



A NEW LEAF

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 2

MARCH/APRIL 2004

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Workshops & Seminars

Saturday, March 6 from 10AM to 1PM—Florida Friendly Spring Garden Program @ the Duval County Extension Office on 1010 North McDuff Ave. Call 387-8850 to register. The cost is \$2.00.

An assortment of herbs and plants will be available for purchase. Topics will include:

- Create a Florida Yard using harmony and balance with Feng Shui landscaping
- What is that pest and why is it in my yard? Discover IPM
- How to make your own rain barrel
- Compost with worms—Vermiculture demonstration

Tuesday, March 9 from 6 to 8PM @ Bradham Brooks NW Library on 1755 Edgewood Avenue. Create a yard you will love. Come to a do-it yourself work-

shop on Landscape Design using the Florida Friendly ideas. Pre-register by calling 387-8850.



April 27 from 6:30 to 8:30PM @ Regency Square Library on 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd. Learn How to Green Up Your Landscape This Spring. Call 387-8850 to register.

April 29 from 10:00AM to 1:00PM @ the Mandarin Garden Club on 2892 Loretta Road. Learn about garden design, groundcover options, plants that take the heat, IPM, and tropicals for the landscape. Registration fee is \$5.00. To register, call 387-8850.

Master Gardener Spring Plant Clinics

Look for Master Gardeners at the following plant clinic sites at these retail garden centers. Bring in plant problems and pick up the latest info from the University of Florida. Clinics run from 10AM to 1PM. Features for March 20 will be spring gardening tips and on April 3 look for info on butterfly and hummingbird gardening.

Saturday March 20

- Lowe's @ 4040 Oldfield Crossing Dr
- Hall's Nursery @ 5645 Blanding Blvd.
- Hall's Nursery @ 11524 San Jose Blvd.
- Plant Ranch @ 14108 Beach Blvd.
- Second Hand Rose @ 506 Beach Blvd.

Saturday, April 3

- Proctor Ace @ 525 N. 3rd St., Jax Beach
- Turner Ace Hardware @ 13164 Atlantic Blvd
- Turner Ace @ 784 Marsh Landing Pkwy
- Turner Ace Hardware @ 5827 Arlington Road
- Hagan Ace Hardware @ 12501 San Jose Blvd
- Proctor Ace @ 5723 University Blvd.



Problem—Florida Wax Scale

Do you have plants with whitish raised globs or bumps on the upper surface of leaves or along stems? Scales are numerous this year perhaps due to the mild winter and/or stressed plants. The Florida Wax Scale is one that is common on landscape plants including crape myrtle, gardenia, Indian hawthorn, hollies, pyracantha, oaks, and others. Scales are often arranged in a straight row along midribs of leaves. Plants are often covered with a black residue, called sooty mold.

The adult female scale is oval in shape measuring 3mm wide. They are highly convex and have a dirty white to pinkish wax covering. Eggs are oval and pink to dark red, just under the

female's waxy protective covering. Eggs hatch into pink crawlers over a 2 to 3 week period usually following new growth. The crawlers move to a new location and begin their own feeding, extracting sap from leaves or twigs.

To control, improve plant health and target control sprays in spring as crawlers are emerging. Spray with horticultural oil spray (like Organo-



Question of the Month: How to Control Weeds in Lawns?

How do I control this weed in my St. Augustinegrass? To homeowners a beautiful lawn is one without a single weed and only one type of grass. Most homeowners are not tolerant of an occasional intruder. To accomplish this, be in tune with your lawn because if the grass is not strong, weeds can take over sections of the yard.

Usually, there is a reason that weeds establish themselves in lawns. Overfertilizing and overwatering are two common practices. Lawn areas killed by chinch bugs or cold damage can be quickly invaded by unwanted weeds. In truth, it's not easy to maintain a lawn in Florida. We have the perfect environment for insects, diseases, and many weeds.

