



A NEW LEAF

Duval County Extension



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Welcome to the New Year

2015 has arrived and the holidays are behind us. This is a time many of us forget about landscape chores. It's a good idea to take a break from mowing but every week take a walk around the landscape to check for problems. During a recent inspection I noticed a plant with somewhat variegated foliage. However, the leaves of this viburnum shrub should be a solid green. Careful inspection revealed the plant was covered with false oleander scale. This hard scale is a pest on many ornamental plants and can be active year-round. For more info go to http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/orn/scales/.false_oleander_scale.htm.



Upcoming January/February Classes

Saturday, January 17 - How to Start Vegetables From Seed & Take Home Your Own Seed Tray, 9:30 - 12:30PM. Preregistration & pre-payment required (trays limited). \$15, checks payable to DCOHAC. Call Jeannie to register.

Thursday, January 22 - Preparing for Spring Gardening, Highlands Branch Library, 1826 Dunn Ave, 6pm-8pm. Free program, call to register 255-7450.

Saturday, January 24 - Gardening for Grades and Nutrition Workshop for Teachers, call Terry @ 255-7450 for registration form or email at delvalle@coj.net.

Wednesday, January 28 - "Make & Take" Rain Barrel Workshop, 9:30-noon, Duval Co. Ext. Cost \$45. Pre-payment required by January 23rd. Make check payable to DCOHAC and mail to Rain Barrel Workshop, 1010 N. McDuff Ave., Jax, FL 32254. Class is limited. Questions call 255-7450.

Wednesday, February 11 - "Make & Take" Compost Tumbler Workshop, 10am-noon, Duval Co. Ext. Cost \$65. Prepayment required by February 6. Make check payable to DCOHAC and mail to Compost Tumbler Workshop, 1010 N. McDuff Ave., Jax, FL 32254. Class is limited. Questions call 255-7450.

Thursday, February 12 - Spring Tips & Easy Care Plants - 6pm-8pm, West Regional Library 1425 Chaffee Rd. Free program, call to register 255-7450.

Saturday, February 28 - A Day of Gardening; see back page for details.

Canning Classes are \$20 per person, pre-registration and pre-payment required. Call Jeannie to register.

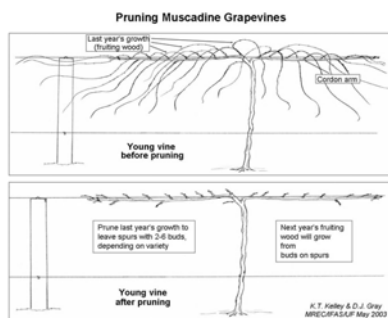
- Kumquat Marmalade, Saturday, January 10th 9AM to Noon.
- Chili con Carne/Cheese Crackers, Saturday, January 24th 9AM to 1PM.
- Jams and Jellies with Splenda, Monday, February 2nd from 9AM to Noon.
- Candy Apple Jelly & the Mason Jar (Decorating/baking/gift giving tips) Saturday, February 7th, 9AM to Noon
- Saturday, February 21, Strawberry Kiwi Jam Class 9-Noon.

Things to do in January/February

By Terry DeValle

Flowers

- ◆ Hold on to poinsettias if you intend to plant them in the landscape after the cold weather is past. March is typically a safe planting month. Check for details in the next edition on planting tips.
- ◆ Deadhead (remove old flowers) pansies and snapdragons to keep them blooming. Cold sensitive bedding plants can be covered with leaves, pine straw, blankets, or row covers for protection during a freeze.



Fruits and Nuts

- ◆ Prune grapes in January or February. For muscadines, prune all branches that are less than 3/16" in diameter, leaving 2 to 6 buds per spur. Remove most of the spurs located at the top of the trunk to prevent crowding and bushiness.

- ◆ Harvest citrus that are ripe before the freeze if temperatures are going to drop below 28°F for at least 4 hours. If fruit are not ripe, leave on the tree because citrus will not ripen once picked.
- ◆ Prior to a severe freeze, protect graft unions of young citrus by banking clean sand around the trunk just above the graft union.
- ◆ Now is the time to purchase and plant bare root fruit trees like pears and plums.
- ◆ Fertilize fruit trees in mid-February. For most fruit, use a citrus blend or peach/pecan special. Use a 6-6-6 or 8-8-8 at the rate of 1 to 2 pounds of fertilizer per inch of trunk diameter measured 4' above ground level.

