



FYN Garden Q & A Series

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Yards & Neighborhoods



FYN Topic: Saltbush

Question: There is a plant growing next to my cactus. It wasn't there when I left last May. Now it is over 6 feet tall. It is sort-of pretty but I can't let it grow taller. What is it? What should I do with it?
D. G., St. James City

Answer: Your newly discovered plant is Saltbush, *Baccharis halimifolia*. Female plants have bristle-like, white flower that look like worn out paint brushes. Once open, these flowers in mass look like a thick blanket of snow weighing down each branch. Common along Pine Island roadways, drainage ditches and field edges, Saltbush seeds blow easily into residential areas and lay dormant until summer. In the right place, Saltbush trees can be pruned severely to form a dense shrub or pruned more severely to keep as small tree rising 10 to 14 feet high. Growing in the wrong place, saltbush quickly crowds out nearby plants. It's a survivor under extreme conditions (wet or dry). Learn more at http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenPubsAZ/Saltbush_Baccharis_halimifolia.pdf.



Saltbush blooms in autumn



Late fall flowerheads, with purple sheath around silky white blooms

Useful Links

<http://www.floridayards.org>
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>
<http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>
<http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu>

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 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>

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