

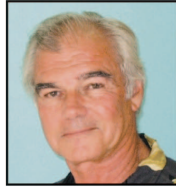


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NATIVE PLANTS *Continued from Page 37*

drainage pipe or rock channel allowing rainwater to exit onto large stones or underground drain.

Selecting the right native plants for planting in a rain garden in Southwest Florida often takes some patience and perseverance. Plants are spaced so that their mature width is permitted between plants. The key is choosing a large enough diversity of native plants to guarantee that if one plant species fails to establish properly another one will. Select eight or more different types of native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, groundcovers or bunchgrasses obtained from a local native nursery. All the plants used should be highly attractive to wildlife by providing food, seeds or shelter.

Before purchasing, check each plant to make sure it has a healthy root system. Plants should not be root bound nor appear brown or dying. Healthy roots should penetrate the soil to the bottom of the pot. Using plants with healthy roots makes sure each plant you install has adequate reserves for its roots to establish quickly no matter what season (wet or dry) you plant.

See NATIVE PLANTS continued on Page 47

Capt. Cliff Utt **Redfish • Snook**
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