

EDIBLE GARDEN

LISA MEREDITH

COMPOST, VERMICOMPOST, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY GARDEN
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

UF/IFAS EXTENSION HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY



Hillsborough
County Florida

Florida-Friendly
Landscaping™ PROGRAM



UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Why Use Edible Plants?

- ❖ Increased food security
- ❖ Limited in land space
- ❖ Reduced food cost
- ❖ Personal pride in producing food and excitement returning to nature
- ❖ Improved taste and nutrition of food
- ❖ Protecting the environment and reduced energy input

Design and Management Tips

- ❖ Plan your design first
- ❖ Start with the “Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide”
- ❖ Take the plants’ needs into consideration – right plant, right place
- ❖ Even those who have small yards or who live in apartments—grow potted herbs on the patio or plant vegetables in a window box.
- ❖ Make certain any pesticides are labeled for plants that will be consumed.

Limited Space? Here's a 5' x 10' garden plot



Snow Peas

Strawberries in a window box

Carrots

Green Onions

Broccoli

Spinach

Fruit Trees

- **Orange Blossoms** - Orange spp.
- Citrus blossoms are sweet and highly scented



Barbados Cherry



Edible Flowers Flavors

- American persimmon
- Loquat, Japanese plum
- Lychee
- Mango
- Peaches
- Nectarines
- Plums

Diospyros virginiana

Eriobotrya japonica

Litchi chinensis

Mangifera indica

Prunus persica

Prunus persica

Prunus domestica

Raised Vegetable Bed



Rosemary



Blueberry

Pomegranate



Parsley Border



Be Creative



Strawberries



Lettuce



Peppers

Edible Flowers

- **Rose Petals** - *Rosa* spp.
- All roses are edible, with flavor more pronounced in darker varieties
- If roses smell good then they taste good
- Remove the white bitter base



Credit: Sydney Park Brown, UF/IFAS

Edible Flowers

- **Hibiscus** - Hibiscus spp.
- Cranberry flavor
- Hibiscus tea



Edible Flowers Flavors

A vibrant field of sunflowers with bright yellow petals and dark brown centers, set against a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds. The sunflowers are in various stages of bloom, and their green leaves are visible in the foreground and background.

- Nasturtium - blossoms have a sweet, spicy flavor similar to watercress, one of the most common eaten flowers.
- Johnny Jump-Up - mild wintergreen flavor
- Pansy - slightly sweet green or grassy flavor
- Marigolds - flavors range from spicy to bitter, tangy to peppery
- Dianthus - sweet petals, cut them away from the bitter white base of the flower
- Begonia - the leaves, flowers, and stems are edible; blossoms have a citrus-sour taste.
- Sunflower petal - flower is best eaten in the bud stage when it tastes similar to artichokes.
- Society Garlic – garlic taste
- Chrysanthemum - tangy, slightly bitter

Helpful Tips

- Before you venture out to the garden and harvest flowers for the dinner table, it's important to remember that some flowers are poisonous. Make sure you've correctly identified each variety you're using.
- Avoid flowers that may have been sprayed with pesticides or other chemicals.
- Pick your edible flowers in the morning, when they have the highest water content.
- Store them on a damp paper towel inside a sealed container in the refrigerator up to one week.
- Revive wilted flowers by floating them in ice water for a few minutes.
- Prepare them for eating just before serving in order to prevent further wilting.

Teas

- To make tea from fresh leaves
 - Pick leaves that are mature, but not old
 - Wash off dust
 - Use 2 tablespoon per cup of boiling water, let steep for 5 minutes
 - Add honey, sugar or your choice of sweetener.
- To dry leaves
 - Wash the leaves and spread out on a cookie sheet
 - Crack the oven door and let set overnight or until leaves crumble in your fingers.
 - Using dried leaves 1 teaspoon per cup of boiling water and let steep 6 minutes, add sweetener of choice
 - If dried properly, leaves can be kept in a closed jar in a dark spot for a long time.

Teas

- *Diospyros virginiana*
- *Monarda punctata*
- *Passiflora incarnata*
- *Pinus* spp.
- *Rhus copallina*
- *Rosa* spp.

