

Composition of Tampa's Urban Forest

What is the composition of Tampa's urban forest?

Tampa is located in the transitional climate zone between tropical south Florida and temperate north Florida. On our study plots we identified 93 different tree species in Tampa. This represents a unique and diverse suite of species coexisting in Tampa's urban forest.

What is the diversity of Tampa's urban forest?

Diversity or species richness is simply the number of species in a given land area. Diversity is an important attribute in the urban forest and can be an indication of its vulnerability or resiliency to such natural disturbances as insect and/or disease outbreaks. Areas that have low species diversity are more likely to be less resilient to such disturbances.

How many trees are in Tampa's urban forest?

It is estimated that there are over 7.8 million trees in Tampa. For this study, a tree is defined as a woody stem with a diameter of 1 inch or greater at 4.5 feet. The top 10 most common tree species in Tampa are red mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*), Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), black mangrove (*Avicennia germinans*), white mangrove (*Laguncularia racemosa*), live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), Darlington oak (*Quercus hemisphaerica*), cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*), Carolina laurel cherry (*Prunus caroliniana*) and white lead tree (*Leucaena leucocephala*) (Figure 2).

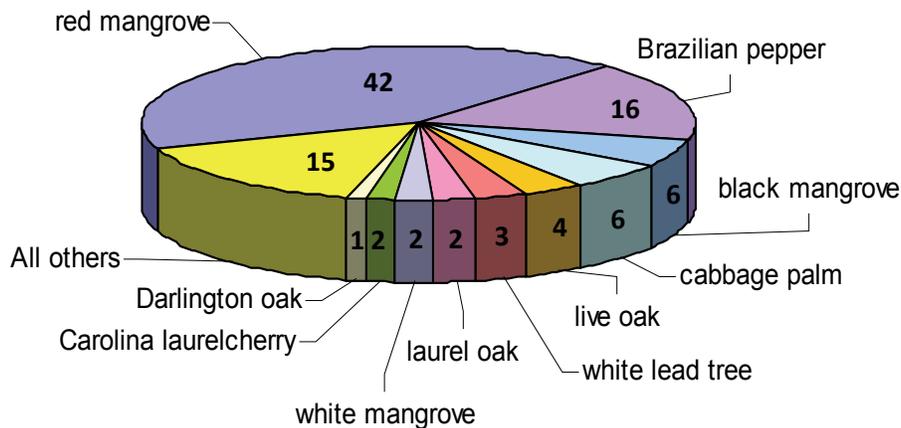


Figure 3: Relative percentage of tree species by number of stems in Tampa.