

Florida's Native Coreopsis Takes Center Stage

On new specialty license plate, scheduled for release in March or April 2000.

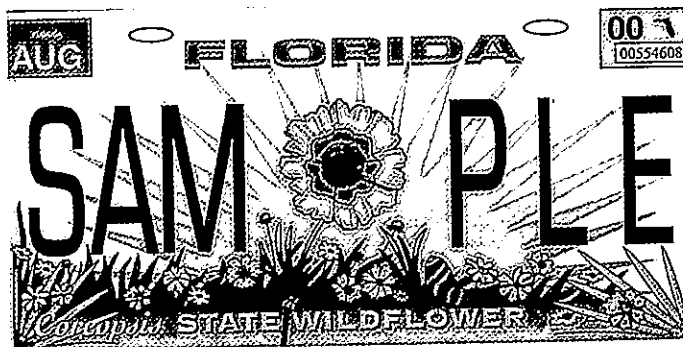
Florida, named as the "Land of Flowers," now has a colorful new license plate paying homage to our official state wildflower the Coreopsis. After several years of concerted effort, the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Keep Florida Beautiful, the Think Beauty Foundation and the Florida Department of Transportation—along with other related groups—successfully secured legislation for the new plate this past July.

The wildflower plate features a brilliant Coreopsis tinctoria in the center, set amidst a green field flecked with other varieties of Coreopsis and flanked by slender sable palm fronds. Our state butterfly the Zebra Long-Wing (*Heliconius charitonius*) and a ladybug accent the design.

The new plate should be available from your county tax collector in March or April of 2000. If you purchase the wildflower plate on the five-year anniversary of your current auto tag, the cost will be \$15 above the price of your registration. If you purchase the wildflower plate prior to the five-year anniversary of your current auto tag, the cost above the price of your registration is \$15 plus a \$10 new plate charge, which goes to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

\$15 fee to fund planting grants

The \$15 fee funds the Wildflower Account established by Keep Florida Beautiful, Inc. Wildflower Account funds will be used for pass-through wildflower planting grants, educational programs, and development of native wildflower seed



stock, focusing primarily on the Coreopsis. Any community in Florida may request wildflower planting grants, which means sales of this tag can benefit every Floridian.

Wildflower Advisory Council
A Wildflower Advisory Council was created within Keep Florida Beautiful, Inc., to oversee expenditures of the Wildflower Account. The nine-member

council includes representatives from the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, the Think Beauty Foundation, the University of Florida, Florida's Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection, the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Florida League of Cities, and the Florida Association of Counties.

About the Coreopsis

The Coreopsis tinctoria (tickseed) is a prodigious bloomer, having vibrant yellow flowers with maroon centers. A hardy, upright, annual wildflower, it prefers full sun in various soil types and is an ideal plant for areas that have poor drainage or remain soggy for extended periods of time. There are many varieties of the

Coreopsis, some with solid gold blooms like the lance-leaved tickseed and others with mahogany-red flowers like the dwarf red plains coreopsis.

For more information

For more information about the wildflower license plate, please contact Carolyn Schaag, President, Florida Federation of Garden Clubs at 561-622-8016 or Keep Florida Beautiful at 850-385-1528.

Florida "Shines" At National Conference

A National Conference, whose subject was "Managing Roadsides Naturally" was held on October 22nd, and 23rd at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas. The two hundred delegates learned how to determine what species were right for their areas, ways to educate the public about their native plant programs and how to connect with people who have forged successful community partnerships.

The State of Florida was chosen to present their partnership with the Department of Transportation and the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs. Gary Henry, represented the Department of Transportation and Elizabeth Pate, FFGC Roadside Beautification Chairman represented the FFGC and spoke of the partnership that had been started in the

1970's through the leadership of the Federations past presidents and is still strong and productive.

It was a distinct honor that the FFGC's partnership with the FDOT was chosen as the best one in the Country. The Florida Federation was the only one to have a speaker on the two-day program. Much interest was expressed in our Roadside Beautification program and in the upcoming BLOSSOMS AND BUTTERFLIES CONFERENCE to be held March 14, 15, and 16, 2000.

Elizabeth Pate

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