



**M.S. Position:** Benefits of Native Plants in Residential Landscaping

**Overview:** The [Residential Landscape Ecology Lab](#) of Dr. Basil Iannone in the [School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences](#) at the University of Florida is seeking a creative and motivated MS student to start in August 2022. The student will also work closely with the [Urban Landscape Entomology Lab](#) of Dr. Adam Dale at UF and the [Urban Ecology Lab](#) of Dr. Patrick Bohlen at the University of Central Florida (UCF). This position includes competitive stipend, tuition waiver, and benefits.

**Review of applications will begin immediately**

**Duties:** The loss of biodiversity is a pressing global issue, and urban areas are influencing biodiversity at increasingly larger scales. Native plants can support native biodiversity and can increase resource use efficiency in urban landscapes, which is why there is increased interest among developers, nurseries, and landscape architects in increasing the use of native plants to support these ecological functions.

The overarching goal of this project is to determine the degree to which landscaping with native plants restores resources for higher trophic levels, i.e., provides food/energy for wildlife. This project involves a unique academic-private partnership aimed at minimizing the environmental impacts of a 24,000-acre development project east of Orlando, Florida on native biodiversity and water resources. The student will quantify differences in evidence of sustained food resources for higher trophic levels among landscaping dominated by native plants, more-traditional landscaping dominated by nonnative ornamental plants and turfgrass, and nearby natural areas in central Florida (e.g., floral and fruit abundance, pollinator and herbivore activity, arthropod abundance, and evidence of arthropod reproduction).

This position will be supported by [the UF/IFAS Center for Land Use Efficiency](#), the [Florida Chapter of The Nature Conservancy](#), and the UF/IFAS Program for Resource Efficient Communities. Other project partners include [Cherrylake](#) landscape company, [LifeSoils](#) LLC, and the UF/IFAS [Sustainable Floridians](#) Benchmarking and Monitoring Program, UCF, the [Sunbridge Stewardship District](#), and Tavistock Development Company.

**Qualifications:** A bachelor's degree in biology, ecology, landscape architecture, environmental horticulture, or a related field, and strong interests in urban ecology and leading interdisciplinary projects aimed at enhancing urban biodiversity are required. Experience working with arthropods is desired, but not required.

**To apply:** Email the following as a single PDF document to Dr. Basil Iannone ([biannone@ufl.edu](mailto:biannone@ufl.edu)), making sure to state "Native Plant MS position" in the subject: (1) Cover Letter stating your (a) research/career goals, (b) your experience that qualifies for this position, and (c) how you would benefit from this opportunity; (2) C.V.; (3) unofficial transcripts; and (4) contact information for three professional/academic references that can speak to your ability to succeed in a graduate program and as a project leader.