

Native Plants of the Bailey Tract



J.N. *Ding* Darling
National Wildlife Refuge



Please note: harvesting or eating plants, flowers, or fruits growing on refuge property is illegal.

Native plants are protected by federal law. Information on edibility and human use is included for educational purposes only.

Outside the refuge, never eat parts of any wild plant unless you are **100%** confident of the identification.

*Larval host data indicates how many species of moths or butterflies feed on the plant as caterpillars.

Black-Jack,
Bidens pilosa

While native in the Americas, this species has spread as an invasive to other parts of the world. This plant reaches around 6 feet in height, and can be easily recognized by its white flowers. Thorns on the seeds attach to clothing and can be spread this way.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: occasionally used medicinally in Africa and Asia where it has been introduced.

Larval host data unavailable.



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Boneset, *Eupatorium sp.*

Genus *Eupatorium* contains many similar species of bonesets, a number of which are native to southern Florida. Bonesets along the Bailey Tract reach up to 7 or 8 feet in height.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: no extensive human use.

Larval host to **31** species of moths or butterflies.



Bristle Thistle, *Cirsium horridulum*

Not to be confused with *Carduus nutans* (an invasive thistle sharing the same common name), bristle thistle is easily recognized by its elongate, spiny leaves and purple flowers when it reaches full height.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators, in particular many types of native bees.

Human use: no extensive human use.

Larval host data unavailable.



Bushy Bluestem, *Andropogon glomeratus*

This warm-season grass reaches heights of 2 to 4 feet and blooms from September to October. Bushy bluestem has low drought tolerance and can be found growing in moist to damp areas in the Bailey Tract.

Wildlife use: excellent cover for wildlife, seeds eaten by birds and mammals.

Human use: historically, gathered into a broom for sweeping.

Larval host to **17** species of moths or butterflies.



Cabbage Palm, *Sabal palmetto*

This highly salt-tolerant species is a staple of the FL landscape, and common at the Bailey Tract. This species flowers in July and August and produces blue to black berries (not coconuts!) in the autumn.

Wildlife use: berries are food for small mammals and birds, extensive shelter for wildlife.

Human use: historically, used by Native Americans for building dwellings, paddles, arrows, staffs, and more.

Larval host to **10** species of moths or butterflies.



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Carolina Willow, *Salix caroliniana*

This small tree is an obligate wetland species (only found growing in wetlands), and can easily be recognized by its slender leaves.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators, important larval host for many Lepidoptera, which in turn are food for birds and other wildlife.

Human use: no extensive use by humans.

Larval host to **190** species of moths or butterflies.



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Christmasberry, *Lycium carolinianum*

Look for this small shrub growing at the edges of salt marshes and on sandy shell mounds. This plant is easily identified by its succulent deciduous leaves and bright red berries in autumn.

Wildlife use: berries are food for birds and other wildlife.

Human use: no extensive use by humans.

Larval host to **4** species of moths or butterflies.



Dogfennel, *Eupatorium capillifolium*

A tall perennial plant often reaching over 6 feet in height. This species grows well in moist areas and is common along in the Bailey Tract. Unlike fennel used in cooking, **dogfennel is not edible and is poisonous to humans if consumed.**

Wildlife use: attractive to pollinators.

Human use: occasionally as an insecticide and fungicide.

Larval host to **31** species of moths or butterflies.



Florida Bluehearts, *Buchnera floridana*

You'll miss these small but beautiful flowers if you aren't looking! Luckily this species flowers year-round, so there are always opportunities to see it in bloom.

Wildlife use: attractive to pollinators.

Human use: no extensive humans use.

Larval host to **1** species of moth or butterfly.



Florida Fishpoison Tree, *Piscidia piscipula*

Keep an eye out for this low-growing threatened species along the Bailey Tract's south dike. This species is highly drought-tolerant. Also known as Jamaican Dogwood.

Wildlife use: food and shelter for wildlife, flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: **all parts toxic**; historically used as an analgesic and sedative, and by Native Americans to sedate fish. Often used in woodcarving.