A perfect lawn has a price tag. Herbicides may be required to get a handle on weed control and now is the time to treat for many of them. Before treating, first identify the weed. It should be categorized into one of three types: a grass, broadleaf, or sedge. A broadleaf weed is one that has net-like veins and usually showy flowers. Examples include dollarweed, chickweed, clovers, Florida pusley, betony,



and many others. Grasses have hollow, rounded stems with joints. Veins run parallel to one another. Sedges look like grasses but instead, stems are triangular-shaped and solid. Examples include kyllinga, yellow and purple nutsedge. Sedges like areas that stay wet because of poor drainage or irrigation.

The other question to ask: Is this weed persistent throughout the year or is it an annual (present during warm or cool season but not both—comes back from seed)? Many annuals are treated with a pre-emergent herbicide. Pre-emergent products are applied to control germinating seeds and should be applied before weeds appear to control either warm-season or cool-season weeds.

For St. Augustinegrass, homeowners can consider the following options based on the weed type. Keep in mind Pest Control Operators have a wider range of materials to combat these problems.

Before purchasing, read all the fine print to make sure your grass is on the label and follow directions carefully. If you

have Floratam, a variety of St. Augustinegrass, check the label. Sometimes, the label states that some of the herbicides for broadleaf weeds may damage this specific variety.

This list is not complete but is just intended to provide options for homeowner weed control on St. Augustinegrass.

BROADLEAF: Atrazine or look for combinations of 2,4-D, MCPP, and Dicamba. Examples of combo products include Ortho Weed B-Gon Weed Killer (Ready to Use) and Spectracide Weed Stop, Bayer Advanced Lawn Southern Weed Killer for Lawns (Ready to Use). Use low rates on St. Augustinegrass and a repeat application may be necessary 10 to 14 days after initial treatment for adequate control (see label).

GRASSES: Atrazine, Pendimethalin, and Hi-Yield Benefin Granular

SEDGES: Basagran (yellow and annual nutsedge, some kyllinga), Image (purple nutsedge, kyllinga, and others).

For more information on weeds and control options, go to <http://turf.ufl.edu/> Click on residential for options.

Flowers & Vegetables for March and April

Warm weather is just around the corner. However, we may still have a freeze as late as early April, so be prepared to protect tender plants.

In March, annuals to plant include ageratum, alyssum, amaranthus, asters, baby's breath, balsam, begonia (nonstop, tuberous, wax), browalia, calendula, celosia, calliopsis, cosmos, dusty miller, exacum, gaillardia, gazania, geranium, hollyhock, impatiens, lobelia, marguerite daisy, marigold, nicotiana, ornamental pepper, pentas, phlox, rudbeckia, saliva, strawflower, sweet william, thunbergia, torenia, verbena, vinca (periwinkle), and zinnia. In April, add to the list coleus and



Now's the time to add warm season flowers.

portulaca. Remove from the list ageratum, alyssum, amaranthus, baby's breath, balsam, begonia, browalia, calendula, cosmos, and strawflower.

Bulbs to plant in March include achimenes, allium, alstroemeria, amazon lily, aztec lily, begonia, blood lily, caladium, canna, crinum, dahlia, gladiolus, gloriosa lily, gloxinia, kaffir lily, tiger lily, tritonia, tuberose, voodoo lily, watsonia, and zephyr lily. From the list for April add blood lily, buttercup (ranunculus), lily, marica (walking iris), moraea (african lily) and spider lily and remove crinum.

Vegetables to plant in March in-

clude beans (snap, pole, lima), cantaloupes, carrots, celery, collards, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, green onions, kohlrabi, lettuce (transplants only), mustard, okra, parsley, peanuts, peppers, potatoes, pumpkin, radish, southern peas, squash (summer and winter), sweet potatoes, Swiss chard, tomatoes, and watermelon. In April, add New Zealand spinach and remove carrots, celery, collards, green onion, lettuce, mustard, parsley, potatoes, and Swiss chard.



Wildlife Feature — Learn to Live With Wildlife

Is a raccoon or other animal reeking havoc around your home? If you live in an urban area or close to an area that is being developed, you may come into contact with a raccoon or other critter. Raccoons have adapted well to city-living and are very accomplished at getting into garbage cans. They are not picky eaters and will eat a variety of fruits and vegetables from the garden and, if available, will also eat pet food. To avoid problems, eliminate food sources.

