



FYN Garden Q & A Series

Thomas Becker
Extension Agent, Florida
Yards & Neighborhoods



FYN TOPIC: Florida Privet, Varnishleaf and Indian hawthorn shrubs

Question: I'm looking for an evergreen shrub, 8' to 10' tall that can be pruned to screen an east facing bedroom window and A/C unit. The shrub can't be real wide. Would either of these natives work: Florida privet or varnishleaf?
Robert E , Estero

Answer: East facing sun is a full sun environment unless blocked by a tree canopy. Florida privet is an excellent choice for a dense screening hedge. It prefers full sun and medium moisture and maintains a continuous wider and denser base than the also native, varnishleaf. Varnishleaf tends to develop more new leaves higher on the bush. It also loses more of its inner leaves when drought and cold stressed.

No matter what type of shrub you select (wax myrtle, cocoplum, thyrallis, Simpson's stopper, etc.) keep your screening plants healthy longer by planting no less than five feet or more from your home's foundation or the A/C unit. This allows air movement and work space to maintain both the windows, walls and back of each shrub. Keep in mind, these suggestions are for maintaining taller shrubs that will block your view into and out of the window. A shorter growing shrub such as Indian hawthorn would be preferred.

Useful Links

<http://www.floridayards.org>
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>
<http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu>



Rhampholopsis
spring growth



Indian Hawthorn is low maintenance

Thomas Becker is an extension agent for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program at the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the Horticulture Help Desk at 239-533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. or by emailing Extgardener@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A. & M. 05/18/2013.

