

Garberia

(*Garberia heterophylla*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms.

Garberia is unlike most species in the Asteraceae family in that its growth habit is woody and shrubby rather than herbaceous. Garberia is endemic to Florida's north and central peninsula, and occurs naturally in scrub and xeric hammocks. It typically flowers in late fall but has been known to flower sparsely throughout the year. It is a state-listed threatened species and is part of the Eupatorieae tribe, whose members produce flowers consisting of only disk and no ray florets. It is an excellent nectar source for many butterflies and bees.



Photo by Stacey Matrazzo

Garberia's inflorescences are large, showy clusters of pink to purple flowers. Individual disk florets are tubular and have conspicuously extended styles. Ray florets are absent. Leaves are oval to obovate with undulating entire margins and a distinctly grayish-green hue. They are alternately arranged. Bark is also grayish in color. Seeds are born in tiny achenes.

The genus name *Garberia* honors American botanist Abraham Garber (1838–1881). The species epithet *heterophylla* is from the Greek *hetero*, which means "diverse," and *phúllon*, meaning "leaf."

Family: Asteraceae (Aster, daisy or composite family)

Native range: Clay and Putnam counties, Central Florida south to Highlands County

To see where natural populations of Garberia have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Lifespan: Perennial

Soil: Dry, well-drained, sandy acidic soil

Exposure: Full sun to minimal shade

Growth habit: 1–5' feet tall with equal spread

Propagation: Sow seed in winter and cover lightly

Florida regions of landscape suitability: North (peninsular), Central

Garden tips: Garberia works well in dry, sunny areas in a mixed shrub bed or as a single specimen. In normal conditions, it is evergreen and is particularly long-lived. It is drought-tolerant and, once established, requires little to no irrigation.

Garberia is often available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit www.PlantRealFlorida.org to find a native nursery on your area.

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