Lawns

- ◆ Large patch fungus (brown patch) is very noticeable in area lawns creating circular brown patches in St. Augustine and Zoysia lawns. This disease thrives with mild temperatures and moisture. For more info: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/lh044>
- ◆ Take a break from mowing lawns and service your lawnmower. Clean the mower, sharpen the blades, drain and replace the oil, drain or use up the gasoline and grease all fittings.
- ◆ Even though lawns may be brown from the cold,

when it's dry lawns may need supplemental water. The Irrigation Ordinance allows watering once per week if needed. During cool weather, water once every 10 to 14 days. Watering days for odd # addresses are Saturday and even # addresses on Sunday.

- ◆ Pull cool season weeds like chickweed or Asiatic hawkbeard if they are going to seed. If warm season weeds were a problem last year, be prepared to treat before seeds germinate. Germination is based on soil temperatures, so treatment time can vary from mid-February to early March. Treat when day temperatures reach 65 to 70°F for four or five consecutive days. This usually is when azaleas and dogwoods are blooming.

Trees + Shrubs

- ◆ Purchase camellias now so you can see the flower color and type. 'Shishigashira' on right is a cultivar of *Camellia hiemalis*. Members of this species are usually more dwarf in growth habit and can tolerate more sun. 'Shishigashira' has medium rosy-red semi double flowers and is a versatile plant with a naturally low spreading habit that can be used as a hedge, espalier, or a container plant.
- ◆ It's time to prune deciduous plants if needed. Trees like crape myrtles don't need to be pruned except to remove rubbing branches, diseased or dead branches, and suckers from the base. Don't prune spring flowering shrubs or trees until after bloom. Examples include: azalea, dogwood, redbud, Japanese magnolia, and spirea.
- ◆ Prune roses and strip any remaining leaves from plants to reduce disease problems. Remove leaves that have dropped to the ground.
- ◆ Fertilize young ornamental plants in mid-February with a specialty or 16-0-16 type fertilizer.



Vegetable Garden

- Prepare gardens for spring planting in February. Turn the soil two weeks before planting to give plants a chance to rot or for a no-till option cover with cardboard or newspaper to choke out weeds.
- Start seedlings for transplants. Although squash can be direct seeded, transplants offer quicker yields and may help avoid borer problems.

What to Plant in January/February By Terry DeValle

Temperatures have been up and down as is normal with our winter weather. It's still a good idea to play it safe by growing cold hardy plants. Choices of things to plant are limited, so take some time to look through 2015 catalogues and prepare for spring planting. Order seeds now while they are still available. Start transplants by early February for March planting to get a head start on the spring season.

Annuals recommended for planting now are carnation (China doll), dianthus, flowering cabbage and kale, lobelia, pansy, petunia, ranunculus, stock, viola, and snapdragon. Violas are much easier to care for than pansies as they require no deadheading for continued flowering. For March flowers, plant delphinium, digitalis (foxglove), and larkspur in January or February. Both delphiniums and



Lobelia 'Techno Heat'

larkspur may require staking to support the flower stalk and both can be used as cut flowers. Keep in mind that all plant parts, including the seed, are poisonous. In February, add to the list baby's breath, calendula, marguerite daisy, and statice.

Bulbs that can be planted are Achimenes, African lily (Agapanthus),

amaryllis, Aztec lily, calla, crinum, daylily, Dutch iris, Gloriosa lily, gloxinia, Hurricane lily, Ixia, Kaffir lily, marica (walking iris), moraea (African lily), Spider lily, Tritonia, tuberose, tulip (prechilled only), Voodoo lily, watsonia, and Zephyr lily. In February it's too late to plant amaryllis, calla, daylily, Hurricane lily, and tulips, but add to the list Amazon lily, caladium, canna, and dahlia.

Vegetables to plant now include beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, Chinese cabbage, collards, kale, kohlrabi, leek, mustard, onions, parsley, English peas, potatoes, radish and turnips.

Endive and lettuce can be planted in February. Lettuce are one of the first cool season vegetable to go to flower if we



Red Mustard

get a few days of really warm weather. Once the plant begins this process (bolting), harvest the leaves as soon as possible because they will become more bitter over time. For more information, go to <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>.

Mosaic Disease of St. Augustinegrass by Terry DeValle

Mosaic disease of St. Augustinegrass is a new problem for sod growers and homeowners. It is called Sugarcane Mosaic Virus (SCMV) because it was first noted as a problem on sugarcane but was diagnosed on St. Augustinegrass in the 1960s. Then it was confined to lawns in sugarcane producing areas.

