



Okaloosa County, FL Common Plants

Explore how 28 plants have adapted to life along the Gulf Coast of the Florida panhandle through this deck that accompanies the Plant Classification activity. Access the lesson on our Lesson Plans page: education.eol.org/lesson_plans

This card deck has been developed as part of the Okaloosa SCIENCE project, a collaborative STEM education grant for the Okaloosa County School District in Florida. The goals of this project include enhancing scientific literacy, connecting to place, and building community by engaging in hands-on activities.

Find this card deck and more at:
education.eol.org/species_cards



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Title Image Credit: Carol + Lee CC-BY-NC

Project Description

Bermudagrass *Cynodon dactylon*



Flowering Plants



Okaloosa County, Florida
+ Urban Habitats

AUTO
Foodweb Role

Height	90 cm (max)
Growth Form	Grass
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	Yellow
Sunlight/Soil	Open; disturbed

NE
IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range

Native to Africa; introduced to temperate and tropical regions across the world

Image: 2011 Barry Breckling CC-BY-NC-SA

Bald Cypress *Taxodium distichum*



Confiers



Okaloosa County, Florida
Freshwater Forested Wetlands

AUTO
Foodweb Role

Height	15-21 m
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Deciduous
Flower Color	Purple
Sunlight/Soil	Sun; moist/acidic

LC
IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range

Native along Atlantic and Gulf plains from southern Delaware south to Florida, west to Texas and through Mississippi Valley to Oklahoma, Missouri, and Illinois

Image: Steven J. Baskauf CC-BY-NC-SA

Common Name

Scientific Name

Taxon Group

Food Web Roles

DECO	Decomposer: Energy from dead material
AUTO	Autotroph: Energy from sun, water, CO ₂
HERB	Herbivore: Energy from plants
OMNI	Omnivore: Energy from plants, animals
CARN	Carnivore: Energy from animals
APEX	Apex Predator: Top predator
DETR	Detritivore: Energy from dead vegetation
SANG	Sanguinivore: Energy from blood
MULT	Multiple: Energy from multiple sources

Habitat (where species is found)
+ (indicates species is also found in other habitats)

Species Conservation Status

IUCN Redlist™

International Union for
Conservation of Nature

NE	Not Evaluated
VU	Vulnerable
CR	Critically Endangered
EW	Extinct in Wild
EN	Endangered

Virginia Creeper *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*



Flowering Plants



Okaloosa County, Florida
+ Urban Habitats

AUTO
Foodweb Role

Length	2 m (max)
Growth Form	Vine
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	Green
Sunlight/Soil	Variable; variable

NE
IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range

Native in eastern and central North America from Nova Scotia to Florida and west to Texas, Nebraska, Ontario

Image: Mary Keim CC-BY-NC-SA



Bracken Fern

Pteridium aquilinum



eol
Ferns

AUTO

+ Okaloosa County, Florida
Hardwood Forested Uplands Foodweb Role

Height	1.2 m (max)
Growth Form	Fern
Life Cycle	Perennial
Spore Color	Brown
Sunlight/Soil	Sun to shade; moist

IUCN Redlist™ NE

Geographic Range
Occurs throughout world except hot and cold deserts, with several subspecies and varieties

Image: Valter Jacinto CC-BY-NC-SA

Chinese Tallow

Triadica sebifera



eol
Flowering Plants

AUTO

+ Okaloosa County, Florida
Urban Habitats Foodweb Role

Height	15 m (max)
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Deciduous
Flower Color	Green-yellow, white
Sunlight/Soil	Open; disturbed

IUCN Redlist™ NE

Geographic Range
Native to China and Japan; introduced and invasive in Southeastern U.S., Puerto Rico, India, Taiwan, Sudan and France

Image: Bryan CC-BY-NC

Cinnamon Fern

Osmunda cinnamomea



eol
Ferns

AUTO

+ Okaloosa County, Florida
Freshwater Forested Wetlands Foodweb Role

Height	61-91 cm
Growth Form	Fern
Life Cycle	Perennial
Spore Color	Green
Sunlight/Soil	Shade; moist

IUCN Redlist™ NE

Geographic Range
Native from Newfoundland to western Ontario, south to Gulf coast and west to New Mexico

Image: cvnp_wetland_biologist CC-BY-NC

Common Buttonbush

C. occidentalis **



eol
Flowering Plants

AUTO

+ Okaloosa County, Florida
Freshwater Forested Wetlands Foodweb Role

Height	3.6 m
Growth Form	Shrub
Leaf Duration	Deciduous
Flower Color	White
Sunlight/Soil	Full sun; flooded

