



The Marion Gardener

Solutions for a beautiful landscape

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Published by Norma Samuel
University of Florida IFAS
Marion County Horticulture Agent

Timely Gardening Tips for MARION COUNTY
by Master Gardener, Jo Leyte-Vidal

The mail box is filled with colorful seed catalogs which push us to get excited about spring vegetable planting and adding new flowering plants to existing beds. Before mail ordering seeds or purchasing transplants at the garden centers sit down and plan on paper.

Begin vegetable seeds in flats this month so they can be transplanted soon after February 14th. Also be prepared to protect the new transplants from a frost with cloches made of gallon milk jugs with their bottoms removed. Sow beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, chard, collards, endive, lettuce, tomatoes, and peppers.

Monthly Newsletter

January 2011

WILLOW (*Salix* sp.) AS A PROPAGATION AID

by Master Gardener, Inez Dickson

My first knowledge about willow being an aid to propagation was from my daughter in California. She has huge curly willow (*Salix matsudana*) trees around her home. Of course, I had to have one and brought a clipping home. I also have a Carolina willow or coastal plain willow (*Salix caroliniana*) that is native to Florida and the Carolinas.

Our Master Gardeners toured Angel Gardens in Alachua County, where host, Pam Greenewald, told us that she uses a willow solution for propagation of her roses, and that further stimulated my interest. Here's what I found out:

Indole-3-butyric acid (IBA) is a plant hormone in the auxin family and is an ingredient in many commercial plant rooting horticulture products. This chemical may be extracted from any *Salix* (willow) genus. Willow has been used by early American natives for many things, including propagation. Sydney Park Brown, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist – Consumer Horticulture, said: "IBA – the rooting hormone naturally found in willow bark is highly valued as a propagation aid."

Ilene Sternberg wrote in her article, *Willow Magic*, that you can easily root a variety of plants by gathering about two cups of pencil thin willow branches cut to 1-3 inch lengths. Steep twigs overnight in a half-gallon of boiling water. Refrigerated liquid can be kept for up to two months in a jar with tight-fitting lid. She suggests that you label it, so you won't confuse it with your homemade moonshine. Soak cutting you wish to root overnight or water the soil in which you have planted your cuttings with two applications. Make a new batch for each use. You can also use lukewarm water and let your willow twigs soak 24 - 48 hours. Other recipes are available on the internet.

I found that the willow tree is an exciting plant, with many other uses. But that's another story!

Editor's Note: I highly recommend that you **DO NOT** transport plant material across State lines or when traveling abroad without getting it inspected and certified as clean by the proper authorities. The movement of plant materials from one part of the country to the next, or one country to another, account for many of the exotic invasive pests that we have today. Eradication of invasive species can cost millions of dollars and can have a negative impact on the importation or exportation of a particular commodity.

**Timely Gardening Tips
for MARION COUNTY
Continued**

Plant carnations, pansies, petunias, Shasta daisies, crinum lilies, agapanthus, and gloriosa lily.

Plant camellias, fruit trees, and bare root roses. Be sure to check that the roses are grafted on Fortuniana or Dr. Huey root stock.



Got Questions?

What does 4-H have to offer my child? When is the best time to prune crepe myrtles? How can I make money off 10 acres of land? What is the difference between type 1 and type 2 diabetes?

uf/ifas marion county
EXTENSION SERVICE
We Have Answers

“It’s beginning to look a lot like...” citrus season

by Florida Division Plant Industry

When the more northern regions of the United States turn white with a blanket of snow, Florida turns orange from winter citrus production. During the 2007-2008 season, Florida accounted for 70 percent of the nation’s citrus production. This is an impressive accomplishment considering Florida’s experience with citrus diseases such as [canker](#), [greening](#) and [black spot](#). In order to keep Florida at the top of the nation’s citrus production, [DPI](#) works to keep citrus and citrus producers safe from diseases.

Many Floridians ship citrus fruits to their friends and family from their backyards or local groves during the holidays. Because Florida is battling citrus diseases, the USDA and FDACS/DPI are regulating the movement of citrus within and outside of the state.