They are easily trapped by using food as a lure and a homeowner may be tempted to save the animal by relocating it to an undeveloped area. However, rarely is relocating wildlife to another habitat a good solution. Animals may be stressed during the relocation process due to trapping, handling, etc. They may carry a variety of diseases and parasites especially because they

were around domestic animals which may be transferred to an otherwise healthy group of wildlife. Raccoons are carriers of rabies. Once moved to another area, they may disrupt the existing population by creating more competition for food.



For information on wildlife, refer to <http://www.wildflorida.org/critters/> or contact the rep for Duval county listed below @ FL Fish & Wildlife Commission.

North Central Region

Rolando Garcia, Regional Director
Route 7, Box 440
Lake City, FL 32055-8713
(386) 758-0525

24-Hour Law Enforcement:
386-758-0529

It's Time to Fertilize Landscape Plants

March is the time to give our lawns a kick to fill in areas damaged by cold weather. The best way to know what fertilizer to use and at what rate is to send a soil sample to the Soils Lab at the University of Florida. The cost is \$7.00 per sample. Forms may be obtained from the county extension office.

For those of you without specific information, the best advice is to find a fertilizer for lawns that has the 1st and 3rd numbers almost equal and the middle number should be low or zero, like 15-0-15. If you can't find this, go with the traditional 12-4-8 or 16-4-8. Look for one that has slow release nitrogen and minor elements.

Woody plants can be fertilized at the same rate as recommended for lawns, but you should use a different analysis fertilizer. An azalea or citrus type fertilizer will work for most woody ornamental plants. Fruit trees, especially citrus, should be fertilized to avoid nutrient deficiencies.

Use a citrus special and begin applications in March. Young trees benefit from monthly light applications.

Determine the amount of fertilizer needed by multiplying the length by the width of the lawn or bed area. The University of Florida has developed an easy conversion chart to help homeowners

avoid math. Check the table below to determine the amount

fertilizer to apply for a given area. Don't over-apply! By applying the fertilizer at lower rates but perhaps more frequently, the grass will have a better chance at choking out weeds. Lawns need a minimum of 2 applications per year, in March and again in September. Depending on the lawn type, more applications may be necessary to maintain plant vigor.



Fertilize in March for spring green up

Lawn (square feet)	6%N*	10%N*	12%N*	15%N*	16%N*	23%N*	27%N*
1000	8.4 lbs. 17.4 cups	5 lbs. 9.5 cups	4.2 lbs. 8.7 cups	3.3 lbs. 7.25 cups	3.1 lbs. 6.5 cups	2.2 lbs. 5.5 cups	1.9 lbs. 4.75 cups
2000	16.8 lbs. 34.8 cups	10 lbs. 19 cups	8.4 lbs. 17.4 cups	6.6 lbs. 14.5 cups	6.2 lbs. 13 cups	4.4 lbs. 11.0 cups	3.8 lbs. 9.5 cups
3000	25.2 lbs. 52.2 cups	15 lbs. 28.5 cups	12.6 lbs. 26.1 cups	9.8 lbs. 21.8 cups	9.4 lbs. 19.5 cups	6.6 lbs. 16.6 cups	5.8 lbs. 14.5 cups
4000	33.6 lbs. 69.6 cups	20 lbs. 38 cups	16.8 lbs. 34.8 cups	13.2 lbs. 29 cups	12.6 lbs. 26 cups	8.8 lbs. 22.0 cups	7.8 lbs. 19.5 cups
5000	42 lbs. 87.2 cups	25 lbs. 47.5 cups	21 lbs. 43.6 cups	16.4 lbs. 36.4 cups	15.8 lbs. 32.5 cups	11.0 lbs. 27.6 cups	9.8 lbs. 24.5 cups

*The percentage corresponds to the first of the three numbers found on the bag. For example, use the 15% calculations when using a 15-2-15 product. These figures assume that you are applying the recommended rate of 1/2 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. For more information on lawn fertilization, refer to the Residential Landscape section of <http://turf.ufl.edu> or consult your local County Extension Service office for lawn fertilization fact sheets.

