

## 2011 Florida Garden Select Plants

The Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA) announced the Florida Garden Select Plants for 2011.

Formerly called Florida Plants of the Year, this program of selecting plants that are deemed superior for Florida's environment is now in its thirteenth year. A jury of growers, horticulturists, retailers, landscape professionals and University of Florida faculty members select the plants. Please note that some of the plants are listed for zones south of our area. Okaloosa County is in USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 8 (Northern half of the County is Zone 8A and the Southern half is Zone 8B).

**Caranday Palm**, *Copernicia alba*, has silver-green fronds and chocolate brown stems. The fruit is black in color. It has a rounded crown and can grow in both dry and seasonally wet soils. It typically grows to a height of 20 to 30 feet. Being from South America, it is best suited for Zones 9B – 11.

**Gold Medallion Tree**, *Cassia leptophylla*, produces an abundance of bright yellow flowers in early summer and sometimes again in the fall. Native to Brazil, this tree is well-adapted to Zones 9A through 11. It can survive temperatures into the mid to low 20's but performs best during the heat of summer. It is drought tolerant once established in the landscape. This trees large seed pods are poisonous.

**Japanese Plum Yew**, *Cephalotaxus harringtonia 'Prostrata'*, is a low maintenance groundcover that grows 2 to 3 feet tall and 3 to 4 feet wide. It has attractive, dark green foliage with an interesting needle-like texture indicative of conifers. Low spreading when young, it becomes mound-shaped with arching branches as it matures. It tolerates drought once established but needs adequate water during dry periods to perform best. It is a good choice for partial to deep shade and is recommended for Zones 6 – 10.

**Snow Princess**, *Lobularia 'Snow Princess'*<sup>™</sup>, is an annual with good heat tolerance for this genus. It has a long blooming season, producing mounds of fragrant, white flowers. It creates a great hanging basket in full sun or partial shade.

**Wire Vine**, *Muehlenbeckia axillaris*, forms a spreading mat that is excellent on slopes. It produces white flowers in late spring to early summer followed by small berries. Fall and winter foliage color is bronze-green. It is well suited for Zones 6 – 9.

**Yellow Butterfly Pea Vine**, *Callaeum macropterum*, is a heat loving, evergreen vine to grow on a trellis, pergola or fence. It has long-lasting yellow flowers. It is recommended for Zones 8B – 11.

You can review these plants at the FNGLA Website (<http://www.fn gla.org>) under the Community Programs tab.

Larry Williams, UF/IFAS Extension Agent, Okaloosa County, December 27, 2010