



A NEW LEAF

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Duval County Extension

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November/December

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Enjoy the Fall Colors by Terry DeValle

Lots of plants develop flowers and leaf color in response to shorter days and cooler weather. A few examples of fall and winter flowering plants include chrysanthemums, poinsettias, holiday cactus, Mexican sage, Philippine violet, camellias, goldenrod, liatrus, and *Cuphea* candy corn. Going into winter these nectar sources are very important for our pollinators (see Camellia top right).



Foliage on some trees, shrubs and vines also change color as the chlorophyll breaks down and other pigments become dominant displaying shades of yellow, reds, oranges, and browns. Maples, hickories, crape myrtles, sweetgum, sweet shrub, winged sumac, dogwood, loblolly bay, black tupelo, Virginia creeper, poison ivy, muscadine grapes and oak leaf hydrangea (bottom right) are some local standouts. Enjoy the view whether you are hiking or driving.



Upcoming November/December Classes

Canning Classes are \$20 per person, pre-registration & pre-payment required. Call Jeannie to register. November/December Classes—Different products will be made on different days for Holiday Gifts. Check on the products when you call to register.

Upcoming Classes:

- Saturday, November 21st, Holiday Gifts—5 Deco Jars, 9 am – Noon
- Monday, November 23rd, Holiday Gifts—5 Deco Jars, 9 am—Noon
- Saturday, December 12th, Holiday Gifts—5 Deco Jars, 9 am – Noon
- Monday, December 14th, Holiday Gifts—5 Deco Jars, 9 am –Noon



Winter Workshop on Tuesday, December 15, 10am-12:30pm, Duval County Extension, 1010 N. McDuff, Make and Take Centerpiece from your Landscape, Gifts for the Gardener, and Recycled Gift Ideas. Cost is \$10 to attend. Pre-registration and pre-payment required by Dec. 10. Call Belinda to register.

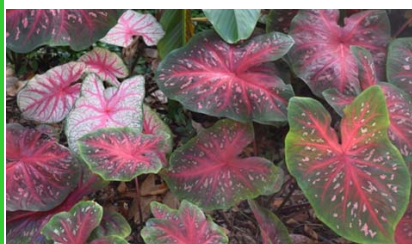
Happy Holidays from the Duval County Extension Staff

Things to do in November/December

By Terry DeValle

Flowers

- **Divide and replant** overgrown perennials now except for those that are in bloom.
- **Continue ten weeks** of short-day treatment for Christmas cactus which began in mid-October for blooms at Christmas. Make sure poinsettias are not exposed to exterior lights at night because



this interferes with flowering. Cover poinsettias in the event of a freeze.

- **Lift caladium tubers** as the leaves fade and store in a cool dry area.

Fruits and Nuts

- ◆ **Harvest persimmons** as they ripen. Astringent varieties must be left on the tree until they fully ripen but non-astringent types can be harvested when firm.
- **Harvest season for citrus** begins with Satsumas leading the way. These fruit are often ready even though peels are not completely orange so test one for sweetness.
- ◆ **Harvest pecans.** Beat the squirrels and harvest pecans as they ripen. If you don't have a tree, check local Farmers Markets for locally- grown pecans.

Lawns

- **Adjust sprinklers** to one day a week on November 1st, the *start of Eastern Standard Time*. Home properties that end in an odd number or with no address can irrigate on Saturday and those with even addresses on Sunday. Non-residential properties are on Tuesday. Turn sprinkler systems off when rainfall is adequate. There are several lawn diseases that thrive with cooler nights and moist conditions and irrigation when not needed only increases the problems. Established woody shrubs need water every two to three weeks if there is insufficient rainfall.
- **Keep up with lawn mowing**, if needed, and mow high going into the winter. This will help develop a strong root system that is more cold hardy. Use up all the gasoline in the lawn mower or drain to avoid mower problems next spring at the end of the mowing season.

- **Do not add nitrogen** fertilizers to lawns. If you missed the fall application, consider applying a fertilizer that contains potassium like a 0-0-16.