This table was taken from ENH962, Figuring Out Fertilizer for the Home Lawn.

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HIRING AN ARBORIST

One of the most important decisions that a homeowner can make regarding the trees in their yard is to have them pruned on a regular basis. The benefits of pruning are far reaching. When done correctly, pruning can increase the life-span of your trees by reducing the risk of branch failure, improving health and appearance and correcting past mistakes.

Poor pruning on the other hand can shorten the life-span of your tree by increasing the risk of limb breakage, encouraging the growth of decay organisms,

and stressing the tree thereby predisposing the tree to damaging insects and disease.

So, you have decided that it is time to prune the trees in your yard. How do you go about finding the right person for the job? Pruning and tree removal can be dangerous work, especially when it comes to large trees and should be performed by a professional arborist. An arborist is someone who has devoted their career to the care of trees.

Some pointers on selecting an arborist are:

- 1) Don't use an arborist that wants to "top" your trees.
- 2) Get several written bids with references and follow up on the references.
- 3) Discuss how the debris is to be removed, If the tree is removed, who will grind out the stump.
- 4) Look for an ISA Certified Arborist. A list for your area can be found at :<http://www.isa-arbor.com/>
- 5) Ask for proof of liability insurance and workman's compensation and check to see if the policy is current.

6) Don't always choose the "low bidder". A low price can indicate an arborist of poor quality.



Certified Arborist Logo

Powdery Mildew: A Recent Problem for Dogwoods

Ask anyone that has an established Dogwood in their yard and they will tell you that it has not looked well the past several years. The culprit, not only in N.E. Florida, but throughout the southeast has been Powdery Mildew. The signs that the powdery mildew fungus (*Microsphaeria sp.*) is present are very distinct. Starting in mid to late April, white feathery patches of the fungus start to appear. The white patches look slightly fuzzy and cause the leaves to look dull and dry. Heavily infected leaves will start to curl and twist and be smaller than normal leaves.

Powdery mildew by itself does not usually kill mature trees, however, repeated infestations can cause a tree to decline irreversibly.



The most promising solution appears to be the development of resistant cultivars. At this time the cultivars that show good resistance include Welch's Bay Beauty, Weavers White and Jean's Appalachian Snow. Research to find more cultivars that have better resistance is ongoing.

Other cultural practices to reduce powdery mildew include: improve air

circulation in the foliage by selective pruning. Reduce fertilization to reduce the amount of susceptible tissue. Avoid the wetting of foliage by watering with soaker hoses and micro-jets. If it is practical, remove infected tissue early to avoid disease build up and rake up and destroy leaves in the fall.

Chemical applications of the fungicide, Daconil, at label rates starting at the first sign of the fungus may also reduce severity of the infestation.

**CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, FL
& UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA**

1010 N. McDuff Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32254

(904) 387-8850
Fax: (904)387-8902

Website: <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu>
EMAIL: DELVALLE@COJ.NET

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It's Time for Hummingbirds

Gardeners are excited about the return of the hummers. Our most common hummingbird in Florida is the ruby-throated hummingbird. Nesting in Florida begins in April with nests often built over water. To attract hummingbirds, plant flowering nectar plants with red, pink, or orange tubular shaped flowers. Some favorite plants for our area include red buckeye, bottlebrush, butterfly bush, coral bean, firebush, red star hibiscus, lantana, firespike, native azaleas, coral honeysuckle, crossvine, milkweed, shrimp plant, and cardinal flower. In addition to plants, you might use artificial feeders. Hummers are territorial so you may need more

than one feeder and be sure to space them at least 10 feet apart. To make your own sugar solution mix 1 part white granulated cane sugar to 4 parts water and boil to dissolve the sugar. Allow to cool before adding to feeder. No red coloring is necessary—they will find it. Change solution every 3 to 5 days. Clean feeder with hot water and white vinegar. Do not use soap or bleach. Place the feeder in a location sheltered from rainfall and direct sunlight.



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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.