Upcoming Programs

⇒ **September 14th** from 1PM to 3PM @ Regency Square Library at 9900 Regency Square Blvd. FYN Part I: Learn the 9 steps to Create a Florida-Friendly Landscape. Also, learn tips about planting a fall vegetable garden. RSVP @ 387-8850.

⇒ **September 21st** from 1PM to 3PM @ Regency Square Library on 9900 Regency Square Blvd. Part II: Learn How to Maintain Your Landscape the Florida-Friendly Way.

⇒ Bonus: Learning about Ferns. RSVP @ 387-8850.

⇒ **October 2nd** from 10 AM to Noon @ Westside Regional Park at 7000 Roosevelt Blvd. Birds, Butterflies, and Beautiful Blooms, Come learn how to attract and keep them fluttering in your back yard plus everything you need to know to start a wildlife habitat. RSVP @ 387-8850.

⇒ **October 2nd** from 10AM to Noon @ Duval County Extension Office. Learn about fall vegetable gardening. See page 4 for details. There is a $5.00 charge to attend. RSVP @ 387-8850. Limited seating available.

⇒ **October 7,9,16,21,23 & 30th** at Trout Creek Park, Orangedale. The Florida Master Naturalist Program will teach classes about freshwater ecosystems, key plants and wildlife, and the role of humans in shaping the environment. Course fee is $200 and the deadline is 9/23. Register at www.masternaturalist.ifas.ufl.edu.

⇒ **October 14** from 1PM to 3PM @ Regency Square Library at 9900 Regency Square Blvd. Waste Not, Want Not: Learn simple and easy techniques to recycle trash into treasure for your landscape and potted plants. Plus, learn about trees for fall color and pruning tips.

Inside This Issue

- What to Plant in Sept/Oct p2
- Garden Check List p2
- Tree Tips p3
- Pruning Palms p3
- Urban Gardening Update p4
- Gear Up for Fall Gardening p4
- The Truth About Compost p5
- Herb of the Month p5
- Lawn Problems p6
- After the Storm p6
- SURVEY p7

Don’t get dropped!
Complete survey on page 7 and return before you forget.

Employment Opportunity—Affirmative Action Employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, IFAS, Florida A & M, UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAMS, AND BOARDS OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COOPERATING.
What to Plant in September and October

Plant strawberries in late October through November. Varieties include Florida 90, Tioga, Sequoia, Florida Belle, Dover, Tufts, Sweet Charlie and Chandler. Plant in rows 36” apart and 12” apart within the row. Elevate rows 6” above existing soil to insure good drainage. Use pine straw to reduce weed problems and slugs.

For instant color plant marigolds and garden chrysanthemums or wait until October to plant cool season flowers lie dianthus, pansy, petunia, shasta daisy, snapdragon, viola, million bells, status, Thunbergia, flowering kale and cabbage.

Bulbs to plant include amaryllis, Aztec lily, calla, elephant ears, grape hyacinth, iris, lachenalia (leopard lily), narcissus, snowflake, watsonia, and zephyr lily. In October add to the list African lily (Agapanthus), gladiolus, kaffir lily, lily, marica (walking iris), moraea, society garlic, spider lily, anemone, hyacinth, pineapple lily and star-of-Bethlehem.

Buy spring flowering bulbs in October (narcissus, tulips, etc.) and store them in the refrigerator for about 60 days. Plant bulbs immediately upon removal. Keep them away from ripening fruit during storage.

Garden Check List

♦ Winter and Spring flowering trees and shrubs have set their flower buds for next year so don’t prune them now. This includes Japanese magnolias, Ashe magnolias, fringe trees, redbuds, azaleas, wisteria, spireas, camellias, and poinsettias.

♦ Poinsettias need their last fertilization late in September. Apply 1 Tbsp. of a general fertilizer (8-8-8) per foot of plant height. Keep them away from light in the evening so they will develop flowers.

♦ Place Christmas cactus in a dark area each night from 5PM to 8AM each day starting in mid October. Continue this short day treatment for 6 weeks and then return to its normal spot to enjoy. Flowers should appear in about 10 weeks from start of treatment.

♦ Fertilize lawns and plant beds by late September. Use a fertilizer that has at least 50% of the nitrogen in a water insoluble form. Slow release/water insoluble potassium is also desirable because it too will quickly leach with heavy rains. Apply at the rate of one pound nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of area. Established trees (over 3 years in landscape) do not need additional fertilizers if surrounding areas receive applications.

♦ Spot treat with herbicides to control weeds. Do not treat the entire lawn with an herbicide unless the weed(s) are throughout the area. Many herbicides weaken the lawn and make it more difficult for them to compete with the weeds. Mow at the recommended height and remove no more than 1/3 of the grass blade at each mowing. Some control may be possible by using a two or three way mix containing 2,4-D, MCPP, and/or Dicamba such as Spectracide Weed Stop, Bayer Advanced Lawn Southern Weed Killer, or Ortho Weed B-Gone for lawns. Read the label and make sure it is safe to use on your specific variety of lawn. ‘Floratam’, a commonly used variety of St. Augustinegrass is often excluded from the label. Some weeds are almost impossible to control with traditional lawn herbicides and will require more drastic measures. A broad-spectrum herbicide such as glyphosate may be another option to control tough weeds like crabgrass, bermudagrass, Virginia buttonweed, Florida betony, alligator weed, and doveweed in St. Augustinegrass. Use an edger or shovel to cut the runners of the St. Augustinegrass around the area to be treated. Glyphosate is a systemic herbicide and this prevents the material from being transferred outside of the treated area.

