

Seeding Dates for Florida Native Wildflowers and Grasses



SOWING SEED at the appropriate time of year is one of the factors critical to successfully establishing a native wildflower/grass planting. Seed must be sown when germination, emergence and subsequent growth will occur quickly enough for wildflowers to fend off competing weed seedlings and for seedlings to tolerate adverse weather conditions.



The recommended sowing dates for North, Central and South Florida shown here are based on the estimated occurrences of the ideal combinations of soil temperatures and rain that are most likely to promote relatively quick germination, emergence, and seedling growth. This estimate also takes into consideration the ideal time during which wildflower seedlings have the best chance to out-compete weed seedlings and/or nonnative turf grasses.

When deciding on a sowing date, consider that Florida's climate is a continuum from North to South Florida, which means the sowing date in your area may need to be adjusted accordingly. Keep in mind that generalizing seeding dates of Florida native wildflowers and grasses is challenging because weather can vary substantially from climatological norms during late fall and winter.

Notes about factors affecting germination and emergence

SOIL TEMPERATURE Germination rates tend to progressively decrease as soil temperatures drop below the mid-60s or rise above the mid-90s. In the top 1/2 inch or so of soils, where seeds germinate, soil temperature is closely tied to air temperature. In addition, dark-colored soil tends to be warmer than light-colored soils. Moist soils will be cooler than dry soils during the day and warmer than dry soils at night. **NOTE:** Seeds of some species – for example, blazing stars (*Liatris* spp.) – require several weeks of cool, moist conditions before they will germinate.

RAIN If supplying supplemental irrigation because of dry weather, provide at least 1/4 inch of water (3/8 to 1/2 inch in sandy soils) daily for two weeks. Use small droplets that will not drive seeds into soil. If seeds are too deeply embedded (1/2 inch or more), they might germinate but never emerge.

During late fall/early winter, the sowing season can be extended if rain is adequate and warm weather is predicted. If dry weather is predicted for late fall/early winter, the sowing season can be extended **ONLY** for naturally moist sites like swales. Elsewhere, sowing seed later than suggested might result in poor establishment.



Pick a State Wildflower. The State Wildflower license plate preserves and conserves Florida's natural heritage by funding native wildflower grant projects, roadside plantings and research at state universities. Choose the plate that gives back to natural, native Florida!

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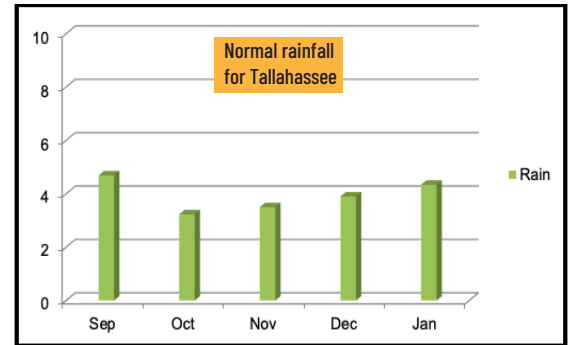
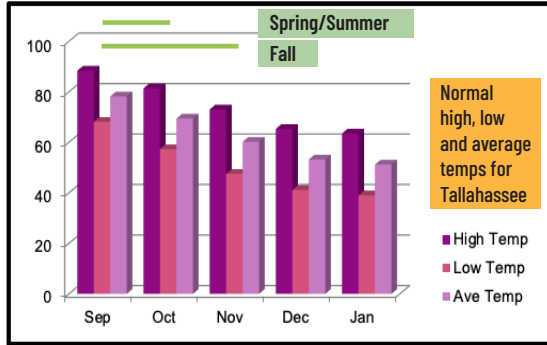
NORTH FLORIDA

Spring- and summer-flowering species:

Sow in mid-September to late October

Fall-flowering species:

Sow in mid-September to mid-November



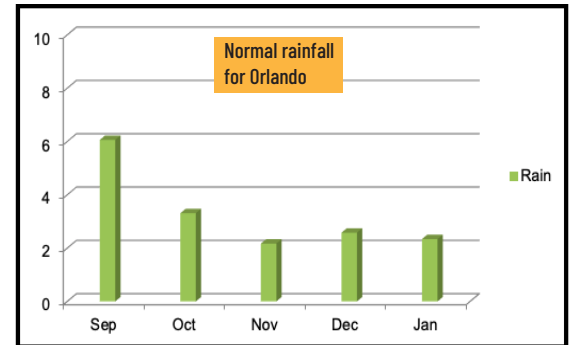
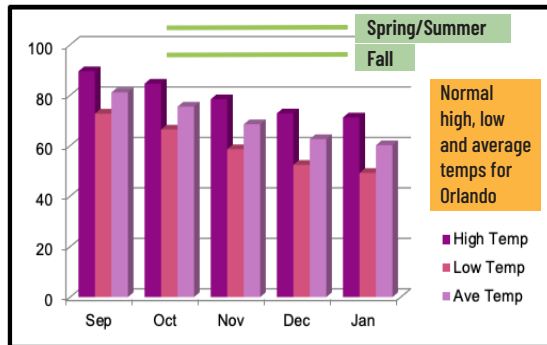
CENTRAL FLORIDA

Spring- and summer-flowering species:

Sow in mid-October to early January

Fall-flowering species:

Sow in mid-October to early January



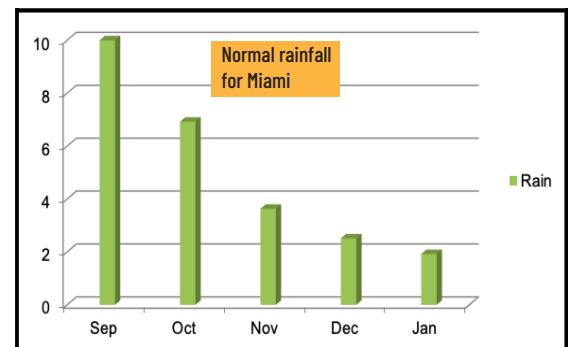
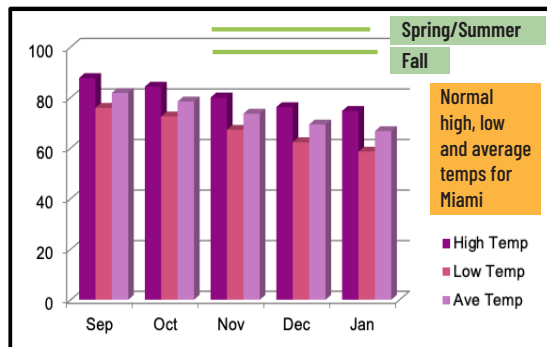
SOUTH FLORIDA

Spring- and summer-flowering species:

Sow in November to mid-January

Fall-flowering species:

Sow in November to mid-January



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