USDA Certificate for Citrus Fruit Shipment

In order to ship backyard citrus fruit out of state, homeowners should take their fruit to a commercial packinghouse certified by the USDA to decontaminate their fruit. All citrus fruit crossing the state line (in plane, train, car, by mail, etc.) must be accompanied by a USDA certificate. Fruit can be shipped freely within the state of Florida.

It is important to note that citrus fruit purchased from grocery stores still has to go through the same decontamination process as backyard citrus fruit, which means it still must be accompanied by a USDA certificate in order to leave the state. If you are interested in buying gift fruit from a business to send, make sure your fruit will be shipped with the USDA certificate from the business.

Also, please note that no citrus trees or citrus plant parts (excluding fruit) can be moved across state lines by mail or any mode of transportation. In addition, under the citrus canker quarantine, fresh citrus cannot be shipped to any citrus producing state or territory, including AZ, CA, HI, LA, TX, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

There are six commercial packinghouses certified by the USDA to decontaminate homegrown fruit. These can be found at <http://fldpi.wordpress.com/>.

If you have any questions, please contact our Citrus Helpline at 888-397-1517, or e-mail dpi-blog@doacs.state.fl.us.

Source: <http://fldpi.wordpress.com/>

GARDENING SERIES ON THE WAY

by Urban Horticulture Agent, Norma Samuel

As I write this article I dread to think what the weather will bring us temperature wise over the next few months. It is now only mid-December and we are already experiencing record lows.

Be not dismayed. Spring will be here before you know it. So, what better way to prepare, than by attending the “Gardening for Dummies” Series, a class designed to help novice gardeners and newcomers to Marion County be successful at what can be a challenging feat for many, if they do not have the correct information. This is the sixth series and participants are always delighted at how much their gardening knowledge has increased. They also usually have a long list of items to complete in the garden because many of their gardening practices were incorrect.

The series will be taught by County Extension Agents and Master Gardeners and promises to be practical and informative. Participants are encouraged to bring specimens of plants, weeds, insects, and diseases for identification, and any gardening questions they would like to have answered.

Topics to be covered: **Organic Vegetable Gardening** – practical information for a bountiful harvest. **Lawn Care** – tips to achieve a beautiful lawn. **Fruit Trees for Marion County** – increase your edible landscape options. **Pests and Good Guys in the Florida Garden** – learn to identify and control common pest problems in the garden and know which insects are beneficial to keep around. **Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL)** - tips for creating and maintaining Florida-Friendly landscapes, explore the FFL website, understand the new landscape ordinances, and learn how to install a micro-irrigation system. **Pruning Trees and Shrubs** – correct pruning techniques to maintain plant health. **Sensible Fertilizer Techniques** – Learn to “Be Wise When You Fertilize”. Hands-on information to ensure proper use and safety. **Flowering Plants for Marion County** – plants that add color to the landscape and require minimal care.

The classes will be held at UF/IFAS Marion County Extension Auditorium, 2232 NE Jacksonville Road, in Ocala 34470, February 7 – 11 from 6:00 – 8:30 pm. The cost is \$25 per person or \$40 per couple (non-refundable) for the entire series to cover cost of reference materials and light snacks. The registration deadline is Monday, January 24. Space is limited so register early. To register by mail make your check payable to Marion County EAC and mail to address above.

The class flyer can be found at: http://www.marioncountyfl.org/CountyExtension/pdf/Ag_Gardening%20for%20Dummies%20Spring%202011.pdf or contact Cindy Steinke at 352-671-8400, if you need additional information or to contact UF/IFAS Marion County Master Gardeners.

What’s Bugging You?

Find out what local residents are calling in about.

When can I prune my crape myrtles, hydrangeas, and cold damaged plants?

Stop! It’s not time to prune. Anne Lambrecht, MG has prepared an in-depth article that will be published in the February issue on pruning. However, since pruning was one of the most common questions in the Plant Clinic in December, I just wanted to advise you to put the pruning shears and saws down until further notice. Yes, many things in the garden look brown, and unsightly now, but it is too early to prune. You will only be stimulating new growth, that will not get time to harden before the next freeze and will die back again. So when can you prune? Prune only after you’ve read Anne’s column.