In 2013 there was an outbreak in Pinellas County and it was also found in Palm Beach County. Initial visual symptoms of the disease are a mosaic appearance on the leaves. Those with the mosaic appearance continued to decline in the fall into spring with necrosis and dieback. The disease continued to affect lawns in 2014.

This disease is spread by infected equipment like edgers, lawnmowers, and line trimmers. It is also possible that aphids may transfer the virus. In addition, the disease can also be introduced with new sod especially when the symptoms are not so obvious. There appears to be some differences in susceptibility among varieties. 'Floritam' seems to be the one that is most severely affected whereas 'Palmetto' and 'Bitterblue' appear to be more resistant.



It has not been identified in our county but it is likely only a matter of time. If the lawn has this disease, replant with a tolerant variety. Those in the lawn business should sterilize equipment between properties. There are no fungicides for control. Info summarized from: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pp313>.

The Blackberry (*Rubus spp.*) By Program Assistant Mary Puckett

Blackberry bushes are often called brambles, from a word that means prickly, belonging to the genus *Rubus*.

Planting is best from December through February and fruit typically ripens during May and June.

Blackberry plants prefer deep, well-drained soils and perform best at a soil pH between 5.5 and 6.5. Avoid low lying areas to minimize flood damage during excess rainfall and possible frost damage to flowers. Blossoms can be injured by temperatures below 28°.



Blackberry bushes may be erect or trailing with gradations in between (semi). A few of the recommended varieties for Florida: Brazos, Oklawaha, Flordagrاند, Arapaho*, Navaho*, Natchez*, and Ouachita* (* = thornless). Refer to resource for descriptions.

In general, space erect cultivars 2 to 4 feet apart and trailing 3 to 5 feet apart. Trailing needs to be trellised and often requires cross pollination. To ensure cross pollination, plant more than one variety. Most erect blackberries (including all Indian-named Arkansas blackberries) are self-fruitful and do not require a pollinizer.

When planting, spread the roots to avoid bending, cut back the shoots to about 6" in length and do not fertilize until late spring or early summer. Blackberries are vigorous growers and do not require much fertilizer. Because they have shallow roots, when applying fertilizer, make an 18" ring surrounding the plant to avoid burning them. During the first year fertilize with about 1/4 lb. per plant or up to 5 lbs. per 100 foot row. During the second year and thereafter fertilize in the winter and in the summer (after harvest) with 1/4 lb. to 1/2 lb. per plant or about 10 lbs. per 100 foot row. Fertilize with a 10-10-10 that includes micronutrients for beset results. Follow label directions for application rates when using your choice fertilizer.

These perennial shrubs can live for many years, producing new canes (shoots) every year. These canes are called primocanes and will elongate, but do not produce berries. The annual fruit is produced on the previous year's canes, known as floricanes.

It is recommended that when the primocanes reach 30 to 36 inches (erect or semi-erect variety) or 40 to 48 inches (trailing variety), cut the tip off to encourage lateral growth and enhance flower bud initiation which should increase yield. In the winter, the primocanes will go dormant.

In the spring the previous year's canes will leaf out, flower and fruit. After fruiting, floricanes dry up and die. It is recommended to prune out and remove all floricanes at the ground or crown level after harvesting.

Irrigation and weed control are the two most important cultural practices during the first year. Drip irrigation is preferable to overhead irrigation. Drip irrigation conserves water, does not wet foliage (which enhances disease) and does not promote excessive weed growth. Soils with high water holding capacity require less frequent irrigation than sandy soil. Organic mulches such as pine straw or pine bark further enhance water conservation. During the fruiting cycle, add one inch of water per week in the absence of adequate rainfall.

The fruit is an edible cluster of tiny drupelets that turn from red to deep bluish-black when ripe.

Resource: "The Blackberry" <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/HS/HS10400.pdf>

Lettuce Build Community By Master Gardener V. Freeman

Although the word play makes my English teacher colleagues cringe when they read it, my favorite business card still proclaims, "Lettuce build community." It is the card I use when I am working with folks who want to start a community garden.

My first community garden occurred on my front lawn in Jacksonville's Historic District. It was my thinly veiled attempt to get folks to help me deal with a big expanse of turf grass. I created beds around the lawn's edges and finally some Square Foot Beds right in the center. And over the decade, individuals and couples came: a Navy Master Chief, an organist, a blood bank director, an artist, a graphic designer, a quasi-homeless Audrey Hepburn look alike, a Delta flight attendant and two folks who started an organic CSA that now feeds over 30 families.



