

XERISCAPE

by Robert Craig

The rapidly growing human population, increasing numbers of tourists, and the influx of citrus growers moving south because of freezes in north and central Florida have dramatically increased the demand on water supplies in south Florida.

The South Florida Water Management District is actively promoting xeriscape — landscaping with properly located, dry-habitat native plants and drought-tolerant exotics.

Approximately 50% of south Florida's water use is for outdoor landscaping (not including agricultural irrigation). Xeriscape could minimize the impact of water restrictions and rationing on lawns and gardens if those measures become necessary.

SFWMD has launched an effort to educate the public about xeriscape, including:

- educational conferences
- a model landscape code
- a fifteen-minute video on xeriscape
- xeriscape demonstration gardens
- a plant guide
- a computer program listing natives and their growth characteristics, offered free, that runs on an IBM-PC.

Information can be requested by writing to the South Florida Water Management District, P.O. Box 24680, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, 33416.