- **Got weeds?** Cool season weeds are popping up in plant beds and in lawns. Hand pull or spot treat with a post-emergence herbicide labeled for your lawn or plant beds. For information on weed control, go to <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP141>. It's a good time to control tough perennial weeds like torpedograss shown in photo as they go dormant



- ◆ **Monitor lawns** for large patch fungus (brown patch), take-all root rot, and pythium. Treat with a recommended fungicide if present. For more info: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/lh064>.

Trees & Shrubs

- **Remove leaves** as they drop from deciduous plants if they had a leaf spot disease to reduce disease problems next year. Otherwise, use them to mulch plant beds, in vegetable gardens, or compost piles.
- **Install new ornamentals** in the landscape now to give them a chance to establish roots before the heat kicks in next spring. Keep watered if weather is dry. Remember to plant them about 10% above the existing soil grade.
- **Avoid heavy pruning** now because it will stimulate new growth that is susceptible to the cold. It is okay to prune dead wood, diseased wood, and suckers coming from the plant base anytime of the year. Spring blooming plants should be pruned shortly after bloom and prune summer/fall blooming plants like Althea in late winter.

Vegetable Garden

- **Scout for pests** daily, especially caterpillars and aphids. Insecticidal soaps and oils will control most soft bodied insects. Bt (Dipel or Thuricide) is a good treatment for small caterpillars. Switch to spinosad for larger caterpillars. Avoid overhead irrigation to reduce disease problems.

What to Plant in November/December By Terry DeValle



'New Red Fire' leaf lettuce is both attractive and edible

Fall gardening is in full swing. This is the season for arugula*, beets*, broccoli*, Brussels sprouts, cabbage*, carrots*, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage*, collards*, English peas, kale*, kohlrabi*, leek*, lettuce, mustard*, onions*, parsley*, radish*, spinach, and turnips. Add to the list for December those with an *

listed above. Try growing leaf lettuce in a container and you can bring them in during a hard freeze.

Plant strawberries in November. Varieties include 'Chandler', 'Camarosa', 'Sweet Charlie' and 'Festival'. Plant in double rows and raised beds. Commercial growers cover soil with black plastic, but some home gardeners prefer to use an organic mulch like pine straw to prevent weeds and conserve moisture. Strawberries also grow well in containers.

There are many annuals for cool weather. For both November and December, plant carnation (China

doll), delphinium, dianthus, foxglove (digitalis), larkspur, lobelia, ornamental cabbage, ornamental kale, pansy, petunia, Shasta daisy, snapdragon and violas. Because a lot of vegetables are also attractive, consider using plants like Swiss chard or leaf lettuce in place of annuals. Remove old flowers on snaps, petunias, and pansies to encourage new blooms.



Aurora™ Light Purple Delphinium

Bulb-type plants include African lily (Agapanthus), amaryllis, anemone, Aztec lily, calla, crinum, daylily, freesia, hurricane lily, hyacinth, Iris spp., Ixia, kaffir lily, Lily spp, Moraea (African lily), narcissus, pineapple lily, shell ginger, snowflake (Nov. only), society garlic, spider lily, Star-of-Bethlehem, Ornithogalum spp., walking iris, ranunculus (buttercup), tritonia, tulip (Dec. only), voodoo lily (Dec. only), watsonia, and zephyr lily.

Loropetalum Decline By Terry DeValle



periodic pink flowers.

Loropetalum chinense var. *rubrum*, Chinese Witch Hazel, is a popular landscape plant that offers color in the landscape throughout the year because of the burgundy foliage and

The plant grows best in full sun and once established is drought tolerant. One problem that occurs frequently is a tip dieback which affects the new growth. Research conducted by UF/IFAS and University of Georgia show that this dieback is because of nutrient deficiencies, primarily copper (Cu). Some cultivars show few problems but 'Ruby' appears to be especially susceptible.

Affected plants do not look healthy and are in a state of decline plus the new growth is stunted. There may be other reasons for this decline so first determine if

plants where installed incorrectly or are not maintained properly (remember plant 10% above existing grade). Another fix would be to replace 'Ruby' with less susceptible cultivars like 'Burgundy', 'Plum Delight'™, 'Pizzazz'™, or 'Sizzlin Pink'.



