

## Florida Sunshine (*Illicium parviflorum*)

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### Florida Sunshine (*Illicium parviflorum*)

- **Common Names:** Florida Sunshine Anise, Florida Sunshine *Illicium*.
- **Recommended Use:** Privacy hedge or specimen shrub.
- **Exposure:** Full to partial shade.
- **Size:** Approximately 5 feet tall, 3 feet wide.
- **Habit:** Round to upright shrub.
- **Bloom Time:** Small yellow flowers in summer are relatively inconspicuous but have a mild, pleasant scent.
- **Maintenance Category:** Low.
- **Water Use:** Average.
- **Highlights:** Bright yellow foliage maintained throughout the year (and especially in winter) provides a vibrant addition to the landscape. Whether as a full sun showcase specimen or as a bright light in the shade garden, this plant is a low maintenance option for a variety of uses in the landscape.



The bright yellow foliage of Florida Sunshine adds a burst of color to the landscape. Photo by Ashley Hickman

### Summary

This compact evergreen shrub adds a burst of color to the landscape with its golden chartreuse foliage – the defining feature of this variety. The bright yellow leaves of this plant can be used to brighten up areas of the landscape in light shade, or they may serve as a screening hedge – an illuminating line of bright yellow foliage along pathways and roads. While partial shade is often recommended, specimens at the Hammond Research Station have thrived in full sun. This selection is a cultivar from the Florida native *Illicium parviflorum*, and it retains that anise fragrance with the foliage. Make sure that the soil moisture is adequate since this plant prefers soils that don't get too dry. While you will likely appreciate the lush yellow in the landscape, deer are not particularly fond of the foliage. During winter when most of the landscape languishes, the yellow foliage of Florida Sunshine becomes even brighter – lighting up the landscape before fading to a pale hue that is accompanied by a reddening of stem tips. You may encounter the pleasant fragrance that emanates from Florida Sunshine, but don't let that sway you to consume any part of this poisonous plant. Summertime flowers are not particularly showy, as the small, relatively inconspicuous yellow blooms don't draw much attention. Overall, the stunningly bright foliage commands substantial attention in the landscape offering a beacon of light in the shadier sections of the garden. For these reasons and more, Florida Sunshine *Illicium* is a Louisiana Super Plant for 2024.

### Requirements

- Well-drained but moist soils.
- As with most *I. parviflorum*, these plants prefer partial to full shade, but Florida Sunshine is capable of handling full sun, unlike similar selections.
- Limited maintenance is needed. Prune in spring before new growth.

## Growth Habit

- Forms a dense, evergreen, pyramidal shaped shrub.
- Vigorous grower that maintains a compact form, regularly topping out at 5 to 6 feet. However, some

specimens have been capable of reaching heights and widths up to 12 feet.

- Changes in colors for foliage and stem tips are observed throughout the growing season.

For more information on Florida Sunshine and other Louisiana Super Plants, contact your local LSU AgCenter Extension office or visit [LSUAgCenter.com/SuperPlants](http://LSUAgCenter.com/SuperPlants).



PUB. 3707-DD (ONLINE) 4/24

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