

A New Leaf

Volume 5, Issue 3

May/June 2004

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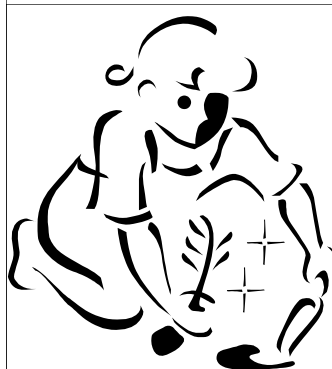
Summer begins June 21

Upcoming Programs For Spring

Become a Florida Friendly Landscape Gardener by attending a 2 part class on May 13 and June 2 at the Duval County Extension Office on 1010 N McDuff Ave. On May 13 from noon to 3PM, learn how to become a Florida Friendly Landscape Gardener. Special focus will be on ferns, right tree/right place, common landscape mistakes, and easy color options. On June 2 from 10AM to 1PM, learn how to maintain a Florida Friendly yard in half the time. Special features include ABC's of Landscape and Tree Care, Antique Roses (Linda Hertz), and IPM. Antique roses will be available for purchase. To become certified, you must attend both classes. Call Becky @ 387-8850 to register and the cost to attend is \$2.00 per class (\$4.00 total for both) which can be paid at the

door.

Landscape Makeover Workshop will be held on Thursday June 17 from 9:30AM to 1PM. This workshop will be held at the Mandarin Garden Club on 2892 Loretta Road. Topics include design tips, create a tropical flare, plants for the heat, plant options for problem areas, and ground covers in place of turf. Tour demo gardens to get more design ideas and a look at some great native plants. Registration deadline is June 15 and the cost is \$5.00. Call Becky @ 387-8850 to register.



Master Naturalist Program @ Duval County Extension Office in June — The Coastal Systems Module will be offered June 3, 4, 10, 11, 18, 25 at the Duval County Extension office on 1010 N. McDuff Ave. This program is for adults who want to learn more about Florida's environment. Individuals as well as educators and those in the eco-tourism business can benefit. Topics include: ecosystems (continental shelf to beyond dunes), key plants and wildlife, and the role of humans in shaping the environment. Each module includes: classroom presentations, field trips, and practical interpretation. Advance registration is required. Course fee \$200. For registration go to the website at www.masternaturalist.ifas.ufl.edu. For more information email the instructor at wyn-inger@attbi.com. or call her at 220-0232.

Fungus That Causes Sudden Oak Death in Florida

by Larry Figart, Duval County Urban Forester

What is Sudden Oak Death?

Sudden Oak Death is a disease of oaks and related species that is caused by the fungus *Phytophthora ramorum*. The disease affects not only oaks but also other plants including azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias and maples. It currently has been found on 40 different plant species. Up until the recent past the fungus was limited in the U.S. to Northern California, and Oregon.

Why is Florida Concerned?

California nursery inspectors discovered on March 12, 2004 the fungus that causes Sudden Oak Death in two large commercial nurseries in Southern California. The two nurseries, Monrovia Growers, Azusa, California, and Specialty Plants, Inc., a direct-mail company out of San Marcos, California had shipped quantities of potentially infected stock to many states around the country, including Florida. The State of Florida immediately ordered all nursery plants from Monrovia Growers quarantined and also stopped all shipments originating from California Nurseries from entering the State. Over 100 samples from the quarantined plants in Florida were analyzed for the fungus. To date samples from five nurseries in Florida have tested positive for the fungus, one in Tallahassee and four in N.E. Florida. All of the samples that tested positive were varieties of Camellia.

What are the Symptoms?

Symptoms on the foliage look like leaf scorch or sunburn. The lesions are brown with a bull's-eye effect with dark brown centers and lighter edges. The edges of the lesions are diffuse or fuzzy. In older infections, the leaf lesions can progress down the leaf petiole into the stems causing leaf-drop, stem lesions, and dieback. To view pictures of the symptoms and for additional

information, you can visit the Department of Agriculture Web site at:



www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/enpp/pathology/sod-up.html.

What do I need do?

