

There are many low-maintenance native plants that you can add to your OASIS ...

Experiment with what you find in nature. Learn to identify native plants and how to propagate them. Some good native plants available in nurseries are wild frangipani, orange manjack, pink cedar, sea grape, lignum vitae, turpentine tree, teyer palm, sabal palm, wild ferns, wild anthurium, and spider lily.



Wild frangipani tree



Orange manjack tree



Pink cedar tree



Sea grape tree



Teyer palm



Turpentine tree



Spider plant

Carefully choose the exotic (non-native) plants that you add to your OASIS...

Introduce exotic plants that will not escape into the **natural zone** and crowd out native plants. You can also select certain exotics with showy flowers or foliage to add accents of color to your landscape. Good exotic plants for the **OASIS** include hibiscus, bougainvillea, oleander, croton, heliconia, ginger, ixora, aralia, agave, and non-native palms.



A low-maintenance natural landscape in a dry area.

For more information on how to create an environmental landscape, call Cooperative Extension Service
(340) 693-1080 or (340) 692-4080

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V.I. Beauty Begins With Your Yard



**CREATE A LOW MAINTENANCE
- LOW COST LANDSCAPE IN
BALANCE WITH YOUR
NATURAL SURROUNDINGS**

Save time, money and help preserve a healthy natural environment

Minimize clearing with backhoes and bulldozers...

Clear only building footprints – where house, cistern, septic system, and driveway will be. Heavy equipment can ruin the soil and kill plants that protect the top soil. Clearing promotes unwanted weed growth because of increased exposure to additional sunlight. Hard-to-control plants like guinea grass, vines, tantan, and casha can rapidly take over cleared areas. **Hand-clearing** will preserve existing vegetation while removing unwanted plants.

Protect newly cleared land

Plant ground covers to hold soil. Use mulches like shredded bark, wood chips or mulch matting to protect soils from sun exposure and erosion.



Mulch matting used with ground covers.

Use porous paving for driveways and walkways...



Concrete strips (left), gravel, paving stones or modular blocks can be used for driveways and walkways. Paving stones, modular blocks, or boardwalks make good walkways. Porous paving lets rain soak into the soil for plant use and reduces flooding.

Use the native vegetation on your property in your landscape plan



A natural landscape in a moister zone accented with exotic ground covers.



Divide your landscape into an OASIS area and a NATURAL ZONE....

OASIS

The **OASIS** area is nearest the house, walkways and driveway. This is where you put plants that require routine maintenance like exotic plants, plants that need irrigation and fertilizer, vegetable gardens and potted plants. Maximize the productivity of your **OASIS** with box gardening to grow more food in a small amount of space using much less effort and water. Cultivating dwarf fruit trees also saves space and it is easier to maintain them.

NATURAL ZONE

The **NATURAL ZONE**, beyond the **OASIS**, is where native vegetation is preserved. It's the low maintenance zone where native plants thrive on rainfall alone. This area doesn't need expensive watering, fertilizing or routine pruning. Native vegetation borders serve as windbreaks (**reducing wind speed by up to 50%**), privacy barriers, noise buffers (**cutting sound levels by almost half**), dust filters (**trapping Sahara dust carried by trade winds**), wildlife habitats (**cutting down on mosquitoes and other insect pests by wildlife**), and cooling shade.