IUCN Redlist™ NE

Geographic Range
Native from Nova Scotia to Ontario, south to Florida; west to the Great Plains; scattered through southwest
**Full scientific name: *Cephalanthus occidentalis*

Image: test CC-BY-SA

Eastern Prickly Pear

Opuntia humifusa



eol
Flowering Plants

AUTO

+ Okaloosa County, Florida
Coastal Uplands Foodweb Role

Height	7.5-10 cm
Growth Form	Cactus
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	Yellow and red
Sunlight/Soil	Full sun; sandy

IUCN Redlist™ NE

Geographic Range
Atlantic coast from Massachusetts to Georgia, west to Louisiana and north to Arkansas and New York

Image: Steven J. Baskauf CC-BY-NC-SA

False Rosemary

Conradina canescens



eol
Flowering Plants

AUTO

+ Okaloosa County, Florida
Coastal Uplands Foodweb Role

Height	91-182 cm
Growth Form	Shrub
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	Lavender
Sunlight/Soil	Full sun; sandy

IUCN Redlist™ NE

Geographic Range
Coastal Florida panhandle west to Mississippi

Image: Gerrit Davidse CC-BY-NC-SA



Littleleaf Sensitive-briar
Mimosa microphylla

eol
Flowering Plants



AUTO
Okaloosa County, Florida
Pines/Sandhill Foodweb Role

Height	30-90 cm
Growth Form	Vine
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	Purple/pink
Sunlight/Soil	Sun; Rocky/sandy

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Florida and Georgia

Image: Matthew Herron CC-BY-NC

Lizards Tail
Saururus cernuus

eol
Flowering Plants



AUTO
Okaloosa County, Florida
Freshwater Forested Wetlands Foodweb Role

Height	50-120 cm
Growth Form	Herb/Forb
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	White
Sunlight/Soil	Part shade; muddy

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native from Ontario and Quebec through southern New England and New York, south to southern and midwestern U.S.

Image: MBG CC-BY-NC-SA

Loblolly Pine
Pinus taeda

eol
Conifers



AUTO
Okaloosa County, Florida
Freshwater Forested Wetlands Foodweb Role

Height	25-33 m
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	Yellow
Sunlight/Soil	Full sun; acidic soil

LC IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native from North Carolina through Florida, and west to Louisiana

Image: Alicia Pimental from Queenstown, Maryland, United States CC-BY

Longleaf Pine
Pinus palustris

eol
Conifers



AUTO
Okaloosa County, Florida
Pines/Sandhill Foodweb Role

Height	18-25 m
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	Yellow
Sunlight/Soil	Sun; dry, sandy

EN IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Southeastern USA, from Virginia to eastern Texas in the Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plains

Image: bobistraveling CC-BY

Magnolia
Magnolia grandiflora

eol
Flowering Plants



AUTO
Okaloosa County, Florida
Hardwood Forested Uplands Foodweb Role

Height	30 m (max)
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	White
Sunlight/Soil	Variable; loamy

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native to southeastern eastern United States from Atlantic coast from North Carolina to central Florida, west along Gulf coast to Texas

Image: Forest & Kim Starr CC-BY

Muscadine Grape
Vitis rotundifolia

eol
Flowering Plants



AUTO
Okaloosa County, Florida
Hardwood Forested Uplands Foodweb Role

Height	22-30 m (long)
Growth Form	Climbing Vine
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	White
Sunlight/Soil	Sun/shade; moist

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native from Delaware south to central Florida, west along Gulf coast to eastern Texas and north along Mississippi River to Missouri

Image: Mary Keim CC-BY-NC-SA



Narrowleaf Silkgrass

Pityopsis graminifolia

eol Flowering Plants



AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Pines/Sandhill Foodweb Role

Height	45-91 cm
Growth Form	Grass
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	Yellow
Sunlight/Soil	Part shade; sandy

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Delaware to Ohio and south to Texas and Florida

Image: Mary Keim CC-BY-NC-SA

Partridge Berry

Mitchella repens

eol Flowering Plants



AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Hardwood Forested Uplands Foodweb Role

Height	5 cm
Growth Form	Forb/herb
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	White
Sunlight/Soil	Shade; rich

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native in eastern North America from Newfoundland west to Ontario, south to Texas and Florida

