



UNIVERSITY OF  
**FLORIDA**

IFAS EXTENSION

City of Jacksonville Agriculture Dept.

# A New Leaf

Volume 6, Issue 1

January/February 2005



## Upcoming Programs

The following Programs will be held at the Home and Patio Show at the Prime Osborne Center:

- Friday, Feb. 25:** 1 p.m. — Move Into Spring Vegetable Gardening  
 2 p.m. — Know and Grow Herbs  
 3 p.m. — Florida Landscape Tips for the Newcomer  
 4 p.m. — Spring Green-up in the Landscape  
 5 p.m. — All About Citrus  
 6 p.m. — Fruit Trees for NE Florida  
 7 p.m. — Flowering Trees for Color
- Saturday, Feb. 26:** 11a.m. — Move Into Spring Vegetable Gardening  
 Noon — Tips to Great Roses  
 1 p.m. — Landscape With Native Plants  
 2 p.m. — Latest Irrigation Guidelines & Tips  
 3 p.m. — Landscape Design for the FL Friendly Yard  
 4 p.m. — Garden to Attract Butterflies  
 5 p.m. — Designing With Color  
 6 p.m. — Hot Herbs to Grow  
 7 p.m. — Herbs from Garden to Table
- Sunday, Feb. 27:** Noon — Save Time, Energy & Money in the FL Yard  
 1 p.m. — Use Natives to Attract Wildlife  
 2 p.m. — Tree Care and Establishment  
 3 p.m. — Tree Pruning 101  
 4 p.m. — Top Native Trees for NE Florida

### February 8th

### Totally Tomatoes and Lettuce in a Dishpan

10:00 a.m. to Noon

Duval County Extension Office

Learn everything you need to know about growing tomatoes and the latest varieties. Also learn how to have a salad in 6 weeks by growing lettuce in a dishpan! Each participant will take home some tomato seedlings. There is a \$3 registration fee paid at the door. Pre-registration required: call 387-8850.

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## More Programs.....

- Wed. Jan 12** from 10AM-Noon at the Extension Office—Survival in the Landscape—Benefit by Putting the Right Plant in the Right Place and Cold Weather Tips.
- Friday January 21** from 10AM to 12:30PM —Arbor Day Program. Learn how to plant and care for trees and about natives. Get 2 free native trees at the program.
- Sat. Jan 22** from 10AM—2PM at the Extension Office—Irrigation Workshop—Learn about micro, drip, & how to retrofit your system. Fee at door is \$5.00.
- Sat. March 5** from 10AM to 1PM at the Extension Office—Pathway to FYN Heaven. Learn how to be an angel in the landscape by using FYN practices.

**TO REGISTER CALL 387-8850**

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# Things to Plant in January & February

By Terry DelValle, Horticulture Extension Agent



larkspur

Cold weather moved in just before the holidays to give us a taste of winter. Although temperatures have varied throughout Duval County, most areas experienced at least a light frost, including the beaches. Choices of things to plant are limited, so take some time to look through 2005 catalogues and "think spring"! Annuals recommended for planting now are carnation (China doll), dianthus, flowering cabbage and kale, pansy, petunia, ranunculus, stock, viola, and snapdragon. For March flowers, plant delphinium, digitalis (foxglove), and larkspur in January or February. In February, add to the list baby's breath, calendula, marguerite daisy, and

statice.

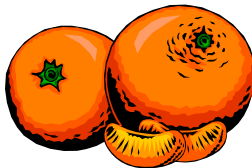
Bulbs that can be planted are Achimenes, African lily (Agapanthus), amaryllis, Aztec lily, calla, crinum, daylily, Dutch iris, gloriosa lily, gloxinia, Hurricane lily, Ixia, kaffir lily, marica (walking iris), moraea (African lily), spider lily, Tritonia, tuberosa, tulip (prechilled only), voodoo lily, watsonia, and Zephyr lily. In February it's too late to plant amaryllis, calla, daylily, Hurricane lily, and tulips but add to the list Amazon lily, caladium, canna, and dahlia.