If the decline is due to copper deficiency, foliar applications of copper sprays will help. Plants have not responded to copper soil applications. Based on research, the best option is to apply a copper/lime mixture to the leaves. Add 0.5 lbs powdered copper sulfate pentahydrate and 0.25 lbs fresh hydrated lime to ten gallons of water. Make sure to cover plants thoroughly. Apply no more than four applications per year and keep in mind that copper stains. Info and photo on right from <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ss556>.

Urban Gardening Highlights by Mary PUCKETT

Hope you are enjoying the cooler weather as much as we are. One of the keys to success is planting your crops early enough to get them established before the first heavy freeze. Starting out with transplants that are already growing gives you a 3 to 4 week advantage.

At the Urban Garden site we have been busy for the last 3 weeks getting our fall crops planted. The master gardeners have planted 12 beds. One is referred to as our “insectary” bed that not only provides diversity in floral structure to attract pollinators and other beneficial insects to the garden but adds beauty as well.

Those that received our July/August New Leaf issue can appreciate what our newly planted bed will develop into.



Insectary planted 09/20 includes: Alyssum, Angelonia, Dianthus Nasturtiums and Snapdragons.
“African Blue” Basil plant in forefront.

Our current plantings include the following vegetable crops:

Beet varieties planted include:
Blankoma and Red Ace

Broccoli varieties planted include:
Blue Wind, Arcadia and Waltham

- ◆ When planting your broccoli transplants, space them 12—18 inches apart.
- ◆ Fertilize with a complete fertilizer such as 3-4-4 or 10-10-10 for transplants and side-dress with nitro-

gen fertilizer when the plants are half grown.

- ◆ Provide ample soil moisture, especially as the heads develops.
- ◆ Harvest the central head when still tight and compact. Size varies with variety and growing conditions. Cut the central head when 4 to 8 inches in diameter and still compact with 5 to 6 inches of stem, but before it begins to loosen and individual flowers start to open (showing bright yellow).
- ◆ Removing the central head stimulates the side shoots.

Cabbage varieties planted include:
Farao and Caraflex

Greens planted include:
Red Pac Choi, Tatsoi, Champion Collards, Garnet Red Mustard, Toscano and Red Russian Kale and Rhubarb Swiss Chard.

On October 22nd, the Master Gardeners were busy planting 250 bare-root strawberry plants. The variety was, Chandler, *Fragaria x ananassa*, originated in California and is recommended for southern and coastal planting.

Chandler is a large, firm strawberry with good flavor. When happy, the plants will grow to be about 8 inches tall and spread up to 1 foot across.



- ◆ Spacing for strawberries average 10—18 inches apart.
- ◆ Two types of transplants are used:
Bare-root green-top plants: Widely available, but more difficult to establish in the field. Require overhead sprinkler irrigation during the hottest part of the day for the first 7-12 days after planting.
Containerized transplants: Require much less overhead irrigation for root establishment. Make planting holes approximately 2 to 3 inches deep to allow covering all roots, while setting the crowns of transplants at soil level.
- ◆ If frost or freeze is predicted, covering the plants with a lightweight blanket will help prevent the flowers or fruits from getting damaged.

More on Strawberries and Onions by Mary Puckett



One week before planting, raised rows were prepared for strawberry planting. Fertilizer applied to rows, drip irrigation added and plastic mulch laid.

Two pounds of 10-5-10 fertilizer (or equivalent) garden fertilizer with micronutrients (including boron) per 10' of row is recommended. We applied in a narrow, single band along the side of the row, keeping fertilizer away from roots.



Freshly planted Chandler's.



Vegetation growing just 2 days after planting.

By the end of October, we will have carrots, lettuces, radishes, turnips, snow peas, nasturtiums and calendulas growing.

In November, we will be planting our bulbing sweet onion. If you have not tried bulbing onions and want to, I would recommend checking with your favorite nursery to see if they are expecting any transplants and place your order. Once they start hitting the market, they go quickly.

- ◆ Transplants should be about the size of pencils in diameter and planted right away.
- ◆ Best grown on raised beds at least 4" high.
- ◆ A complete fertilizer with minor elements (10-10-10; 5-10-10; 5-10-15; 10-20-10) is suggested.

