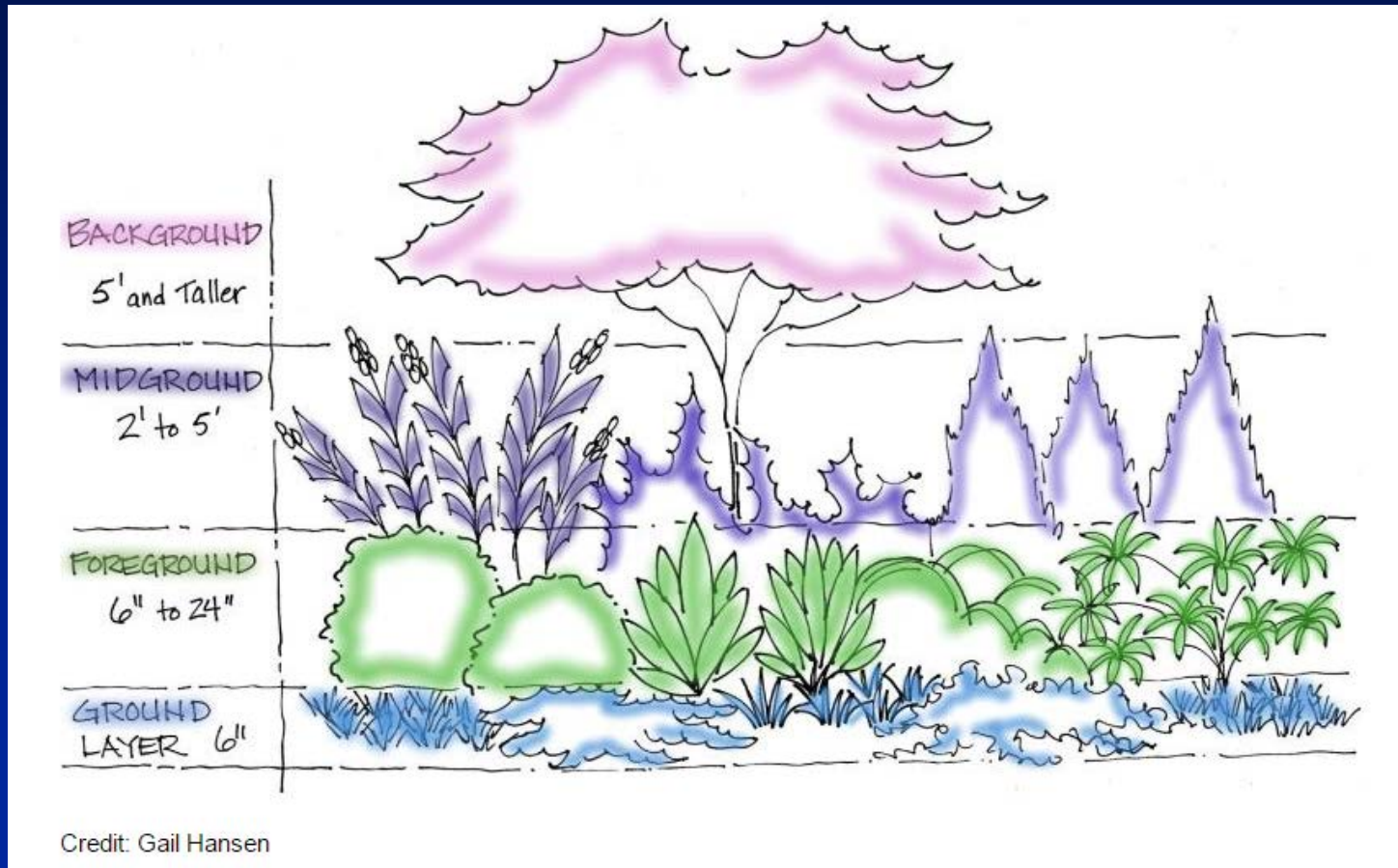
**INVASIVE**

*Eichhornia crassipes*  
(water hyacinth)