## Garden Check List

By Terry DelValle

- ◆ Monitor rainfall and water plants as needed. Although plants may look like they're resting, roots still need water in dry weather. Water grass/turf every week when there is no rainfall at the rate of 3/4". Woody ornamentals need water less frequently—3/4" water every 10 to 14 days. Look at page 5 for information on proposed new irrigation rules.
- ◆ Irrigate plants to help with cold protection 24 to 48 hours before a freeze. If rain precedes the freeze, don't irrigate. Bank sand around citrus to protect the graft union and pull leaf or pine straw mulch up over low-growing sensitive plants. Harvest citrus if it is ripe if temperatures will fall below 28°F for 4 consecutive hours.
- ◆ Now is a good time to scout the landscape for plants that have scale insects. They vary in color and often look like a wart or bump on the plant leaf or stem. When you try to remove it, the scale comes off and is not a part of the plant. Treat with a dormant or horticultural oil and spray both upper and lower leaf surfaces.
- ◆ Mid to late February is the time to put down pre-emergent herbicides for the control of weeds like crabgrass and sandspurs. Germination is based on soil temperature so if the weather is warm, shoot for the earlier date. Likewise, if January and February are cold, apply in late February.
- ◆ Take a break from mowing lawns and service your lawnmower. Clean the mower, sharpen the blades, drain and replace the oil, drain or use up the gasoline, and grease all fittings.
- ◆ Remove leaves from lawns as they drop and use as mulch or make them into compost.
- ◆ It's time to prune deciduous plants, if needed. Remove rubbing branches, diseased or dead branches, and suckers from the base. Don't prune spring flowering trees until after bloom.
  - ◆ Prune grapes in January or February. For muscadines, prune all branches that are less than 3/16" in diameter, leaving 2 to 3 buds per spur. Remove most of the spurs located at the top of the trunk to prevent crowding and bushiness.
  - ◆ Prune blueberries to maintain vigor. Prune older unproductive canes as close to the ground as possible but remove no more than 1/3 of the branches.
  - ◆ Fertilize fruit trees in February. Blueberries: use an azalea, camellia blend. Peaches, plum, nectarine, pear, persimmon, apple, pecan and fig: apply a peach/pecan special.



## A Champion for Trees by Larry Figart, Urban Forester

The first Arbor Day took place on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska. It was championed by J. Sterling Morton. He was a newspaper editor that moved to Nebraska from Detroit, Michigan in 1854. He believed that the treeless plains of Nebraska would benefit from the planting of trees. He set the example by planting orchards, shade trees and windbreaks on his family farm.

Morton used his skill as a journalist to promote sound agricultural information as well as the benefits of trees. He soon became the editor of Nebraska's first newspaper, and developed an enthusiastic clientele. He recommended the newest agricultural techniques to farmers that included planting trees. He advised farmers to plant trees as windbreaks reducing soil erosion, to be used for fuelwood, and to produce shade. He not only wrote about the benefits of planting trees for farmers but encouraged citizen groups and civic organizations to plant trees as well. You could say he was a role model for the modern day extension service.

Morton first proposed a holiday for the planting of trees as a member of Nebraska's State Board of Agriculture at a meeting on January 4, 1872. The holi-

day was set for April 10<sup>th</sup> 1872. The first Arbor Day included prizes for counties and individuals that planted the most trees on that day. It was a huge success. An estimated one million trees were planted on that day.



In 1874, the Governor of Nebraska officially proclaimed Arbor Day as April 10<sup>th</sup>. In 1885 Arbor Day became a legal holiday in Nebraska and was celebrated annually on April 22, which is Morton's birthday.

The Arbor Day concept soon spread to Kansas, Tennessee, Minnesota, and Ohio all proclaiming their own holidays to plant trees. Today, Arbor Day is celebrated in all fifty states. The dates coincide with the optimal tree planting season. In Florida, Arbor Day is the third Friday in January. For more information on Arbor Day visit the National Arbor Day Foundation at <http://www.arborday.org/>.

