

# St. Andrew's cross

(*Hypericum hypericoides*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary\\_of\\_botanical\\_terms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms).

St. Andrew's cross is an evergreen perennial shrub found in wet pine flatwoods, calcareous hammocks, floodplain forests and mixed woodlands throughout Florida. Bees and butterflies love its flowers while the foliage provides cover for birds and other small wildlife.

St. Andrew's cross flowers are small (<1") and creamy yellow with four narrow petals arranged in an "X." They have many prominent yellow stamens. Flowers are borne in axils and have four unequal sepals. Leaves may be linear, elliptic or ovate. They are sessile and oppositely arranged. Stems are branched and reddish-brown. Fruits are ovoid capsules.

The common name refers to St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, who is said to have been martyred by crucifixion on an x-shaped cross.



Photo by Mary Keim

**Family:** Hypericaceae\*

**Native range:** Nearly throughout

To see where natural populations of St. Andrew's cross have been vouchered, visit [www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu](http://www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu).

**Hardiness:** Zones 8a–10b

**Soil:** Wet to moderately dry well-drained or calcareous soils

**Exposure:** Full sun to partial shade

**Growth habit:** 1–3'+ tall

**Propagation:** Seed

**Garden tips:** Although flowers are small and not as showy as other *Hypericum* species, its three-season (sometimes year-round) blooms, attractive evergreen foliage and high adaptability to a variety of conditions makes St. Andrew's cross a perfect addition to any home landscape.

St. Andrew's cross plants are occasionally available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit [PlantRealFlorida.org](http://PlantRealFlorida.org) to find a native nursery on your area.

Learn more about St. Andrew's cross and other easy-to-grow wildflowers in *10 Easy Wildflowers for Butterflies and Bees*, a special insert in the *Fall 2016 Guide for Real Florida Gardeners*, published by the Florida Association of Native Nurseries and available on our website ([www.FlaWildflowers.org](http://www.FlaWildflowers.org)).

\*Some taxonomists place the *Hypericum* genus in the *Clusiaceae* family, of which they consider *Hypericaceae* to be a subfamily (*Hypericoideae*).