Image: John Hilty CC-BY-NC

Sand Live Oak

Quercus geminata

eol Flowering Plants



AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Hardwood Forested Uplands Foodweb Role

Height	9.1 m (avg)
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	Brown
Sunlight/Soil	Full sun; sandy

LC IUCN Redlist™

Adaptations + Energy Sources
Growth: Most of tree is underground, regrows after fire
Reproduction: Acorns favored by wildlife, spread seed
Energy: Sunlight, carbon dioxide, water

Image: Homer Edward Price CC-BY

Sand Pine

Pinus clausa

eol Conifers



AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Pines/Sandhill Foodweb Role

Height	7-12 m
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	Yellow
Sunlight/Soil	Full sun; sandy

LC IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Gulf Coast of Florida and Alabama

Image: Sharp99 CC-BY-NC-SA

Saw Palmetto

Serenoa repens

eol Flowering Plants



AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Hardwood Forested Uplands Foodweb Role

Height	0.6-2.1 m
Growth Form	Shrub
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	White
Sunlight/Soil	Shade; sandy soil

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native in southeast from South Carolina south to Florida and west along Gulf coast to Louisiana

Image: Wikimedia Commons CC-BY-SA

Sea Oats

Uniola paniculata

eol Flowering Plants



AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Coastal Uplands Foodweb Role

Height	152-243 cm
Growth Form	Grass
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	White
Sunlight/Soil	Full sun; sandy

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Atlantic and Gulf coast and barrier islands from Virginia to Florida, Texas, Mexico, Bahamas, and Cuba

Image: Sharp99 CC-BY-NC-SA



Slash Pine

Pinus elliottii

eol
Conifer

AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Urban Habitats

Height	18-30 m
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	Yellow
Sunlight/Shade	Sun/shade; acidic

LC IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native in southeast U.S. from southern South Carolina through Florida peninsula, west along Gulf coastal plain to southeastern Louisiana

Image: Chris M CC-BY

Swamp Tupelo

Nyssa biflora

eol
Flowering Plants

AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Freshwater Forested Wetlands

Height	17-43 m
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Deciduous
Flower Color	Green
Sunlight/Soil	Full sun; flooded

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native from coastal plains of Maryland south to Florida, to eastern side of Mississippi River in Tennessee

Image: Chris M CC-BY

Turkey Oak

Quercus laevis

eol
Flowering Plants

AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Pines/Sandhill

Height	6-15 m
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Deciduous
Seed Color	Green
Sunlight/Soil	Full Sun; Dry, sandy

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native from Virginia south to central Florida, west to southeastern Louisiana.

Image: Kari A.Segraves CC-BY-NC-SA

Atlantic White Cedar

Chamaecyparis thyoides

eol
Conifers

AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Freshwater Forested Wetlands

Height	20-28 m
Growth Form	Tree
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	Green
Sunlight/Soil	Part shade; acidic

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native along Atlantic and Gulf coastal plains from Maine south to Florida, west to Alabama and Mississippi

Image: Crusier CC-BY

Wiregrass

Aristida stricta

eol
Flowering Plants

AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Pines/Sandhill

Height	30-90 cm
Growth form	Grass
Life Cycle	Perennial
Flower Color	Yellow
Sunlight/Soil	Sun-shade; sandy

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Atlantic coastal plain from southeastern North Carolina to southern Florida, and westward to Mississippi.

Image: Kari A.Segraves CC-BY-NC-SA

Yaupon Holly

Ilex vomitoria

eol
Flowering Plants

AUTO

Okaloosa County, Florida
Hardwood Forested Uplands

Height	4.6-7.6 m
Growth Form	Shrub/Tree
Leaf Duration	Evergreen
Flower Color	White
Sunlight/Soil	Sun/shade; moist

NE IUCN Redlist™

Geographic Range
Native along Atlantic and Gulf coastal plains from southern Virginia to Florida, west to Texas

Image: Mary Keim CC-BY-NC-SA



Adaptation: A physical characteristic or behavior that helps an organism survive in its environment

Annual Life Cycle: Life cycle in which plants bloom, produce seeds, and die in a single year

Growth Form: Characterization of plants as trees, shrubs, herbaceous, and grasses

Habitat: The area an organism lives and can find its resources

Leaf Duration: Trees and shrubs are characterized as evergreen (tree retains green leaves all year) and deciduous (tree loses all leaves in fall)

Perennial Life Cycle: Life cycle in which plants regrow each spring

Vocabulary