Make a trench in the top of the bed 4" deep, distribute fertilizer per label at initial planting. Follow-up every 3 weeks with a nitrogen-based fertilizer, such as ammonium nitrate. Make final application approximately 4 weeks before harvesting (neck starts feeling soft, more flexible)



- ◆ Transplants are planted 4 to 6 inches apart on raised rows. Do not plant too deep, or will have scallions. Plant 1" deep.
- ◆ Water the transplants immediately after planting to help establish them.
- ◆ Onions are shallow rooted, so irrigate frequently to keep soil moist and promote steady growth. As plants reach maturity, the soil should be kept less moist.
- ◆ Bulbs can take 4 to 5 months to mature. When tops of onions have fallen, they are fully mature.



Cooler temperatures make it a pleasure to spend time outside. Enjoy!

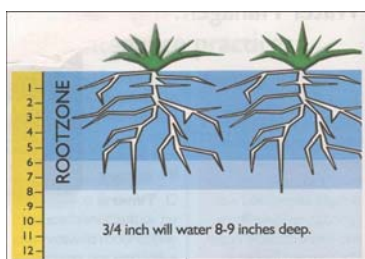
Resource:
Solutionsforyourlife.com.

Help to Save the Water

By Terry DeValle

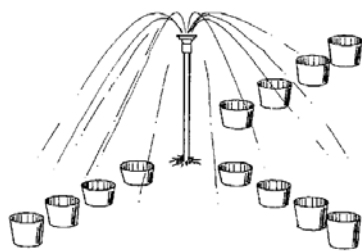
Did you know that 35% to 40% of potable water used by JEA clients is for irrigating plants? Water is a limited natural resource and we all need to do our part to conserve our drinking water.

Florida-Friendly Landscapes promote gardening practices that save water. One of the key principles is right plant, right place and encourages a homeowner to match plants to the site conditions (amount of light, dry or wet soils, mature plant size, etc.) so they require minimal water, pesticides and care.



Watering efficiently is another key principle. Plants should only be watered as needed. Apply 1/2" to 3/4" at each watering to encourage a deep root system. Irrigation

systems should be calibrated to determine how long irrigation systems should run to deliver that amount of water. To calibrate your system, place straight sided cans out in the landscape and run the zone for 15 minutes. Measure the amount of water in each can, total the amount and divide the total inches by the



number of cans to determine the average. Based on the average, calculate how long to run each zone to deliver between 1/2" to 3/4" of water. In general, for rotor zones, run for 45 to 60 minutes and spray

heads for 15 to 20 minutes to deliver between 1/2" to 3/4" of water. Run irrigation systems early in the morning (4 am to 7 am) when there is less wind to reduce waste.



irrigation except during droughts. If irrigation isn't

Turf and ornamental plants should be on different zones because they have different water requirements. Most established woody plants don't require supplemental

needed and they are on a separate zone, cut that zone back to zero so it doesn't run. Also, when there is adequate rainfall, turn the center control dial from auto to off. Sometimes the rainfall shutoff device will interrupt the cycle but once the corks inside dry out, the system can run even though the soil is wet.

Installing this expanding disk rain sensor can save 2,541 gallons of water per 1,000 square feet each year. If you have an in-ground irrigation system, you are required by law to have a functional rainfall shutoff device or a soil moisture sensor so it is important to test it to make sure it is still functional. For more info: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ae221>.



Irrigation zones that have traditional spray heads can be converted to



micro irrigation to save water. And if you want to reduce the amount of turf in your landscape, now is a great time to put in new landscape plants. If you replace turf with drought tolerant ornamentals and switch to low volume irrigation, you can save between 15,569 to 31,767 gallons of water/1,000 square feet per year.

In Florida, we receive over 50" of rainfall each year but it is not evenly distributed throughout the year. Rain-barrels are great at capturing excess rainfall and saving it for dry spells. Consider this, a 1" rainfall over a 1,000 square foot roof area will result in 600 gallons of collected water. In other words, the 55 gallon barrel in this photo will fill up quickly so a series of barrels that are connected to capture the overflow would be beneficial.

For other tips on saving water, go to http://www.gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/water/articles/ten_ways.shtml.