Anyone who purchased a plant in the genera of camellia, rhododendron (azalea), or viburnum in 2003 or 2004 originating from Monrovia Nurseries in California (distinctive green plastic pot with white lettering) or other California nurseries, that are showing symptoms of the disease should contact your local County Extension office for further instructions. Do not dig up, or move the plant. The Department of Agriculture can also be reached at their toll-free helpline number 888-397-1517.

What about my Oak trees?

Any affected plants found in the nurseries and those within ten feet of the affected plants have been destroyed. At the present time plant inspectors are surveying local plants in the vicinity of the affected nurseries. It is believed that the disease has been confined to the nurseries, however, the second level of response is underway and will involve ongoing and extensive public education and outreach programs to identify any plants that may have been moved from the garden centers or introduced into the Florida landscape.

Changes to Some Atrazine Labels

Before buying or applying atrazine, check the label for changes. Some labels have been changed to give specific date restrictions for application. Revised labels state that atrazine products may not be applied between April 15 and October 1. If applied for spring weed control, apply another application at least 30 days after the previous application but not after April 15. Apply no more than 2 applications per year. Homeowner products such as the 43% atrazine product and atrazine weed and feed products do not have these timing restrictions at this time.

Flowers & Vegetables for May and June

Cool season plants will begin to decline and should be replaced with those that can tolerate the heat. Annuals



for May planting include calliopsis, celosia, coleus, crossandra, ex-acum, gaillardia, gazania, hollyhock, impatiens, kalanchoe, mari-gold, nicotiana, ornamental pepper, pentas, portulaca, salvia, thunbergia, torenia, verbena, vinca (periwinkle), and zinnia. In June it's too late to plant those listed above that are underlined.

To keep annuals blooming, fertilize monthly with a 6-6-6 or 8-8-8- type fertilizer at a rate of 1 1/2 or 3 pounds per 100 sq.ft. Marigolds, vinca, and pentas are

exceptions to this rule and should be fertilized less frequently and at lower rates.

Vegetables to plant in May and June include eggplant, lima beans, okra, peanuts, southern peas, and sweet

potatoes (from cuttings called slips). If plants are not producing fruit, consider the following.

- Tomatoes not setting fruit could be because of night temperatures. Optimum night temperatures are from 59 to 68°F for pollination to occur. Also, fruit set will drop when day temperatures are above 90°F unless growing a heat-tolerant tomato.
- Some plants like squash and cucumbers depend on bees for pollination. If you don't see

bees working the plants, be industrious and transfer pollen with a small paint



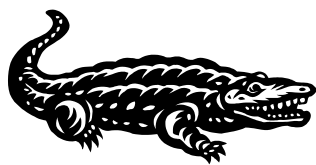
brush from the male flower (no fruit attached) to the female flower.

- Lush green, vibrant plants but no fruit. It could be too much nitrogen fertilizer and/or not enough sun.

Bulbs to plant in May include achimenes, allium, alstroemeria, Aztec lily, begonia, blood lily, caladium, gladiolus, kaffir lily, moraea (African lily), spider lily, tiger flower, walking iris, and watsonia. Don't plant those that are underlined in June but add to the list the butterfly lily.

Wildlife Happenings in May and June

May Events:



- Loggerhead and green sea turtles begin nighttime nesting on sandy beaches.
- Painted buntings nest through summer in northeast Florida.
- Courtship ritual of adult alligators begins, noted by the loud and resounding bellows and water slapping. Continues through June.
- The last of the cedar waxwings and goldfinches head for their northern breeding

grounds.

- Soft-shell and alligator snapping turtles complete egg laying.
- Gray bats congregate at maternity caves now through mid-July.
- Bluegill begin to bed during full moon.

June Events:

- It's the height of gopher tortoise breeding season.
- Red bats and Seminole bats are being born.

- Southern flying squirrels' breeding season begins.
- It's breeding season for least terns, oystercatchers, and black skimmers. They nest on islands, undisturbed beaches, and even rooftops when their preferred habitat is unavailable.



- Plant milkweed as food for monarch and queen caterpillars and as a nectar source for adult butterflies.