Larval host to **4** species of moths or butterflies.



Giant Leather Fern, *Acrostichum danaeifolium*

The largest tropical fern in the region, sometimes reaching over 10 feet in height. This salt-tolerant species is easily recognized by its feather-like fronds.

Wildlife use: shelter for birds, mammals, etc.

Human use: occasionally as a hedge, sometimes planted to prevent gators from sunning in certain areas.

Larval host to **2** species of moths or butterflies.



Goatweed, *Capraria biflora*

This flowering species is common along the trails of the Bailey Tract and reaches about four feet in height.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: no extensive human use.

Larval host data unavailable.



Green Buttonwood, *Conocarpus erectus*

Also known as button mangrove, this species excretes salt from glands located on the underside of the leaves.

Wildlife use: extensive shelter and feeding areas for birds, mammals, and reptiles, flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: provides stability to the shoreline, acts as hurricane buffer, collects detritus washed in by tides. Often used as firewood and to smoke mullet and other fish.

Larval host to 7 species of moths or butterflies.



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Groundsel Tree, *Baccharis halimifolia*

Also known as saltbush, this fall-flowering shrub is common along the trails of the Bailey Tract, and reaches a maximum height of around 12 feet. This species is highly salt tolerant.

Wildlife use: food and shelter for wildlife, flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: no extensive human use.

Larval host to **31** species of moths or butterflies.



Gulf Cordgrass, *Spartina spartinae*

A large wetland grass reaching up to 6 feet in height, cordgrass is one of the dominant species in the marshes of the Bailey Tract.

Wildlife use: extensive shelter for wildlife such as birds and alligators.

Human use: no extensive human use.

Larval host to **16** species of moths or butterflies.



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Pineland Heliotrope, *Euploca polyphylla*

A Florida endemic (only found in FL), this species is often found growing directly on the trail at the Bailey Tract. There are two forms of this species; white-flowered, and yellow-flowered. Only white-flowered is present at the Bailey Tract.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: no extensive human use.

Larval host data unavailable.



Saltmarsh Mallow, *Kosteletzkya virginica*

The large, pink and yellow flowers of this halophyte make it easily noticeable along the trails of the Bailey Tract.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: occasionally planted in gardens.

Larval host to **2** species of moths or butterflies.



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Saw Palmetto, *Serenoa repens*

A short and slow-growing species, some individuals of this species in Florida could be 500 to 700 years old. Saw palmetto usually reaches no more than 7 feet in height, and most at the Bailey Tract are significantly shorter.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: leaves used as thatching by Native Americans.

Larval host to **8** species of moths or butterflies.



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Scorpion's-tail, *Heliotropium angiospermum*

The unique white flowers of this shrub bloom year-round in Florida. It is fast-growing but short-lived, and may reach up to 10 feet in height relatively quickly.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: occasionally as a garden plant.

Larval host to **1** species of moths or butterflies.



Whitemouth Dayflower, *Commelina erecta*

Native to much of the world, whitemouth dayflower grows in shaded patches and on the side of the trails in the Bailey Tract.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators, seeds eaten by birds, foliage eaten by gopher tortoise.

Human use: no extensive human use.

Larval host to **3** species of moths or butterflies.



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Whitetop Sedge, *Rhynchospora colorata*

This grasslike, evergreen, native perennial is common in wet coastal areas and can be found growing year-round throughout the Bailey Tract.

Wildlife use: flowers attractive to pollinators.

Human use: occasionally as a garden plant.

Larval host to **4** species of moths or butterflies.



Acknowledgements

Many thanks to

- J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge
- The “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society – Friends of the Refuge
- The USDA
- National Wildlife Federation Native Plant Finder for larval host data
- Wildflower.org
- The Florida Museum
- Florida Plant Atlas
- Photographs and presentation prepared by Patrick Carney

The "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society (DDWS) supports the important work at the refuge through education.



This project was made possible by the Elaine Jacobson Education Fund at the DDWS.

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