



YOUR NORTH FLORIDA YARD & GARDEN

Flagler County Extension Service & UF/IFAS Florida
Master Gardeners

ISSUE XXXIX

October-December, 2012

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From the MG Desk...

*David Tibbets, UF/IFAS Florida Master Gardener
Newsletter Editor*



I have based the current issue on what I have been observing around my neighborhood and suggestions from others. Around my neighborhood, two things have come to my attention lately. These are (1) a lot of dead snakes, and (2) cockroaches. I think the snakes are always dead because snakes strike such fear in the hearts of men (and women) so the popular mindset is that they must be eliminated without thought! The cockroaches, on the other hand, may be on the rise due to the recent weather; mild winters and recent rains have encouraged their abundance. Lastly, I always have my fair share of winter weeds, so I was happy to write about them, too.

The cool weather is about to arrive, always something to look forward to. I hope the newsletter helps you cope with some of the challenges that we expect you'll see or are already seeing. Happy gardening!

Here are some recent questions that have come across the desk of the Master Gardeners:

Q: What can I use to keep the deer away?

A: This is a pretty difficult question to answer, because one must first determine what is being protected and what it's worth. As we (humans) continue to encroach on more and more of the natu-

(Continued on page 16)



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Upcoming Programs at the Flagler County Extension Service:

Monday 10/29/12, 10 am–12 noon Holiday Gifts from the Garden- Learn how to create beautiful gifts using items found in your garden, create topiaries and container garden gifts, make special holiday delicacies from garden fresh herbs and seasonal vegetables. \$5.00 per person payable at the door.

Monday 11/5/12- Winter Landscaping 101- This program will cover the do's and don'ts on caring for your Florida landscape during the winter months. Including winter irrigation schedule, pruning, maintenance and more. No fee to attend this program.

Due to popular demand, we ask that you pre-register at least 2 days prior to the event. Pre-register by phone: 386-437-7464 or e-mail: rmicieli@flaglercounty.org

Our revised "Guide to Successful Gardening in Florida's Zone 9A, one of the most challenging environments in the South" book will be available for sale at each program!



The Good...

By David Tibbetts, UF/IFAS Master Gardener

Snakes - yes, snakes

Introduction. If you're like me, and many others I am acquainted with, you wouldn't describe yourself as 'snake-friendly.' Snakes seem to bring out an unreasoning fear in some people, to the point that ANY snake causes an amazingly over-the-top reaction and the desire to do just about anything to rid the world of another snake. This mindset is unfortunate, because snakes are one of our best allies in the fight against pests (e.g., disease-carrying rodents, and in some cases, venomous snakes). And, because of man's continuing incursion into areas that used to be green spaces, the odds of running into the odd snake continue to grow. However, snakes, contrary to the beliefs of some, do not go out of their way to hurt humans, but many humans will go out of their way to harm a snake, any snake.



Red Rat or Corn Snake
Photo by Steve Johnson, UF, 2009

Snakes Facts. Here are some interesting facts about snakes:

- The danger of highway accidents is a hundred times greater than being bitten by a venomous snake.
- There are 46 species of native snakes in Florida, only six of which are venomous (and only four of those six are common in Flagler County).
- Snake-bite-related deaths have occurred in Florida at a rate of approximately one death every four or five years — less than the rate of deaths from lightning strikes.
- Snakes prefer shaded areas where they might come across prey like mice and toads.
- Snakes will not charge or chase after people. Their typical reaction is to crawl away and hide.
- When threatened, some will hiss, shake their tail, and even try to bite an intimidating object.
- All snakes stick out their tongues frequently to smell their environment. A snake showing its tongue is not acting aggressively or threateningly.

Like most wild animals, snakes are shy, and will only react when cornered or surprised. If given a wide berth, there is nothing to fear from snakes.

Snakes can be deterred from your yard and home by eliminating firewood stacks, debris, boards, and other objects lying close to the ground that create cool, dark shelters and prey habitat areas. Remove snakes from buildings by placing glueboards or funneled minnow traps in snake-traveled areas, such as along walls. There are no repellents, toxicants, or fumigants registered for snakes. Unless a home remedy has been scientifically tested, its effectiveness is questionable.