Gardening Tips for May/June

Fertilize and prune gardenias following bloom. If lower leaves turn yellow and drop, this is normal when new growth flushes occur. Prune azaleas now if shaping is desired.

If you fertilized your lawn in March, now is the time to apply a second application. Use a slow release nitrogen to avoid too much quick growth, or apply iron.



Blueberries will soon be ready to harvest. Visit

some of the local U-pick businesses. Refer to our webpage at <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/Agriculture/upicks.htm> to find local growers.

Many landscape problems are created by overwatering. Let your lawn tell you when water is

needed. Look for the following signs:

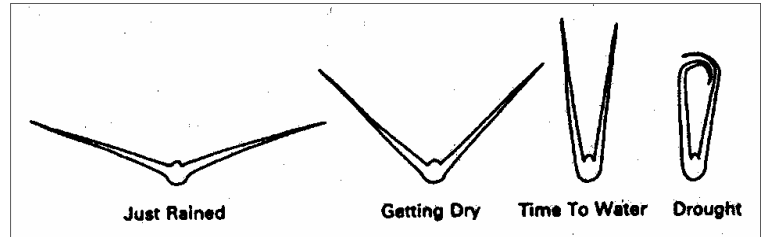
- lengthwise folding of grass blades
- bluish-gray color
- foot prints remain long

after being made.

When 30-50 percent of the lawn shows these signs, apply 3/4 to 1 inch of water in one application. Don't water again until these symptoms reappear. During summer months, symptoms will usually occur 2-3 times per week.

Calibrate sprinklers. It is important to know how much water the irrigation system is applying. To determine this, use several flat-bottomed cans or cups placed around one watering area or zone. If the containers tend to tip over, hold them upright using a stick and rubber band. Turn on

the sprinklers in this area for 15 minutes. Pour the water from all of the containers into a single container and use a ruler to meas-



ure the water depth to the nearest 1/8 inch. Divide this total by the number of containers used. This is the average amount of water delivered in 15 minutes. Adjust the watering time so that 3/4 to one inch of water is applied at each watering cycle. If you have more than one watering zone, recalculate for each area

Water early in the day. The best time to water is between 4 A.M. and 7 A.M. If you do not have an automatic sprinkler system, use hose-end timers to come on between 4 A.M. and 7 A.M. Or put hose-end sprinklers in place the evening before and turn them on manually in the morning.

Warm weather has kicked in and it's prime time for many insect problems. Scout the landscape on a weekly basis to catch problems early. Many problems can be eliminated by pruning out the infested area or other means of physical removal. If treatment is needed, treat only the affected area and use a Florida-friendly insecticide (soaps, oils, neem, BT) to



Apply for Master Gardener Class Now



UNIVERSITY OF
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EXTENSION
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Do you love gardening, want to learn more, and share your knowledge with others? If the answer is yes, you might want to apply for the upcoming Master Gardener class. Training starts in late August and continues into early November. Classes will be held on Wednesdays from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm at either the Duval County, Clay, Nassau or St. Johns County Extension Offices.

There is a fee to cover costs of books and other training materials. To get an application form, call Becky at 387-8850.

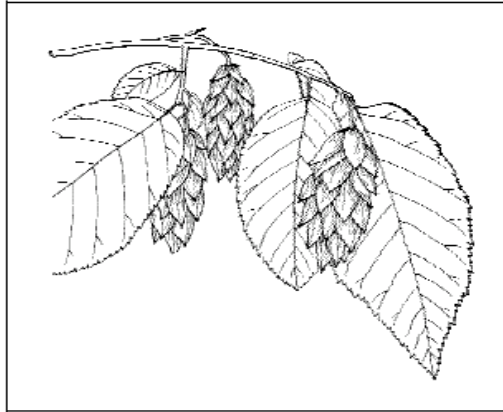
Plant of the Month—Hophornbeam by Larry Figart, Urban Forester

Scientific Name: *Ostrya virginiana*

This tree is a north Florida native that deserves to be planted more. This tree is a member of the birch family. It gets its name from the fruit that resembles hops.

