



## FTGA Launches Grass-Roots Fund-Raising Campaign

The FTGA and the University of Florida have joined forces for a turf research fund-raising program dubbed, "Golfers For A Better Environment." The idea stems from FTGA Public Relations Director Don Benham's experience with a similar successful program instituted by the Michigan Turf Foundation and Michigan State University.

After a couple of dress rehearsal presentations to the board of directors of the Gainesville Country Club and the Florida Turfgrass Association, Benham and Nell debuted the program to representatives of 15 country clubs in the Boca Raton area Feb. 8. David Court, CGCS and Mark Jarrell, CGCS helped the FTGA office with contact names and David's club, Boca Lago, served as the host for this inaugural presentation of the program.

The Golfers For A Better Environment program is designed to encourage grass roots golfers to participate in turf research to accomplish several goals:

- (1) Provide a means for golfers to help preserve and protect their club's most important asset, the golf course.
- (2) Provide independent public funding to study environmental impacts of turf management products and practices.
- (3) Provide a consistent base of support for turf research rather than depending only on annual event sponsorship and attendance.
- (4) Provide factual evidence to rebut sensational, negative and misleading media accounts about golf courses.
- (5) Develop a significant golf constituency that can have political influence when regulations affecting golf courses are under discussion.

The premise of the program is very simple. Each club's board of directors is being asked to consider a convenience billing to their membership of an annual \$5.00 donation to the Florida Turfgrass Research Foundation.. The goal of hav-

## 2000 Florida Plants of the Year - Part 2

**Editor's Note:** The Florida Plants of the Year program was launched in 1998 and has been beneficial to both consumers and growers. Purchasers are introduced to under-utilized but proven Florida plant material. The plants are chosen each year by a committee of horticulturists, nurserymen, educators, landscape architects and other members of the horticulture industry representing Central, North and South Florida.

### Common Name: Red Buckeye

**Botanical Name:** *Aesculus pavia*

**Hardiness:** Zones 4-8

**Mature Height X Spread:** 15-20' tall and 10-12' wide

**Classification:** Landscape shrub or small tree

**Landscape Use:** Specimen or grouped in light shade

**Characteristics:** Deep red flowers in April-May contrast with dark green leaves, and produce shiny brown fruit that contain three orange seeds.

A deciduous large shrub or small tree, palmate foliage blooms in early spring with showy red terminal flowers that attract hummingbirds. A native that thrives in light shade and moist soils, this shrub makes brown shiny nuts, like a chestnut, which split to reveal three orange seeds that germinate fairly easily.



### Common Name: Sweetspire

**Botanical Name:** *Itea virginica* 'Henry's Garnet'

**Hardiness:** Zones 5-9

**Mature Height X Spread:** 4-5' tall and 6' wide

**Classification:** Landscape shrub for massing

**Landscape Use:** Mass plantings in sun or shade, adaptable to wet or dry conditions

**Characteristics:** Drooping fragrant inflorescences of white flowers make a show in mid spring. The fall color is a brilliant reddish purple.

Semi-deciduous Florida native that has arching branches to 4 feet with brilliant red fall color. The shrub has white terminal flowers on weeping spikes in the spring. Spreads underground by runners. It grows well in full sun or partial shade and thrives in wet areas.



### Common Name: Ficus Alii

**Botanical Name:** *Ficus binnendijkii* 'Alii'

**Hardiness:** Thrives in medium to high light

**Mature Height X Spread:** Height ranges from 2-20', average being 6-8'

**Classification:** Ornamental foliage plant

**Landscape Use:** Plant gives a northern look to interiors

**Characteristics:** Similar to sister plant, "Amstel King" the 'Alii' has narrower leaves and a broader fuller look.

The word 'Alii' is Hawaiian, meaning "Chief" for the broad top of the plant. the 'Alii' formerly known as *Ficus maclellandii* 'Alii' thrives in medium to high light. The slender dark leaves make this plant appealing both to interior plantscape and home market. There are three types: the bush, the standard tree and the braids.

