

NATIVE PLANTS *Continued from Page 38*



Beach Sunflower, *Helianthus debilis*;

Perennial and native wildflowers have performed particularly well over the last two years in demonstration rain gardens in Lee County, including ones at Manatee and Rutenberg Parks. Look for these rain garden plant possibilities: beach sunflower, *Helianthus debilis*; scorpion-tail, *Heliotropium angiospermum*; porterweed, *Stachytarpheta* spp.; tropical sage, *Salvia* spp.; blue flag iris, *Iris virginica*; Louisiana iris, *Iris hexagon*; butterflyweed or milkweed, *Asclepias tuberosa*; swamp fern, *Blechnum serrulatum*; spider lily, *Hymenocallis* spp. and spiderwort, *Tradescantia bracteata*. Other native wildflowers may also work if water is provided by regular weekly watering from an in-ground sprinkler or irrigation system.

Native wildflowers are especially useful at quickly establishing themselves and covering the soil surface and preventing weeds. These right wildflowers will re-seed freely both spring and fall and re-populate the rain garden quickly without any additional work required.

Large and small shrubs (sometimes small trees) that have performed well in local rain gardens include: coontie, *Zamia floridana*, wild coffee, *Psychotria nervosa*, golden-creeper, *Ernodea littoralis*; firebush, *Hameilia patens*, necklace-pod, *Sophora tomentosa*; wax myrtle, *Myrica* cultivars; green buttonwood, *Conocarpus erectus* and willow bastic, *Sideroxylon salicifolium*.

Visit local plant nurseries to get other plant ideas. Get help on-line by visiting <http://www.floridayards.org/> or contact the Lee County Extension Office.

For Dr Stephen Brown's contact information see page 45



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