The eastern hophornbeam can get to a height of 20-30 feet in the landscape. It looks best when grown in partial shade. It may look ragged if grown in full sun.

This tree is very drought tolerant and can be grown in well drained soil under the canopy of other hardwoods



and pines.

The foliage looks somewhat like an elm with serrated edges. The fall foliage can be hit or miss sometimes having brilliant yellow foliage and other years not as showy depending on the weather.

One outstanding feature of this tree is its shreddy bark

that stands out in the winter. Another attractive feature is the fruit, which is a nutlet, that opens in the summer and fall, attracting birds and other wildlife.

Troubleshooting Tomato Problems

Growing home-grown tomatoes are well worth the effort. However, there are challenges and sometimes growing tomatoes may seem more trouble than it's worth. Here are a few of the more common problems and symptoms.

- **Blossom-end rot** is a dark sunken area on the blossom end of the fruit. This caused by a calcium deficiency and drought. To avoid, test soil pH (5.8 to 6.5 preferred) and maintain even soil moisture.
- **Verticillium Wilt** is a soil-born fungal disease. Plants show mild to moderate wilt during the day and may recover at night. Older leaves turn yellow along margins in a V-shaped pattern and leaf tips curl upward. Vascular tissue of lower stem has a grayish color. Remove diseased plants, plant resistant varieties, and rotate crops.
- **Fusarium Wilt** is also a fungal disease. Yellow leaves often develop on just one side of the plant starting at the base and moves up. Vascular tissue of stems and petioles turn brown to reddish-brown. Remove diseased plants, plant resistant varieties, and rotate crops.
- **Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus** causes new leaves to turn bronze in color and then forms small black spots on leaves. Green fruit develop raised pale

green concentric rings. Mature fruit have rings that are shades of red and white or red and yellow. Remove diseased plants as there is no control. Remove weeds and treat as needed for thrips with an insecticidal soap spray for thrips.



- **Bacterial Wilt** seems to appear overnight. Healthy green plants suddenly wilt and die within 3 to 4 days. To determine if the plant has this disease, place a cutting of the lower stem in a clear glass container of water and observe for a grayish flow of bacterial oozing from cut end. Remove infected plants and rotate crops.
- Early blight causes dark brown spots with concentric rings on older leaves. Leaves may die causing sunscald on fruit. Fruit may also develop spots with concentric rings beginning at the stem end. This disease is favored by cool humid weather and it overwinters in the soil. Fungicides will help.
- Late Blight is also promoted by cool wet conditions. It causes irregular greasy, greenish-brown areas on leaves with a white downy mold (if moist) at the margins. Fungicides will help with control.

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The 17-Year Cicadas Are Coming

According to entomologist Michael Schauff of the Agricultural Research Service in Beltsville, Md, the 17 year wait for the cicadas is here. They will soon emerge from the ground and overrun yards in the eastern United States. We may even see them in northern Florida. The first sign will be little mounds (volcanoes) of soil at the base of trees. Noisy red-eyed adult insects (top right) will soon emerge in mass. Eggs are laid near the tips of tree branches. Six to ten weeks after egg laying, nymphs emerge (lower right), drop to the ground, dig into the soil where they stay for the next 17 years. Peak activity will be from mid-May and mid-June. Insects will die off within 4 weeks after emerging. There is no reason for alarm. They cause little damage to plants and don't bite. Because they occur in such large numbers, some folks overreact.



Extension information and services are available to all individuals regardless of race, color, sex or national origin. The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no endorsement by the Cooperative Extension Service is implied. This public document was promulgated at an annual cost of \$295.20 or .82 cents per copy to inform garden center personnel and homeowners of research results in ornamental horticulture. For persons with hearing or speech impairments, when contacting our office, please use the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).

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

Terry B. DelValle
Extension Agent-Environmental Horticulture

This newsletter is jointly sponsored by the Florida Cooperative Extension Service, IFAS, Larry Arrington, Acting Dean; City of Jacksonville, John Peyton, Mayor; and the Duval County Cooperative Extension Service, Stephanie Toelle, Acting Director.