Persimmon

dried leaves & seeds

Horsemint

dried leaves & flowers

Passion flower

fresh, ripe, fruit

Pine tree

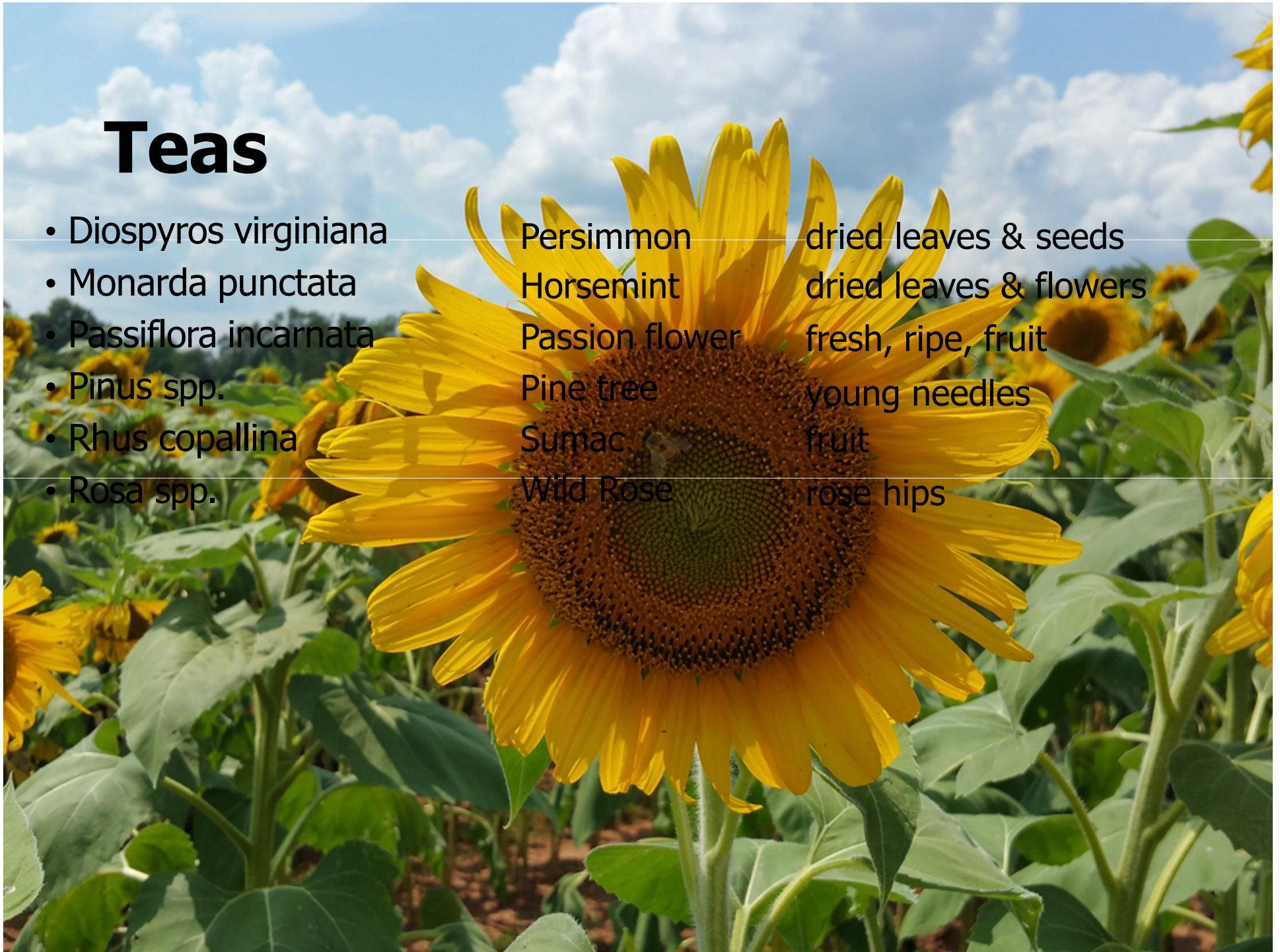
young needles

Sumac

fruit

Wild Rose

rose hips



Edible Grasses

- Lemongrass - *Cymbopogon citratus*



Resources

- Edible Flowers Fact Sheet – Hillsborough County Master Gardener
- Edible Landscaping – Sydney Park Brown EDIS Publication
- <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/EP/EP14600.pdf>

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Lisa Meredith

Compost, Vermi-Compost, School & Community Garden Program
Coordinator

UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County

MeredithL@hillsboroughcounty.org

813-744-5519 x 54146

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/hillsborough/>

<https://www.facebook.com/HCFFL>



Hillsborough
County Florida

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Florida-Friendly
Landscaping™ PROGRAM

