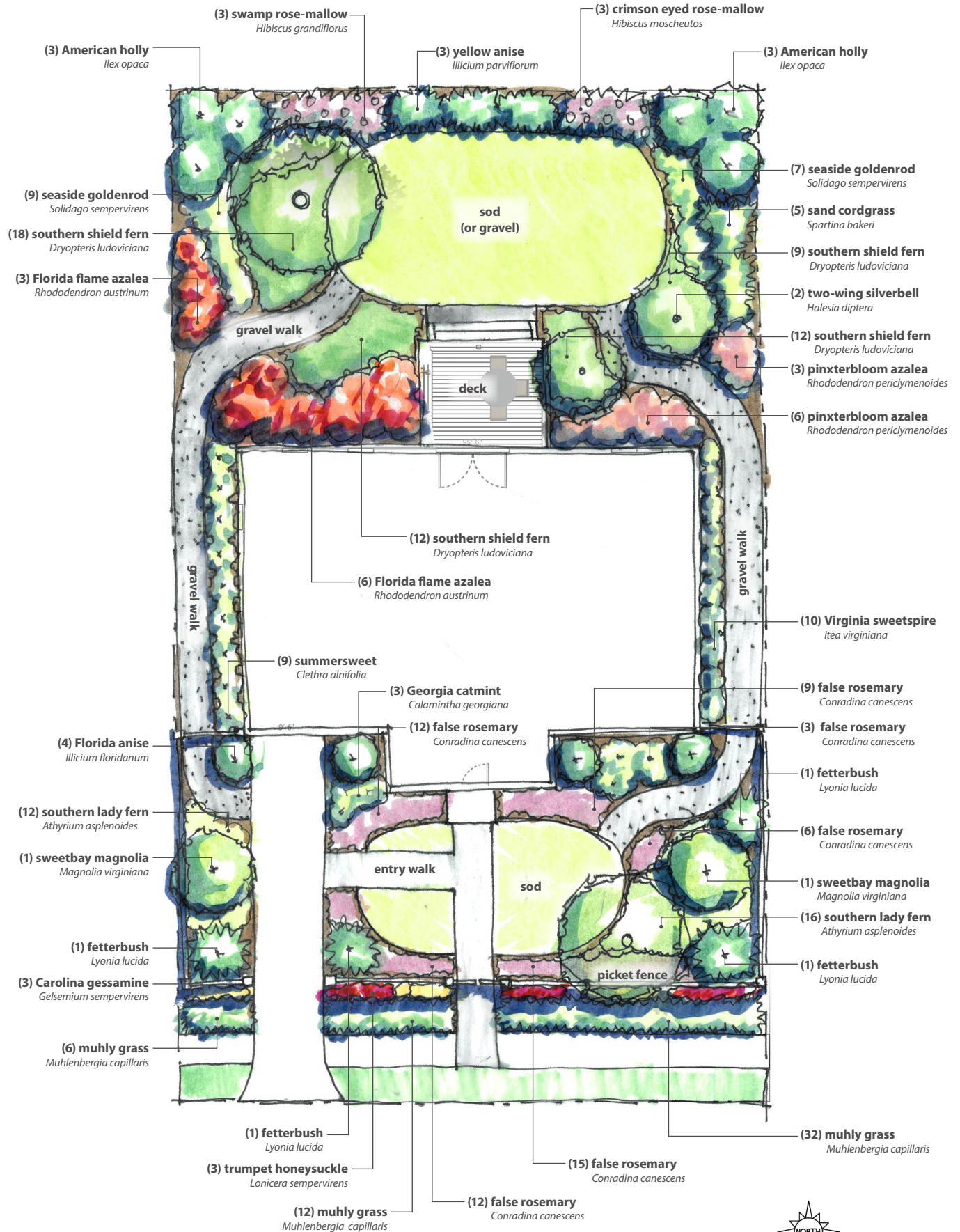


# wild ones native garden design: tallahassee

by caleb melchior | spring 2021



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## SITE ANALYSIS

Wait to do anything big until you've had a chance to observe your garden for a few months - ideally a year. Walk it and watch out your windows to see how the light shifts over the seasons. You'll also be able to identify views you want to frame or eyesores to screen. Keep an eye out for downspouts and any areas where water pools.

Work with your local extension agency to get a soil test. That'll let you know if your soil is generally acid or limey. Along the Gulf Coast, we tend to have sandy soil with a low organic matter content. The species shown in this plan are adaptable to Tallahassee's low nutrient conditions, and will grow across a range of soil pH levels. Along the Gulf Coast, pine needles or composted leaf mulch are the best mulches. They slowly break down into the soil. You can also use a crushed gravel mulch, but be aware that limestone-derived gravels can make the soil more basic.

## PHASING

Start with larger investment projects that will have a big impact. Plant trees and shrubs in back and front gardens to get them established. They'll also be easy to maintain. A second phase would be to add the shrubs along the sides of the house, as well as walkways around the house. Finally, plant perennials and groundcovers throughout.

## MONARCH HABITAT

If you're looking to increase the forage for monarchs in this design, it would be possible to substitute some or all of the goldenrod or Georgia catmint with willow-leaved milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*), green flowered milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*), or green comet milkweed (*Asclepias viridiflora*).

## PLANT LIST:

### Front Garden

- (4) Florida anise *Illicium floridanum*
- (2) sweetbay magnolia *Magnolia virginiana*
- (4) fetterbush *Lyonia lucida*
- (3) trumpet honeysuckle *Lonicera sempervirens*
- (3) Carolina jessamine *Gelsemium sempervirens*\*
- (28) southern lady fern *Athyrium asplenoides*
- (40) marginal wood fern *Dryopteris marginalis*
- (36) muhly grass *Muhlenbergia capillaris*
- (54) false rosemary *Conradina canescens*
- (6) Georgia catmint *Calamintha georgiana*

### SIDE GARDENS

- (9) summersweet clethra *Clethra alnifolia*
- (10) Virginia sweetspire *Itea virginica*

### BACK GARDEN

- (2) two-wing silverbell *Halesia diptera*
- (6) American holly *Ilex opaca*
- (3) yellow anise *Illicium parviflorum*
- (9) Florida flame azalea *Rhododendron austrinum*
- (9) pinxterbloom azalea *Rhododendron periclymenoides*
- (3) swamp rose-mallow *Hibiscus grandiflorus*
- (3) red eyed rose-mallow *Hibiscus moscheutos*
- (5) sand cordgrass *Spartina bakeri*
- (16) seaside goldenrod *Solidago sempervirens*
- (39) southern shield fern *Dryopteris ludoviciana*

\*Carolina jessamine flowers attract native bees, hummingbirds and Spicebush Swallowtail Butterflies (per Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Database). Some gardeners may want to avoid planting Caroline Jessamine, however, because of its potential adverse effects on honeybees. While Carolina Jessamine is a southeast US native vine and studies have shown that many native bee species are not affected by it, gardeners with honeybees may want to avoid it. Potential substitutes include yellow passionflower (*Passiflora lutea*) and/or crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*).