



Quick Clips, Native Tips: Growing Florida One Reel at a Time



Heather Kalamán, UF/IFAS Extension Orange County, hkalamán@ufl.edu

Introduction

Florida's native plants support biodiversity, wildlife, and water conservation, yet limited community awareness about native plants and their ecological benefits hinders their adoption in the landscape. Social media can bridge this gap by providing accessible, engaging, and shareable content that empowers individuals to make informed decisions, ultimately leading to greater environmental impact and sustainable landscape practices.

Methods

The *Floridian Flora Fridays* educational videos are created from clips filmed at the UF/IFAS Extension Orange County Exploration Gardens (Fig.1). Content includes foliage, flowers, fruit, and shots of the full size plantings. These clips are then edited into 1-minute reels with music and narration, providing detailed information on each plant, including scientific and common name, size at maturity, soil and light preferences, flowers/fruits, wildlife value, and any ethnobotanical significance.

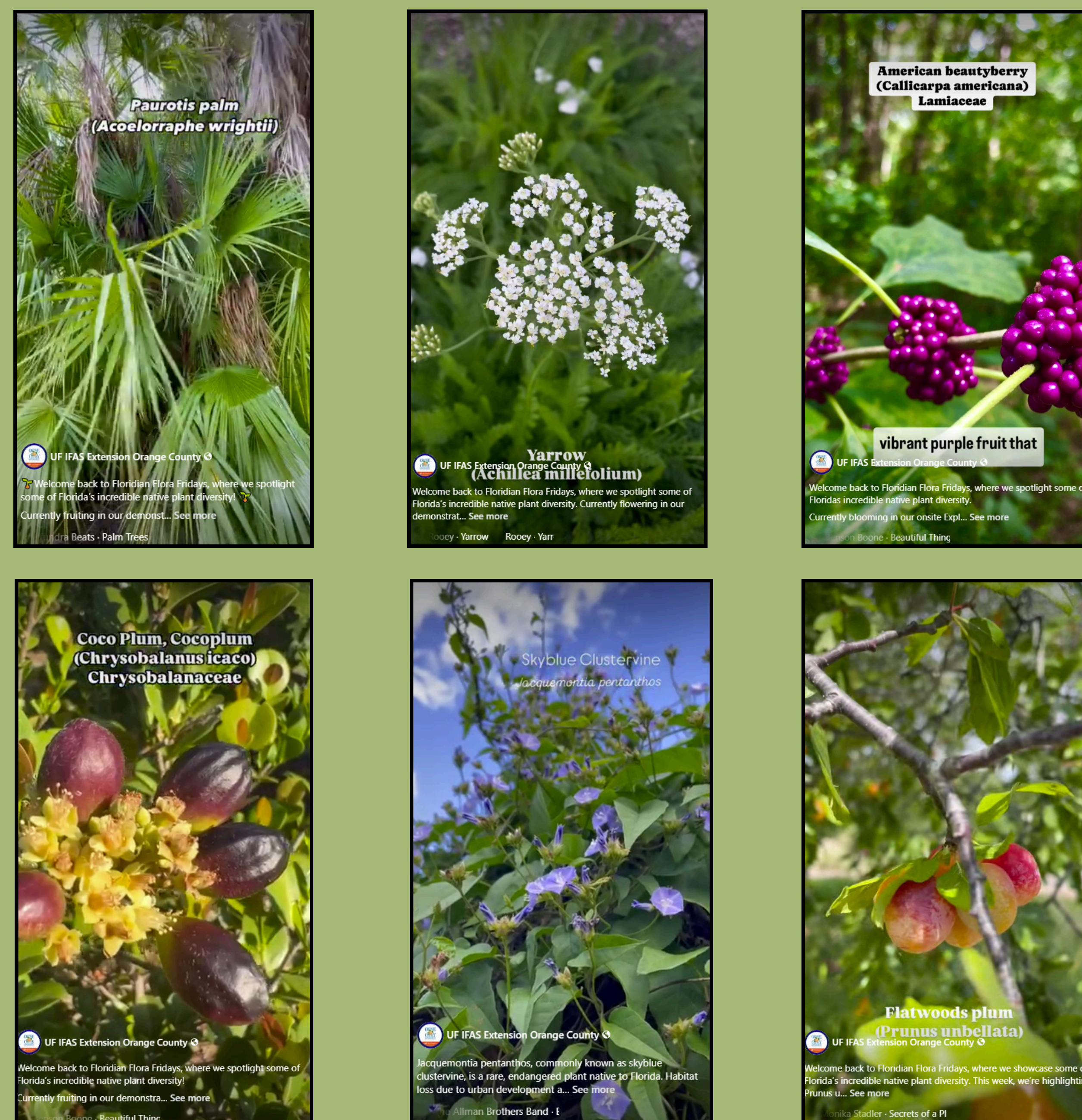


Figure 1. Images of *Floridian Flora Fridays* educational reels posted to UF/IFAS Extension Orange County social media platforms.



Scan here to learn more!

Results

Collectively, these videos have reached over 200,000 unique users, generating thousands of post interactions. Notably, one video on Florida's native skyblue clustervine (*Jacquemontia pentanthos*) has reached 83,991 people, garnered 1,500 likes and comments, was saved 140 times, and shared 205 times. Other featured plants, such as Simpson's stopper (*Myrcianthes fragrans*), beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*), and cocoplum (*Chrysobalanus icaco*), have consistently drawn strong engagement, with individual posts reaching hundreds to thousands of viewers.

Discussion

Social media has proven to be a powerful tool for expanding the reach of native plant education, extending the message beyond local communities to inspire Floridians statewide. *Floridian Flora Fridays* fosters an appreciation for the ecological importance of native species while offering practical guidance for integrating them into home and public landscapes, ultimately contributing to a more resilient and environmentally sustainable future.