

Buttonsage

(*Lantana involucrata*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms.

Buttonsage is a woody, evergreen shrub that produces dense clusters of small, fragrant, whitish to lavender flowers. Leaves are oppositely arranged, ovate to elliptical in shape, with toothed margins and a rough upper surface. They are aromatic when crushed. Its fruit is a small, purplish-black drupe.



Photo by Alan Cressler

Buttonsage occurs naturally along coastal strands, dunes, hammocks, and pinelands in coastal counties from Pinellas (on the west) and Brevard (on the east) south to Monroe and into the Keys.

Family: Verbenaceae (Vervain or verbena family)

Native range: Coastal counties from Pinellas (west) and Brevard (east) south to Monroe and into the Keys

To see where natural populations of Buttonsage have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Lifespan: Perennial

Soil: Well-drained, sandy soils

Exposure: Full sun to minimal shade

Growth habit: 3–5' tall with 1–5' spread

Propagation: Seed

Florida regions of landscape suitability: Central, South

Garden tips: Buttonsage is an excellent addition to tropical and subtropical butterfly gardens as its nectar is attractive to a variety of butterflies and other pollinators and it blooms year round. It is drought- and salt-tolerant. It also works well as a hedge plant.

Caution: Do not confuse this with its non-native relative, *Lantana strigocamara*, which has larger, more colorful blooms, but is highly invasive and thus should be avoided. *Lantana strigocamara* is the species typically found at big box retail garden centers. Be sure to inquire with staff to ensure you are purchasing the native species, or visit a nursery that specializes in native plants. For more information on the invasive *Lantana strigocamara*, visit the UF/IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants' species page.

Plants are available from nurseries that specialize in Florida native plants. Visit www.PlantRealFlorida.org to find a nursery in your area.

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Florida Wildflower Foundation • P O Box 941691, Maitland, FL 32794-1691 • 407-622-1606 • www.FlaWildflowers.org

