

# Spanish bayonet

(*Yucca aloifolia*)

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

Spanish bayonet is an erect, woody evergreen shrub that produces large (1-3 feet) terminal panicles of showy white flowers. Individual blooms are six-parted, bell-shaped and droop downward. They are often tinged with purple. Leaves are long, dark green and linear to lanceolate in shape. They are stiff and sharply tipped.

Spanish bayonet occurs naturally in sandhills, dry thickets, disturbed sites, and coastal strands, hammocks and grasslands. It flowers spring through fall and provides food and cover for a variety of wildlife and pollinators. The blooms are frequented for their nectar by hummingbirds and butterflies such as the great southern white. Spanish bayonet is also the larval host plant for the cofaqui giant skipper and yucca giant skipper butterflies.

**Family:** Agavaceae (Century plant family)

**Native range:** Nearly throughout, but mostly in coastal counties

To see where natural populations of Spanish bayonet have been vouchered, visit [www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu](http://www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu).

**Hardiness:** Zones 8–10

**Soil:** Well-drained, sandy soil

**Exposure:** Full sun to partial shade

**Growth habit:** 5–10'+ tall, 3–6' wide

**Propagation:** Seeds, division\*

**Garden tips:** Because of its sharply tipped leaves, Spanish bayonet is not recommended for landscapes where children may be present. It is, however, good for discouraging foot traffic in a particular area and used as a barrier hedge. Its distinct foliage and flowers make it a nice accent plant either as an individual specimen or in a group. Spanish bayonet can live up to 50 years.

Spanish bayonet plants are often available from nurseries that specialize in Florida native plants. Visit [PlantRealFlorida.org](http://PlantRealFlorida.org) to find a nursery in your area.



Photo by Sally and Andy Wasowski,  
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center