In Florida's tropical and sub-tropical climates, plants that are adapted for warm, wet weather thrive. What kind of plants come to mind when you think of Florida?

Palm trees, orange trees, and colorful flowers such as hibiscus are commonly associated with Florida—and for good reason! These hardy plants are suited for hot weather, lots of rainfall, and exposure to sea salt. Palm trees can weather both excessive moisture and long periods of drought, making them perfect seaside plants. Over a hundred of varieties of oranges enjoy Florida’s sunshine to grow. Colorful and unusual flowers such as hibiscus, crepe myrtle, birds of paradise, and orchids dot the landscape making Florida a lush colorful paradise.

Plants that thrive in Florida have adapted to survive in a tropical and sub-tropical climate. Some have developed a tolerance for salt water, others have adapted to thrive in sandy soil. Still other plants are adapted to thrive in both wet conditions and drought, such as the slash pine which can withstand both flooding and months without rain.

Cabbage Palms are found throughout Florida. The cabbage palm is the state tree of Florida.

Plants are organized by their scientific classification, which helps scientists study the genetic relationships between plants. All plants have their common and scientific names. The cabbage palm’s scientific name is *Sabal palmetto*. Scientific names include the genus and the species. The cabbage palm belongs to the *Sabal* genus which includes most palm trees. Its species name is *palmetto*, which is unique to the cabbage palm.

Can you find a cabbage palm in your neighborhood? Compare it to other palm trees, are they related to the cabbage palm? How can you tell?
ACTIVITY
FLORIDA SENSORY PAINTING

MATERIALS:
TEMPERA PAINT AND BUTCHER PAPER OR BROWN PAPER BAGS

DIFFICULTY LEVEL:
SIMPLE

DIRECTIONS

1. Gather leaves, pine cones, citrus and other nature samples.

2. Spread butcher paper on a table or the ground. Cutting open brown paper bags, removing the bottom is another good option for a large painting surface.

3. Place a liberal amount of washable tempera paint in a tray or paper plate.

4. Dip the sensory nature samples into the paint and use them to paint, dab or press onto the butcher paper. Explore how the different textures and scents affect the way the paint is applied.

5. You can also try creating impressions of the plants by lightly coating them in paint and pressing them onto a single sheet of paper.

WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE WHAT YOU CREATE!

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