Virginia buttonweed
In the movie "Gremlins", the main character receives an exotic pet for Christmas. The situation starts to deteriorate quickly when the cute harmless pet starts to multiply uncontrollably, turning into voracious demons occupying and destroying parts of the town. The heroes of the movie are forced to go to drastic lengths in order to protect the rest of the town. Unfortunately for many land managers in Florida this story is being played out in real life. In their case the enemies are not cute, exotic Mogwai, but non-native, exotic, plants.

The definition of a non-native invasive plant is that it is a plant that can flourish on its own and expand into plant communities where it is not historically found. Invasive plants can displace native plants and alter natural processes such as fire and water flow. How did they get here? The answer, for many of our invasive plants is that we invited them here. A well known example is Kudzu. It was originally brought to the U. S. as an inexpensive livestock forage, and erosion control. It now exists in patches as large as 100 acres and can grow as much as one foot a day.

While Kudzu may be the most well known, there are several other "Gremlins" affecting North Florida. Air potato vine was introduced into Florida from Africa in 1905. It quickly grows tall enough to overtop and shade out many native trees and plants. Japanese climbing fern was introduced as an ornamental because of its lacy foliage. It quickly escaped into the wild and is threatening native understory plants with its dense foliage. Cogongrass was introduced as livestock forage and erosion control. It has done its job well. However, it creates acres of thick cogongrass patches crowding out many native plants. It is listed as one of the 10 most invasive plants in the world. Chinese Tallow has been called the North Florida Melaleuca because of its tendency to crowd out native tree species and create dense monocultures of Chinese tallow.

Land managers in Florida have few weapons against invasive exotic plants. Millions of dollars are spent annually in labor and herbicide application. Money is also spent in trying to locate natural enemies of these plants in their native range to be used as biological control.

Homeowners can help in the effort to eliminate invasive plants by following three steps. First, learn to recognize invasive plants that may grow in your area. The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council maintains a list of those plant species it considers invasive. It ranks them as category I, or category II based on their ability to alter plant communities. Second, do not plant species that may be able to escape cultivation and grow into our natural areas. Finally, remove plants in your landscape that are considered invasive, especially category I listed plants. For further information on invasive plants in Florida, visit the F.L.E.P.P.C. on the web at fleppc.org.

**Pruning Palms**

It's an active hurricane season and palms pruners are active. Check out these examples ...does the far right example look familiar? Remove dead and dying lower fronds and fruits to reduce the risk of these becoming hazards. Don't remove live healthy fronds and keep those fronds that are growing horizontal or upright. Removing healthy leaves could create nutrient deficiencies.
Gear Up For Fall Planting

Ready to plant the fall garden but just don’t know what crops to grow? Here’s a few ideas to get you started. You should be able to find plants and seeds at your local nursery. Here are a few of the recommended fall crops: (more information may be found at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CROP</th>
<th>VARIETY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beets</td>
<td>Early Wonder, Detroit Dark Red, Cylindra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>Early Green Sprouting, Waltham 29, Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Gourmet, Marion Market, Red Acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>Snowball Strains, Snowdrift, Imperial 10-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>Rea Sails (leaf), Bibb (butterhead), Valmaine (romaine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions</td>
<td>Shallots (multipliers), Excel (bulbing), White Portugal (bunching)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radish</td>
<td>Early Scarlet Globe, Champion, Sparkler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinach</td>
<td>Olympia, Bollmsdale, Longstanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The future of the Urban Gardening Program, we hope to build our involvement in the community by getting more gardeners into our program. We also have a demonstration site that will soon have a Verti-Gro unit, hydroponics, and different variety trials. Feel free to come by our site at the end of Superior Street to see the latest in vegetable gardening. I look forward to being a reliable source of information for the community.

Sincerely,
Sara Cimbalik
Urban Gardening Program Assistant

New to the Community? Don’t have space to grow your own veggies?

Contact Mary Puckett at the Duval County Extension Office to inquire about getting your own gardening plot thru the Urban Garden Program, 387-8850
The Truth About Compost!

If you've ever wondered if composting of horse manure with wood shavings is good or bad, we've got the answers. Horse manure along with bedding (such as sawdust, wood shavings or straw) contain the carbon and nitrogen necessary for successful composting. The challenge is to ensure the proper proportions of the materials. Different types of organic materials compost differently. You'll need to customize the process to fit your specific combination of manure, bedding, and other organic materials. You can find the best mixture by developing a clear understanding of the process, accurately measuring materials, and going through some trial and error. Here's a short test to do just to see if you have enough or too much air space.

