

The Nature of Pine Ridge Estates

Welcome to the community of Pine Ridge, built in the 1950s as "country estates" for residents of Naples. Large lots were laid out on a natural ridge of land east of 41, which represents some of the highest property in western Collier County. This is good for storm protection and provides residents with a unique natural Environment.

Pine Ridge was originally made up of a mature forest of pine trees with a few natural ponds and depressions that were enlarged into the lakes we know today. There was also "scrub" habitat with various oaks and other vegetation adapted to dry (xeric), sandy soils.



Natural Pine trees with Palmetto understory

These habitats still exist but they are slowly disappearing as landscape plans typically remove and/or ignore replacing the natural plants that are important to the ecosystem that makes Pine Ridge unique (and valuable). Incorporating pines and other native plants into your landscape is important for a variety of reasons.

Wildlife in Pine Ridge is more abundant and diverse than other communities in our area. Bald eagles, ospreys, red shouldered hawks, owls and song birds join animals which have disappeared from other areas. Unique animals include gopher tortoises, river otters and red foxes. As time goes on and larger houses are built, much of our native habitat is being lost. Modern new houses can help our property values, as long as we don't lose the nature that makes Pine Ridge unique along the way.

We can all help by planting a few native plants in our yards. Pine trees, oaks and even palmettos can be attractive and easily integrated into landscaping plans with many other native plants that are available.

Where to Buy Native Pines

Driftwood Garden Center

5051 Tamiami Trail North
Naples, FL 34103-2895
239-261-0328

Davenport Nursery

14454 Collier Blvd.
Naples, FL 34119
239-304-5990

Deep South Native Nursery

(large orders may be delivered)
2051 N. Evalena Lane
North Ft. Myers, FL 33917
239-334-2493



These can compliment fruit trees and colorful ornamentals. Landscape plans for Pine Ridge should be unique, specifying native trees and plants that enhance our community and by preserving the natural pine forest when possible.

It is also important to remove exotic plants (see reverse) that were introduced, which can over-run and destroy property.

For more information about local plants, contact the Collier County Extension agent Doug Caldwell at 239-252-4800 or find information on their website: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*)

A shrub that reaches over 30 feet in height, typically with a short trunk hidden in a thicket of branches. The leaves are alternately arranged with 1-2 inch long, finely toothed leaflets. The glossy fruits are in clusters that are initially green, and become bright red when ripe. The plant and leaves have a peppery smell.

Removal*: Pull seedlings out by the root. Cut back larger plants and remove by root.



Air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*)

A quick-growing, large-leaved vine that spreads up to 8 inches per day. It typically climbs to the tops of trees and has a tendency to take over all plants. Even if the plant is cut to the ground, the tubers can survive for extended periods and send out new shoots later.

Removal*: If growing into trees or other desirable species, vines should be cut or pulled down to minimize damage to the desirable vegetation.



Rosary pea (*Abrus precatorius*)

Warning - poisonous if ingested.

Rosary pea is a small, high climbing vine with seedpods that curl back when it opens, revealing the seeds. The seeds are small, brilliant red with a black spot and are poisonous when ingested. It can grow over small trees and shrubs. Roots grow very deep into the ground and are difficult to remove.

Removal*: Hand-pulling and removal of entire plants, particularly the roots, is practical for small infestations only.



Earleaf acacia (*Acacia auriculiformis*)

Medium size tree that can be up to 50 feet tall. It is fast-growing and fruits at an early age. Bright yellow, buttonlike flower clusters appear in spring. Fruit are somewhat earshaped, brown, contorted pods that persist for months. Leaves are sickle shaped.

Removal*: Uproot entire plant and place in sealed garbage bag.



Carrotwood (*Cupaniopsis anacardioides*)

Fast-growing evergreen tree that can reach heights of about 35 feet. The brightly colored fruit is a yellowy-orange, three-lobed capsule which, when ripe (May to June) splits open to expose three shiny black seeds encased in red or orange fleshy tissue. Leaves have slightly wavy margins.

Removal*: Uproot tree and place roots in sealed bag to prevent sprouting.



**All removal techniques can include chemical eradication. Read instruction labels carefully and wear protective gear at all times. Consult the Collier County Extension agent on type of herbicide to use.*