

OYSTER PLANT

Oyster plants, or *Tradescantia spathacea*, can be found throughout Pine Run. While many find them attractive, they pose a danger to the ecology of central and southern Florida. Oyster plants were first classified as a Category II invasive plant in Florida in 2007, as their rapid spread throughout Florida was causing concern. In 2019, it was upgraded to a Category I invasive because of demonstrated ecological damage. It has become naturalized, meaning that it grows wild. When it takes root in a coastal hammock, it forms a dense mat, blocking out the seeds of the native plants and trees, destroying the habitat for the wildlife. The proliferation of the plant is due to the plant easily rooting from yard waste, the dispersal of seeds by the wind, and the shoots sent out by established plants. It is listed in the Global Invasive Species Database.

The sap from the leaves causes a rash in some people. It is toxic if eaten and will cause severe burning pain in the mouth and throat.

With increased development, the landscaped areas of communities have become ever more important in preserving ecological balance. The Landscaping Committee asks for your help in reducing the presence of this plant in Pine Run.