Five-Gallon Bucket Test  **Materials needed:**
- five-gallon pail
- one-gallon pail
- typical mix of materials added to the compost pile (horse manure, wood shavings, straw, etc.)

Fill the five-gallon pail one-third full with a mixture of typical compost materials. Drop the pail 10 times from a height of six inches onto a concrete floor or sidewalk. Be careful not to spill any of the compost materials.

Add more material to fill the five-gallon pail two-thirds full. Drop the pail 10 times from a height of six inches.

Fill the five-gallon pail up to the top. Drop the pail 10 times from a height of six inches. Fill the five-gallon pail to the top once again. Add water to the five-gallon pail, keeping track of how much you can fit in before it overflows. If you can add 2-1/2 to 3 gallons of water, you have adequate free air space. If not, you need to add more bulking material, such as straw, coarse wood chips, or shredded bark. If you can add more than 3 gallons of water, you have too much free air space. The particle size must be reduced by shredding or grinding the compost materials or by mixing finer materials into the compost.

Retest new mix. Happy Composting

Part Time Job Opening

The Urban Gardening Program is looking for an individual to work 20 hours a week. Requirements include operation of a small tractor with tiller and mower, rototiller, and lawnmower; light maintenance work on the equipment; prepare and maintain community garden plots by mowing and tilling; and perform other garden related chores. For more information contact Mary Puckett at 387-8850.

**Herb of the Month**

**Borage, Borago officinalis**

Borage is an annual that can be seeded in the fall or spring. Plant the seeds thickly 1/4 of an inch deep. Germination takes about 7-10 days. The seedlings should be thinned to 6-12 inches apart. In the winter the plant likes full sun and increase shade in the springtime. Borage is a spreading plant with white hairy bristles. It produces blue or purple starlike flowers. The flowers can be used as garnish in salads and beverages. The small tender greens have a cucumber like taste and odor and can be sautéed, steamed, or added to cheese, poultry, or anything else you desire!

**Fall Work Shop**

The annual fall Urban Gardening Workshop will be held on Saturday October 2, 2004 from 10:00 AM-12:00 noon at the Duval County Extension office auditorium located at 1010 N McDuff Ave. Jacksonville, FL. Participants must Pre-Register by September 29, 2004 by calling 387-8850. The workshop will be capped at 45 people. Participants will learn about the fall vegetable garden crops. They will get to take home some seedlings of different varieties after transplanting them into cell packs. Cost will be $5 to cover materials. Hope to see you all there!
**Lawn Problems**

Frequent showers along with other stresses tend to bring about problems in the landscape. One that is showing up because of all the rain is take-all root rot, Stenotaphrum secundatum. The specifics about the biology of this disease are unknown but it occurs on all warm season turfgrasses. Affected areas are irregular patches of 8 to 24" in diameter or larger. There is a mixture of yellow and dead grass. Examine the roots to determine if your lawn has this disease. Affected roots are very short, black and rotted. The runners, stolons, may also have black spots and begin to rot. There are no controls once the symptoms become evident. Manage the affected lawn by practicing good mowing, fertilization, and watering practices. Banner, Bayleton, Eagle, Rubigan or thiophanate methyl may be helpful if used preventatively.

Another disease that may show up now with the lower night temperatures is brown patch, *Rhizoctonia solani*. There are distinct patches of yellow to brown-colored turf usually in a circular pattern but mowing practices may change the normal pattern. Examine the basal portion of leaves where they attach to the rhizome. The leaves are easily pulled apart and the basal leaf area is rotted and brown. Do not mistake this disease with phenoxy herbicide injury (2,4-D). With this herbicide injury, the grass may pull apart but the leaf base is not dark and rotted. Control measures are to avoid high nitrogen fertilizers that are quick release products. Use a balanced fertilizer with equal amounts of nitrogen and potassium. Irrigate as needed and only when due is present, preferably in the early morning hours. Fungicides will have some effect but mostly will prevent it from spreading.

**After the Storm**

Hurricane Frances created havoc in Duval County. Soils are saturated and some trees are leaning just waiting for the next storm to topple. Homeowners should access these trees to determine if they are a hazard to structures, power lines, or automobiles. It's expensive to take trees down, but it's more expensive to repair structures or replace cars. Here's a checklist of things to do in your landscape after the storm.

- Clean up all debris on lawns and in plant beds. This will help to dry out saturated soils.
- Leaning trees: If leaning, small trees can be straightened and staked. Do not plant deeper than they were originally growing and get rid of any air pockets. Leave stakes in place for up to one year. Trees may require more water in dry weather so treat them like a newly transplanted tree. Large trees may not survive because of damage to the root system.
- Check trees for cracks or splits in the trunk or major limbs. Split branches can be removed but splits in the trunk can't be repaired and the trees should be removed. When removing branches, make cuts outside of the branch bark ridge and the trunk collar. If branches are heavy, make the 1st cut 1/3 way through the branch on the underside 15" out from the trunk. Make the second cut downward on top 17" out from the trunk to severe the branch. The last cut is made as shown above and will leave a short nub.