Commonly Encountered Snakes. According to the University of Florida ("Dealing with Snakes in Florida's Residential Areas - Identifying Commonly Encountered Snakes," by Steve A. Johnson and Monica E. McGarrity), thirteen snake species are most routinely encountered in residential areas. These are the Southern Black Racer or black snake, "Flower pot snake" Brahminy Blind Snake, Southern Ring-necked Snake, Red Rat Snake (aka Corn Snake), Yellow Rat Snakes, the Eastern Garter Snake, Rough Green Snake, Southern Water Snake, Banded Water Snake, Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake, Pygmy Rattlesnake, Cottonmouth (*a.k.a water Moccasin*) and Harlequin Coral Snake. The last four listed are venomous, but that doesn't mean that **all** snakes should be destroyed when they are encountered. Each of these snakes has its place in our ecosystem, preying on a variety of pests, and in turn being preyed upon by other animals. Try to familiarize yourself with the different types of snakes one might find in Flagler; I recommend you start with the paper cited here,



Rough Green Snake being ejected from pool enclosure

The Good...(cont.)

which can be found at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu.uw258>.



Southern Ringed-neck Snake
Photo by Steve Johnson, UF

What to do if you just can't live with the idea of a snake in your yard.

As previously mentioned, open spaces that might provide better homes for, among other animals, snakes are constantly being taken up for human development. The result is that it becomes more and more likely that we humans will run into snakes in our home patch. If you are absolutely terrified of snakes and can't bear the idea of living in the same zip code with them, first you have to understand that it's already happening. They've been here longer than we have and will remain here regardless of our efforts to eradicate them. Second, getting rid of snakes, apart from the unlikelihood of that happening, is not a good way to go. They are a beneficial animal in the environment, helping to keep down unwanted rodents and other pests and providing a food source for other animals, like birds of prey. So, try to learn to live with your reptilian neighbors. Again, the University of Florida has provided some guidance to help in this regard: "Dealing with Snakes in Florida's Residential Areas - Preventing Encounters," by Steve A. Johnson and Monica E. McGarrity (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw260>). The thrust of this paper is to snake-proof your lawn, garden and home so that it does not encourage snakes to be where they're not wanted. For example, who



Harlequin Coral Snake
Note black nose and touching red and yellow bands
Photo by Steve Johnson, UF



Firewood raised above the ground and placed away from house/pool
Photo by Steve Johnson, UF

wants to open up their pool skimmer and find a snake swirling around in it? The best way to avoid fishing snakes out of the pool is to make sure they can't get in in the first place - ensure doors shut properly, that they have good weather stripping or a good threshold, that pet flaps shut properly, stack firewood on a pallet or base so it is off the ground and in an area away from the pool or house, avoid piling up stuff (e.g., cuttings, mulch, bags of soil or compost) next to the house or pool enclosure, and plug up holes, even small ones (a snake can enter through a hole as small around as a pencil), so that there are no easy points of entry to your pool or house. Recall also that without a food source there is usually no reason for a snake to go hunting in your pool or house, so get rid of rodents (snakes would be happy to help!) and other potential food sources.

What to do with that pesky snake. If you do encounter a snake in a place that requires that action be taken to get rid of it, first off try to identify the snake - from a distance. If it's in your house or other closed area, try to open a path of escape for the snake and, using a broom or other long-handled implement, try to encourage it to take advantage of this escape route. In the event this is not possible, use a large trash can as a receptacle (on its side) and "herd" the snake into it with the broom and release it somewhere that is less threatening to you. Obviously, it would be much better not to have a snake in the house in the first place.

Conclusion. Snakes give me the creeps, but I know that they do good work, so I try very hard to leave them alone regardless of where I find them. I know that they will do more good than harm, as long as I do nothing stupid. I realize that there are some folks out there who have an all-consuming fear of snakes - there's not a whole lot that can be done for them except to try to ensure that their homes are as snake-proof as possible. *Please remember, snakes are good.*



Uncovered holes, like this pool drain hole, provide a cool spot and possible access for snakes



The Bad...

By: Sheri Pruitt, UF/IFAS Master Gardener

Winter Weeds

Introduction. Now that autumn is officially here, it's time to start thinking about what's next. It hasn't happened yet, but the cooler weather is not too far around the corner, so we'll devote this article to the coming of the cooler weather, the weeds that like to come with it, and how to fight them.

Some typical weeds we might see during our cooler weather include annual bluegrass, chickweed, yellow woodsorrel, southern sandspur (sandbur), Florida betony, and dollarweed. Now is the time to prepare to apply an herbicide targeted for your particular weeds and formulated for your type of grass.