And they grew veggies together. And while they were mulching, seeding, watering and wondering, they spoke to one another, asked questions, shared wisdom and learned about each other in a way that broadened their worlds. I was constantly amazed because I thought world broadening could only be done through travel, reading literature or attending corporate sensitivity seminars.

And besides empathy creation via world broadening, community garden offers another benefit EXERCISE, which is now being touted as medicine. The August 2014 *Harvard Health Letter* states, "The health benefits of exercise have been noted since Biblical times. Modern science has confirmed ancient wisdom: physical activity improves sleep, endurance and even sex." Wow!

When I moved from the house with the great lawn into a retirement community with no personal lawn, I once again sought connection via community via gardening. Once again it worked. This time I did not have to dig to create the beds. They were provided by the community's leaders who seems to understand the unique power of growing one's own veggies. And the power seems to be there. My fellow gardeners stormed the beaches at Normandy, held the line in Korea, canoed up the Yangtze just ahead of the Communist takeover and ran major art agencies. On the surface, we are separated by age and experience. Still, we have a connecting thread. We all understand the miracle of seed, soil and sunlight in creating sustenance. We are becoming buddies.

If an individual lives without land (or doesn't want to dig up the yard), there is still a possibility for having a spot in a community garden. The Urban Gardening Program at Duval County Extension has plots available at the following locations.



- Alton Box located at the corner of E. 20th and Thelma Street (32206)
- Ft. Caroline located behind Ft. Caroline Presbyterian Church 3754 University Club Blvd. (32277)
- Superior Garden located at 2650 1st Street W. (32254)

For questions concerning details, contact Mary Puckett, Duval County Extension at <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/> 255-7450 or mpuckett@coj.net .

Cat's Claw Vine By Terry DeValle



Flowers and leaves of cat's-claw vine.
Credits: Niels Proctor, UF/IFAS

you want in your landscape.

This climbing perennial vine is native to the West Indies along with Central and South Americas. It was first noted in Florida in 1957 in Dade County. It is unclear how it was introduced but it is now found in major cities like Jacksonville, Orlando, and Tampa. The Florida climate appears to be ideal for this vine to continue its spread. Initially, it was thought to spread by the root system but after more observations, it appears that seed dispersal is its main means of propagation.

In the spring the vine produces showy yellow flowers composed of five petals that are fused, three on the lower portion and two on the top forming a trumpet shape. Because these vines can climb up to 50 feet high, flowers may not be obvious since they only bloom in full sun. Similar to yellow jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), flowers will only show up at the tops of trees.



Flattened seeds at time of release
Credits: Niels Proctor, UF/IFAS

very efficient in invading new areas.

The cat's claw vine, *Dolichandra unguis-cati*, is one that is frequently brought into our office for identification. Although it has pretty flowers, it is not a plant that

The fruit look like string beans, initially green turning dark brown in color as they ripen. Each fruit crack open to unleash about 50 seed pieces that are light and become airborne making them

Unless cat's claw is in flower or has fruit, it may be difficult to distinguish it from other common vines.

Leaves are arranged opposite from one another along the stem and are typically in pairs. The tendrils occur between the pair of leaflets and are unique due to the claws.

However, they fall off as the vine matures and may only be visible on new growth which is frequently too high to observe.

This plant is categorized by the IFAS Assessment of Non-Native plants as invasive and not recommended in the central zone of Florida and is listed as a caution/managed plant in north Florida. Based on individuals comments that have brought it in to our office, it is very aggressive here as well. The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) lists it as a category I invasive exotic so is a plant that will disrupt natural areas.

To control, the vine can be cut repeatedly to starve the plant as it resprouts from the root system. The plant has an underground root tuber that is very persistent. Treating the foliage of small plants with a systemic herbicide is effective as well but mature vines are often too tall for this treatment to work. The easier option is to cut the vine at ground level and immediately treat the stump with full strength glyphosate. This is a systemic herbicide and will help control the underground portion.

Other countries where it is also invasive are researching biological control agents like a leaf-tying moth, lace bugs, leaf-mining beetles, and seed feeding weevils.

Information and photos taken from <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr391>.



Close-up showing the sharp, hooked tips of the 3-pronged 'claw.'

Credits: Niels Proctor, UF/IFAS

Plant a Tree for Arbor Day By Larry Figart

Planting a tree correctly allows it to start growing and establishing itself immediately. A properly planted tree has a better chance of living a full useful life in your landscape. So, celebrate Arbor Day by planting a tree. If you do not have room in your yard perhaps a local school would appreciate the donation of a tree.