Items below are available for purchase at the UF/IFAS Marion County Extension Service. Please come to see these environmentally-friendly products.



RESERVE THE DATE

UF/IFAS Marion County Master Gardener Spring Festival - March 12 & 13. Over 70 garden vendors will be onsite with plants and many garden related items for purchase. Spread the word to your family and friends. Last year we had over 9,000 attendees. This year we plan for it to be bigger and better. Look for more information in next month’s newsletter.



UPCOMING LECTURES/EVENTS:

Educational seminars and events are presented by UF/IFAS Extension Agents and or Master Gardeners.

JANUARY

Florida Yards & Neighborhoods

January 6, 2011
10:30 am
Bellevue Library

Florida Yards & Neighborhoods

January 11, 2011
2:00 pm
Freedom Library

Gardening for Dummies Series

February 7-11, 2011
6:00—8:30 pm

Place: Marion County Extension Service
2232 NE Jacksonville Road
Ocala 34470

(352) 671-8400

\$25 per person/\$40 per couple

Registration is required and due by January 24, 2011.

Please join us for five nights of classes covering topics such as Organic Vegetable Gardening, Lawn Care, Fruit Trees for Marion County, Pests & Good Guys, Florida-Friendly Landscaping™, Pruning Trees & Shrubs, Plant Identification, Sensible Fertilizer Techniques, and Flowering Plants for Marion County.

FEBRUARY

Palms in the Landscape

February 3, 2011
10:30 am
Bellevue Library

Ask Your Master Gardener - Spring Veggies and Flowers

February 8, 2011
2:00 pm
Freedom Library

Ask Your Master Gardener - Spring Veggies and Flowers

February 12, 2011
2:00 pm
Library Headquarters—Ocala

Ask Your Master Gardener - Spring Veggies and Flowers

February 15, 2011
2:00 pm
Dunnellon Library

Ask Your Master Gardener - Spring Veggies and Flowers

February 19, 2011
2:00 pm
Marion Oaks Library

TOO, TOO MANY

by Kathleen Patterson, Florida Yards & Neighborhood Coordinator

Recently, I and several Master Gardener/Florida Yards and Neighborhood Volunteers had the opportunity to evaluate landscapes for Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Certification. All we managed to say at each home we visited was wow, what happened here? The FYN yard certification program encourages homeowners to practice good landscaping practices following the nine principles.

These nine principles include right plant-right place; fertilize appropriately; water efficiently; manage yard pests responsibly; mulch; recycle; protect the waterfront; attract wildlife and reduce stormwater runoff. Plants should be placed according to site conditions, sun/shade, soil evaluation, and planted with adequate spacing for the mature size of the plant. NOT, because they look nice now.

These landscapes had layers of plants. Tall plants in front of short plants, grasses in front of plants, grasses planted too close together. My favorite was the home that had 10 saw palmettos planted in a space that should have had no more than 3. We found azaleas in full sun, trees planted too close to the house, and a myriad of other problems.

These landscapes were not Florida-Friendly in any manner. Plants were crammed together, inappropriate plant materials were used as foundation plantings. Most of these homes had very low windows and podocarpus or Feijoa were planted in front of the windows. These plants can reach heights of over ten feet tall. One homeowner stated that he had already pruned the podocarpus several times and he had only lived there about ninety days.

Oh my goodness - I was in shock as were my volunteers. This landscaper needs to be educated on exactly what Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ is. Plants should be low maintenance so little to no pruning is required. Plants should be beyond the drip line of the roof so that they may benefit from rainfall, thereby reducing the need for supplemental irrigation, mulch should never be placed near the stem of the plant or up against the foundation of the home. Newly planted trees should have a basin or berm that may be filled with water to adequately water the tree.



I am still questioning the sanity of the landscaper. What was he thinking? In a year's time, these landscapes would be so overgrown you wouldn't be able to see the house for the plants. Plants would be competing for water, air, space, and light. Frankly, many would be dead for lack of room to grow.

Well, I think I have grumbled enough and you get the idea. But as they say....."a picture is worth a thousand words" so enjoy the photo! And call me if you have a problem such as this with your landscape. We are here to help!

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