'The Opposition'. As most of you are aware, our lawns have an endless variety of weeds. We can't cover them all, so we'll just introduce you to a few of the more likely intruders that you may see. Step 1 in getting rid of weeds is to properly identify them.



Annual Bluegrass

Annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*), as its name implies, very much resembles grass, but it just doesn't fit in with whatever grass you already have. While it loves the cooler weather and will happily propagate during late fall and winter, it will die during the first heat of spring.



Chickweed

Chickweed (*Stellaria media*) is a widespread, hardy annual often found in moist fertile soil. In mild, winter climates it begins to bloom before winter ends. Edible, but not very tasty, the plants form dense foliage topped by starry flowers.



Yellow woodsorrel

Yellow woodsorrel (*Oxalis stricta*) is an upright, herbaceous perennial with hairy stems. Leaves are alternate, divided into three partly folded, deeply cut, heart-shaped lobes.

Flowers are bright yellow with five petals on stalks bent below the fruit and attaching to a common point.

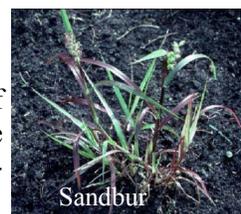


Florida betony

Southern sandbur (*Cenchrus echinatus* L.) looks just like many other types of weed grass, except that it has sticky, ouchy bits! The sticky, ouchy bits are the seed heads that get caught in clothing, dogs' paws and many other surfaces, which helps it spread.

Florida betony (*Stachys floridana*) is a square-stemmed, erect, hairy perennial which spreads by seeds, rhizomes and tubers. The tubers are segmented and resemble a rattlesnake's white rattle, usually up to 4 cm long and about 1 cm wide, although they may be up to 8 cm long. The flowers occur in clusters of 3-6 in the upper leaf axils.

Dollarweed (*Hydrocotyle* spp.), properly known as pennywort, is a perennial weed prevalent in Florida. It propagates via rhizomes and occasionally by tubers, producing erect, bright green, shiny leaves with scalloped margins. The petiole is located in the center of the leaf and forms an umbrella shape, which renders this weed easily distinguishable from dicondra, where the petiole is found at the margin of the leaf base. Its flowers occur in elongated spikes or rounded umbels at the top of long stalks, and its fruit is greenish, rounded and somewhat flattened. Reproduction can occur via rhizomes, tubers or seed. Pennywort is found in moist to wet sites.



Sandbur



dicondra

pennywort

The Bad...(cont.)

Getting rid of the weedy “so and so’s”. As with many things in the lawn or garden, the prescription depends on the size of the problem. If your grass is weak, or your weeds have been given several seasons to settle in, integrated pest management practices are necessary. This includes combining scouting, physical (hand pull) removal, good cultural practices (proper mowing, watering, etc.) and chemical controls as a last resort.

Hand weeding. If your weed problem is relatively small, then pulling up the weeds by hand or with a trowel, hoe, shovel, etc., may be do-able.

Mowing. Simply mowing regularly, just like with grass, will help to keep the weeds in check. It will not, however, kill weeds, which doesn’t seem quite fair—when I mow my lawn too short, it seems to have an immediate adverse effect on the grass, while the weeds just seem to laugh and thrive. Why is that? Murphy’s Law applied to gardening? Anyway, mowing helps to keep the weeds in check, and a mowed lawn, even if it’s mostly weeds, still looks surprisingly good.

Herbicides. There are four basic types of herbicides: Selective - A selective herbicide controls certain plant species without seriously affecting the growth of other plant species. The majority of herbicides used are selective herbicides. Nonselective - Nonselective herbicides control green plants regardless of species. These are generally used to kill all plants, such as in the renovation or establishment of a new turf area, for spot treatment, or as a trimming material along sidewalks, etc. Contact - Contact herbicides affect only the portion of green plant tissue that is contacted by the herbicide spray. These herbicides are not translocated, or moved, in the vascular system of plants. Therefore, these will not kill underground plant parts, such as rhizomes or tubers. Contact herbicides often require repeat applications to kill re-growth from these underground plant parts. Systemic - Systemic herbicides are translocated in the plant's vascular system. The vascular system transports the nutrients and water necessary for normal growth and development. Systemic herbicides generally are slower acting and kill plants over a period of days.