## Tree of the Month— Eastern Mayhaw/*Crataegus aestivalis* by Larry Figart, Urban Forester

The Eastern Mayhaw is a slow growing native tree that reaches a height of 30 feet with a spread of at least 35 feet when mature. The leaves are deciduous and dark green with reddish undersides. The tree is very beautiful in the spring with a display of white flowers that bloom before the leaves appear. The tree produces large red fruit that is a little smaller than a grape. The fruit ripens in early April to mid May, hence the name Mayhaw. Folks living in the portions of the south where this tree is common collect the fruits by placing a sheet underneath the trees, shake them, and then gather the fallen fruit. They are rarely eaten fresh; more often processed into Mayhaw jelly, butter, syrups, or wine. Mayhaws are fairly high in potassium and calcium, vitamin C and  $\beta$ -carotene.



The downside to this tree is that the branches can be thorny. This can be mitigated with regular pruning that will remove the low drooping branches.

The tree grows in low, shaded, river floodplains, however, it produces more fruit when grown in full sunlight in well drained soil. The trees are long lived, can produce fruit for at least 50 years, and are fairly disease resistant.

## Urban Garden Update

By Sara Cimbalik, Urban Gardening Program Assistant

The demonstration garden located on Superior Street has gotten a bit of an exterior face-lift. The front beds are planted with colorful vibrant edible flowers such as, violas, pansies, dianthus, and salvia. A second hand chain link fence has been put up and more area has been put into production. Soon we will be adding some new edibles to the site such as, inherited Muscadine Grapes and Rabbiteye Blueberries. The community garden behind our site has been full of energetic gardeners this growing season. A lot of pride is showing in

their luscious green plots and the garden is becoming very aesthetically pleasing. The educational programs on the Winter Edible Garden and Hydroponics brought in many newcomers and were a great success. In February we'll be educating on Totally Tomatoes, everything from varieties to hydroponics; be sure to join us! We still have a limited number of community garden plots available so if you're looking for a spot to have a great spring vegetable garden call our office at 387-8850 to inquire about available plots.

## January & February, Garden Transition Time

By Sara Cimbalik

January and February is the time of year when the transition from cool season crops to warm season crops begins to take place. The garden depends on grower preference. If one enjoys the cool season greens such as collards, mustard, and broccoli verses the warm season tomato, peppers, and eggplant, one may want to leave the fall/winter garden growing or remove some plants to make room for some of the upcoming spring crops.

For continuing the winter garden; beets, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, Chinese cabbage, collards, leeks, lettuce, mustard, English peas, and radish can all be planted now through February. To get a jump-start

on the spring garden, start transplants indoors 4-6 weeks prior to planting in the garden. Cucumbers, eggplant,

peppers, and tomatoes may all be planted into the garden as early as February. Be sure to protect young seedlings from any freeze. Freezes may occur through March but some gardeners take the chance by planting early to beat their neighbors and insects.



## Herb of the Month — Lemon Balm

By Sara Cimbalik



Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*) is a perennial, lemon-scented herb belonging to the mint family. The plant has bright green, lemon-scented leaves, and can grow up to two feet in height. The plant grows upright and is loosely branched. Lemon Balm can be grown from seeds or from cuttings. If seeding Lemon Balm, germination can take 12-15 days; then thin seedlings 12-18 inches apart. Cuttings are easily rooted. Lemon balm has many uses. The leaves have been used fresh or dried to provide flavor and aroma to drinks, salads, and other dishes.

## Nematode Resistant Bell Pepper

By Sara Cimbalik

In our southern climate nematodes can be a major pest in the garden. For those who love to grow bell peppers and have had problems with nematodes, there is a solution. The Charleston Belle Pepper, developed by Agricultural Research Service (ARS), has been bred to resist nematodes and heat. The Charleston Belle resists three major root-knot nematode species; southern (*Meloidogyne incognita*), peanut (*M. arenaria*) and javanese (*M. javanica*). Not only does the variety resist nematodes, it has also helped protect double-cropped vegetables from nematode attack, which in turn has increased fruit yield. For the homeowner this would be a great variety to try since there is no chemical control for nematodes. Solarizing soil with heavy black plastic and rotating crops by plant family are the best ways to rid the soil of nematodes. Check reliable seed sources for the Charleston Belle variety.



Root knot nematode (magnified) on tomato / Photo by William Wergin and Richard Sayre.

