



# CTPN Planting & Maintenance Guide

## RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

To select an appropriate location, you should know something about the plant you're working with. How big will it get? What are its light and water requirements? A great resource to answer these questions is the [Natives for Your Neighborhood](#) website from The Institute for Regional Conservation.

## SITE PREPARATION

To ensure success of your plantings, it is important to do a little site preparation first. Make sure you are planting into an area that is free of lawn and weeds. You can remove lawn and weeds by several methods such as: using a rake or cultivator to uproot plants, smothering plants with plastic or wet cardboard (this takes a few weeks), or using herbicide like Roundup or Spectracide (be sure to carefully follow label instructions). It is important to remove all dead plant material and discard it prior to planting your pine rockland plants. If your area has a lot of topsoil, consider also removing the top layer of soil, as it will likely contain many weed seeds.

## PLANTING

Dig a hole large enough to bury the entire root ball. You may need to use a digging bar or pick-axe. Always remove the pot before planting. Place your plant into the hole and use the soil from the hole to backfill around the root ball. Don't add store-bought soil. Gently press the soil around the plant to ensure it is stable. Make sure all roots are covered yet avoid planting too deeply

## WATERING

Plants will need to be watered until they are established; after that they should only need water during prolonged drought. If you plant during South Florida's rainy season, you will have less work to do! We recommend the following schedule for new plantings: **Weeks 1&2:** water every day it doesn't rain; **Weeks 3&4:** water every 2-3 days; **After week 4:** water once a week or when you see wilting leaves. **After 3 months** your plants should be established.

## MULCHING (OR NOT)

Mulch is not recommended for restoration projects but in the garden, it is helpful when used correctly. It can suppress weeds, hold in moisture, and improve aesthetics. A layer of 2-3 inches is all that's necessary. Do not mulch up to the base of the plant or cover the trunk. Always select mulch that comes from a sustainable source. Eucalyptus mulch is more sustainable than cypress. Dyed red or brown mulch leaches chemicals and should be avoided. Mulch decomposes quickly in South Florida; you should expect to re-apply it once a year or so.

## PRUNING & MAINTENANCE

Grasses and herbs are low maintenance but may look best if they are cut back once a year or every few years. Most pine rockland shrubs can be cut back severely, even to the ground, after they become well-established. Cut back at the start of summer rains (or just before) to keep shrubs from looking leggy.