The Invaders Among Us By Larry Figart

When I think of the term “alien invader” I think of it as a plot of a science fiction story. Unfortunately it is an issue we are dealing with every day. You may be asking what does alien invader have to do with our Florida landscapes and why is Larry writing about it. Unfortunately Florida is being invaded by an alien of a different sort. The invaders are invasive plants. You may wonder what does “invasive plant” mean? The University of Florida defines an invasive plant as **“an introduced plant that causes harm to the environment, the economy, and/or human health. Often displacing native species, these invaders skew the delicate balance between animals, plants, and important processes such as water flow and fire”**. In other words it is a plant that does not naturally occur in our area and causes great harm to the environment by spreading uncontrollably and displacing native plants. The invasive plant most of us are aware of is Kudzu, a vine that envelops acres and acres of forest and shades it out.



Coral Ardisia Photo by Chris Evans, Bugwood.org

While a weed is any plant growing in a place where it's not wanted, an invasive weed has the potential to cause widespread change to the natural ecosystem. While all invasive plants are non-native, not all non-native plants are invasive. An example of this would be the camellia bush. It has been a staple in our landscape for many

years. It is native to Asia, yet has not been documented as spreading into natural ecosystems in Florida. Fortunately, most of the non-native trees and plants we use in our landscapes are not invasive. However, there are many trees and plants commonly found in our landscapes that are listed as invasive.

For this reason, the control of invasive plants starts in our own back (and front) yards. It is important that we know what is growing in our landscapes and determine if they are invasive or not. The University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences has an easy to use tool that can help us find out if the landscape plant we are growing could be invasive.

This tool is called the UF/IFAS Assessment of Non-native Plants. It can be found online at <http://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu>. It is easy to use and can help us identify the invasive risk of many trees and plants.

The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) is a non-profit organization that maintains its own list of invasive plants. The list can be found at <http://www.fleppc.org>. Some invasive landscape trees and shrubs that are very common include: Chinese Tallow, mimosa, and Chinese privet.

So you may be asking “what can I do?” The answer is easy. In order to stop the spread of invasive plants in Florida it is important that we remove invasive plants from our landscape.

Removing non-native invasive plants from our yards can eliminate a major source of invasion into natural areas. While the removal of these plants may be seen as a burden, the value of removing these invaders remains for years as a benefit to Florida's environment.

Most invasive plants can simply be pulled out of the ground and removed. Stumps of trees that are cut down can be treated with an herbicide to keep it from re-sprouting. Invasive plants can be replaced by plants that are native or with non-native plants that are not invasive. The University of Florida even has a publication that lists alternatives to invasive plants that includes plants that have a similar appearance. This publication is listed as ENH1206 and can be found online at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/EP/EP46700.pdf>.

Perhaps if you have already eliminated the invasive plants in your yard, you can help tackle invasive plants on our public lands. Many local parks have opportunities such as invasive removal work days. By identifying, and removing invasive plants in Florida we are contributing to the long term preservation of our natural areas.



Chinese Tallow

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Greater Jacksonville Agricultural Fair by Terry DeValle

Don't miss the Greater Jacksonville Agricultural Fair running from Nov. 4 through Nov.15 @ 501 Fairgrounds Place, next to The Jax Municipal Stadium.

Sure there are rides, games, animals and music but don't forget to visit the Exhibit Building. Master Gardeners will be on hand in front of the Extension Learning House to answer gardening questions, plus there is lots of educational information available. Tour the educational exhibits on growing lettuce, Urban Grow Buckets, Hydroponics, Microgreens, Termites, Invasive Plants and Aquaponics.

Get the kids involved by making a radish seed necklace to take home and plant once the seed germinates. Visit the Country Store to see what Master Gardeners have canned using local products. Squash pickles, fig preserves, pickled okra, blueberry lemon jam and more are available at the store.

The Jax Beekeepers Association are selling local honey and can offer advice on starting your own hive. Check out their hive at the fair and find the queen bee.

Junior Master Gardener posters are on display to show what they learned about beneficial insects.

Hours for the Exhibit Building on weekdays unless otherwise noted are from 5PM to 10PM, 3 PM to 10PM on Fridays, 10AM to 10PM on Saturdays and Sundays and 10AM to 10PM on 11/10 and Veterans Day. For details go to <http://www.jacksonvillefair.com/pb/Geninfo.html>.



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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