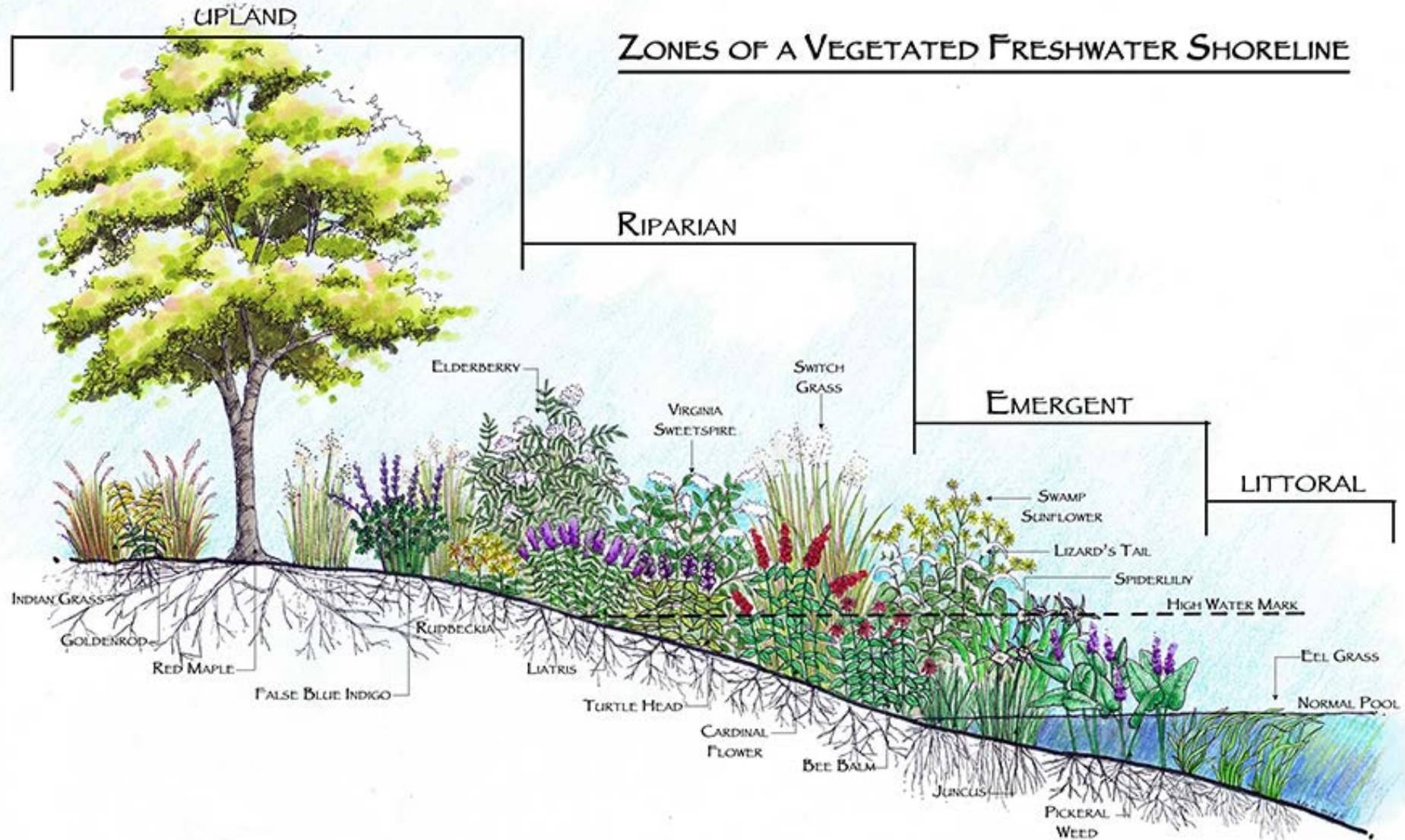
# HOW?

- 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



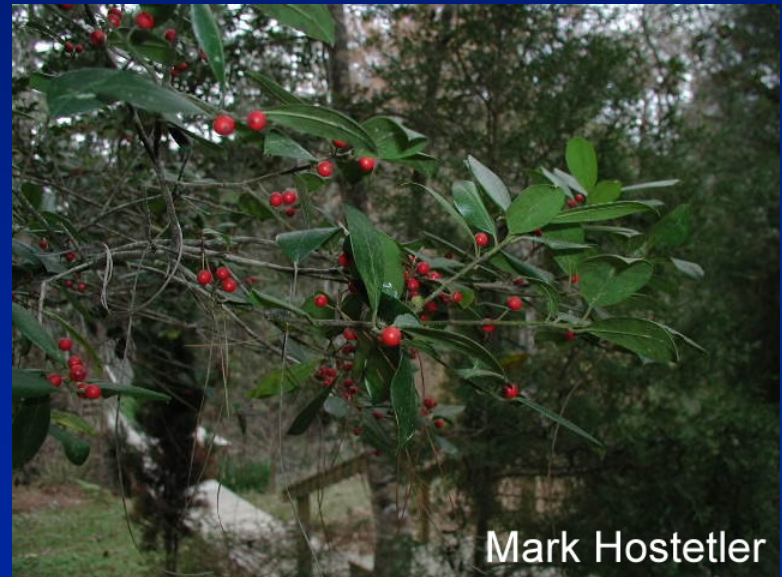
# Provide Fruit and Seeds

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



[www.flwildflowers.com](http://www.flwildflowers.com)

**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](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>

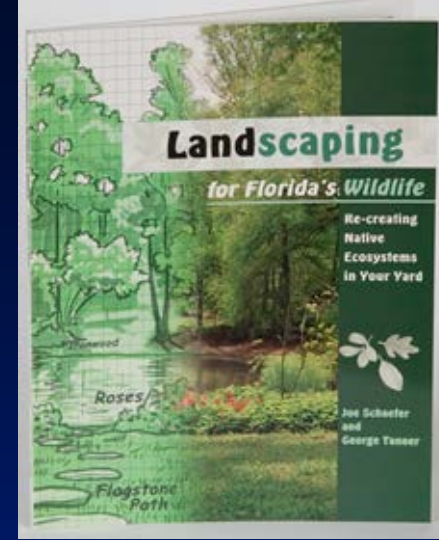


# More Resources

- Web site: [www.wec.ufl.edu/extension](http://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](http://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/>





# Acknowledgements

**Dr. Mark Hostetler, Department of Wildlife  
Ecology and Conservation, UF/IFAS,  
Dr. Basil Iannone, Forest Resources and  
Conservation, UF/IFAS**