

Plant Materials Information

1. morning glory (*Ipomoea nil*)
2. Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*)
3. thatch palm (*Thrinax radiata*)

Conservation message

Thatch palm (*Thrinax radiata*) berries attract birds and keep the ecosystem ecstatic and healthy.

500-word Rationale for Plant Selections

Who knew plants were so amazing! I sure didn't until now. There are so many exquisite different kinds of plants native to the beautiful Florida Keys. Three that really stood out and took a special place in my heart were the morning glory, Spanish moss, and thatch palm berries. That's why I decided to use them in my wreath. All these plants have very special uses that range from lowering heating bills to supplying food for animals.

Wow! The morning glory also known as the *Ipomoea nil* was a must. When I saw it I just knew that I had to include it on my wreath. It added a burst of color and made the whole thing pop! It's used to reduce heating bills by growing on buildings and supply shade. Hard work? Not at all morning glories grow happily on buildings soaking up the sun! Its first use was the most important in my opinion, China used the flower for medical uses. This is pretty amazing if you think about it this magnificent flower saved people's lives. Edible? Yes! If the chance ever comes up when you're trapped in the jungle just look for morning glory's, and a way out...

Ever wonder what's in your mattress or automobile seat? Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*)! That's right, a moss is in your mattress, eww? Not at all! Actually it's quite comfy. Birds use the same bedding as you do and make a nest out of it! This moss dates back a long time ago back to when the Seminole and Houma Native American tribes were here, it was used for a variety of reasons. Did you know Spanish moss can absorb 10 times its weight in liquid? That's pretty amazing. You know what else is amazing? That Spanish moss isn't considered to be a real moss!

Landscaping time in the Florida Keys! Not a problem thatch palm berries have got you covered. If you want a beautiful sight plant a thatch palm tree or for a more scientific name the *Thrinax radiata*! The berries attract birds and keep the ecosystem ecstatic and healthy! The berries turn bright white when ripe and make the tree stand out from all others. The berries hang down in clusters from the leaf sheath. These berries were the finishing touch to our wreath!

I've learned so much about plants from this project! It really makes me think about how plants have such an important job in this world. From saving people's lives to saving people's money! Morning glories have vibrant colors, Spanish moss makes a great base, and thatch palm berries add the finishing touch to our majestic wreath. There's so much more I can learn about plants and I sure plan on doing just that!