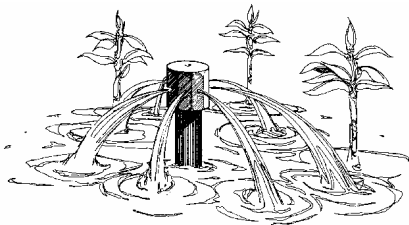
## New Irrigation Rules

By Terry DelValle

New irrigation rules, upon approval, will be implemented in February by the St. Johns River Water Management District. For details, visit [http://sjr.state.fl.us/programs/regulation/rule\\_dev/pdfs/watcons\\_proposed\\_rule.pdf](http://sjr.state.fl.us/programs/regulation/rule_dev/pdfs/watcons_proposed_rule.pdf). Proposed rules will regulate both home and commercial landscapes. Irrigation for established landscapes will be limited to no more than 2 days per week and does not occur between the hours of 10AM and 4PM. Local governments may opt to specify days to water. If this occurs, odd addresses can water on Wednesday and Saturday while even addresses can water on Thursday and Sunday. Non residential landscapes should water on 2 days other than those listed above to help avoid reductions in water pressure.

Some exceptions to the 2 day per week water rule are as follows:

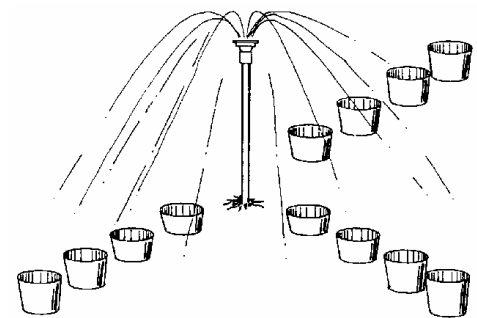
- ◆ Irrigation using micro-irrigation is allowed anytime.
- ◆ New landscapes are allowed to water anytime of day every day for the 1st 30 days and every



- other day for the next 30 days (total 60 days).
- ◆ Water following chemical applications (pesticides, fertilizers) is allowed within 24 hours of application.
- ◆ Irrigation is allowed anytime for maintenance and repairs not to exceed 10 minutes per hour per zone.

With these changes in mind, now is a good time to analyze existing irrigation systems. Calibrate each

zone to determine how long the zone needs to run to deliver 3/4" of water. Repair existing systems to make them more efficient. Adjust heads so that water is not being wasted on hard surfaces (driveways, sidewalks, etc.). Consider converting landscape beds to micro-irrigation. Kits are available at local garden centers. If you need information on getting the most out of your system, attend one of our upcoming workshops.



**City of Jacksonville, FL & University of Florida Extension**

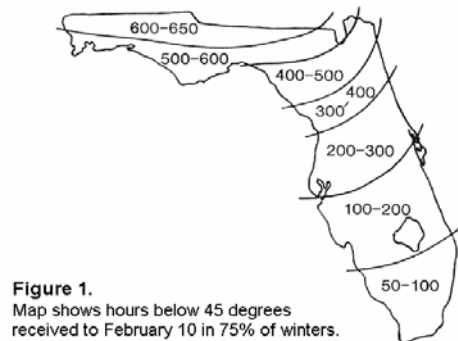
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## Weather Watch by Terry DelValle

Weather for January and February can be variable. According to historical weather for Jacksonville, the average high temperature is 65 (Jan) and 68°F (Feb) and the average low temperature is 43 (Jan) and 45°F (Feb). Temperatures can range from 88 to 7°F so plants sometimes start growing before cold weather is over. Many temperate plants, predominately deciduous, are ready to flower once they have met their chilling requirements. Chilling requirements are the total amount of hours less than or equal to 45°F during the winter. In north Florida, chilling requirements for recommended varieties are met by February 10 to 15th. Average precipitation for January is 3.3 inches and February is 3.5 inches so weather is not as dry as the previous 2 months. Typically rains precede our cold fronts which helps to provide cold protection to plants. The last average frost date is March 14th.



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When you finish with this newsletter, pass it 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, Dean; City of Jacksonville, John Peyton, Mayor; and the Duval County Cooperative Extension Service, Rick Godke, Director.