The rule of thumb when planting a tree used to be "plant the tree at the same level as it was growing in the container". If we follow this outdated advice, we may be dooming the new tree right from the start by planting the it too deep. An old forester friend of mine came up with the following slogan to use when planting trees. He says "**plant it high and it won't die, plant it low and it's sure to go**". If you remember



Tree placed correctly

that saying, and follow these easy steps, your tree will quickly become established in your landscape.

Steps to Planting A Tree

1. Locate the root flare
2. Remove all the soil in the container that may be covering the root flare.
3. Dig the hole slightly shallower than the root ball and as wide as possible.
4. Carefully remove the tree from the container.
5. Cut any potential girdling roots that are circling the root ball at the point where they start to curve.
**Recent research has shown that shaving the outside layer of the root ball away eliminates most root defects and promotes proper root establishment.
6. Backfill the hole while slowly adding water .
7. No amendments like fertilizer or manure should be added to the hole.
8. Add a thin layer of mulch around the tree, but not over the root ball.
9. Water the tree often. A two inch caliper tree needs four to six gallons of water daily for two weeks; every other day for two months, and then weekly until established.

Go to: <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/planting.shtml> for more info

What is Arbor Day By Larry Figart

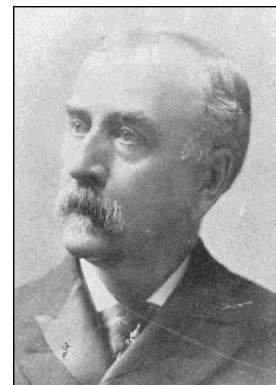
The first Arbor Day took place on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska. It was championed by J. Sterling Morton. He was a newspaper editor that moved to Nebraska from Detroit, Michigan in 1854. He believed that the treeless plains of Nebraska would benefit from the planting of trees. He set the example by planting orchards, shade trees and windbreaks on his family farm.

He not only wrote about the benefits of planting trees for farmers, but encouraged citizen groups and civic organizations to plant trees as well. You could say he was a role model for the modern day extension service.

Morton first proposed a holiday for the planting of trees as a member of Nebraska's State Board of Agriculture at a meeting on January 4, 1872. The holiday was set for April 10, 1872. The first Arbor Day included prizes for counties and individuals that planted the most trees on that day. It was a huge

success. An estimated one million trees were planted on that day.

In 1874, the Governor of Nebraska officially proclaimed Arbor Day as April 10th. In 1885 Arbor Day became a legal holiday in Nebraska and was celebrated annually on April 22, which is Morton's birthday. The Arbor Day concept soon spread to Kansas, Tennessee, Minnesota, and Ohio all proclaiming their own holidays to plant trees. Today, Arbor Day is celebrated in all fifty states. The dates coincide with the optimal tree planting season. In Florida, Arbor Day is the third Friday in January. For more information on Arbor day find it on the web at www.arborday.com.



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Have a gardening question?

Call a Master Gardener @ 255-7450
Monday through Friday
9AM till Noon
12:30PM till 3:30PM



A Day of Gardening By Terry DeValle



We are hosting “A Day of Gardening” on February 28th from 8:30am to 2:30pm to kick off the spring season. Please join us for this delightful day of gardening topics while you shop with local vendors to get ready for the growing season.

The cost is \$15 and the deadline to register is February 23rd. This fee will cover a light lunch, snacks and handouts. Please call 255-7450 for a registration form or request one via email at delvalle@coj.net.

To register using a credit card go to: <http://adayofgardening2015.eventbrite.com>.

Agenda

- 8:30 to 9:30am - Registration and Shopping
- 9:30-10:10am - Welcome & Easy Care Landscape Plants
- 10:10-10:45am: 1st Impressions - Curb Appeal Break
- 11:00-11:45am - Breakout Session 1 (select 1)
 - Plants for Backyard Ponds
 - Warm Season Vegetables for NE Florida
 - Blueberry Basics
- 11:45am-12:30pm - Lunch
- 12:30-1:15pm - Breakout Session 2 (select 1)
 - Success with Grow Buckets
 - The Facts about GMOs
 - Deciduous Fruit Trees for NE Florida
- Break
- 1:30-2:25pm: Busting Myths about Florida Trees
- 2:30: Adjourn

Once you have read this newsletter, turn “A New Leaf” and pass this information on to a friend.

Terry B. DeValle

Extension Agent-Environmental Horticulture

For individuals requiring special accommodations, please contact our office (904-255-7450) within a minimum of 5 working days of the program. For persons with hearing or speech impairments, when contacting our office please use the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).

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