Pre-emergent and post-emergent herbicides. The names are pretty self-explanatory. Pre-emergent herbicides go on to prevent or at least hinder the growth of specific weeds. Post-emergent herbicides attack the weeds after they’re present. Both come with their specific set of issues, which I’ll try to cover here. Both types, however, will, theoretically, go after specific weeds, leaving your lawn intact. If you know that you had a certain weed the previous winter, a pre-emergent herbicide can be applied once temperatures fall to 55-60°F for several consecutive days. A pre-emergent herbicide should not be applied following lawn seeding, because it may kill any germinating seeds. Due to normal degradation of herbicides, a pre-emergent should be re-applied after six to nine weeks from its initial application. A post-emergent herbicide should be applied once the weed of interest has appeared, and re-applied as required by the weed and herbicide involved until control has been established.

The Label is the Law. As with all chemicals, herbicides must (not should) be applied in accordance with the instructions that come with the product to be used. Chemicals must be applied at the levels, rates and frequencies specified by their product labels. And, don’t forget the PPE (personal protective equipment)!

Conclusion. Winter weeds are simply those weeds which appear during our cold months. Their prevention should be the homeowner’s primary goal, and the first, best line of defense is good cultural practices in the lawn and garden. In the lawn, mowing at the correct heights and frequencies, with a mower that has sharp blades, and watering and fertilizing as recommended for your grass type will help to produce grass that is healthy, thick and will crowd out any weeds that might want to intrude into the lawn. In the garden, mulching will help to keep weeds down and make it easier to remove any that might take up residence.

References: Weed Management in Home Lawns, by J.Bryan Unruh, Barry Brecke, Laurie E. Trenholm
Tackle winter weeds with a well planned offense, by Theresa Friday
Winter Weeds, by Tom McCubbin



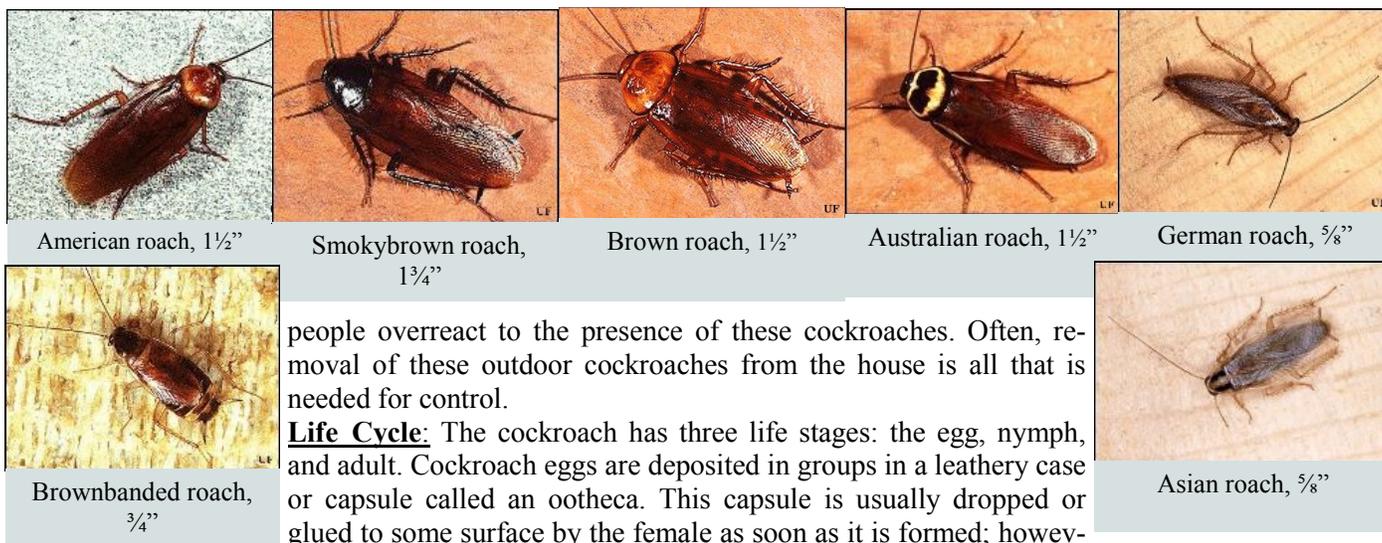
and the Bugglies

From UF/IFAS Publication #ENY-214,
"Cockroaches and their Management"

Cockroaches

Cockroaches are pests throughout the United States. They are annoying and, when abundant, they are also destructive. Cockroaches, also known as waterbugs, croton bugs, or palmetto bugs, destroy food and damage fabrics, book bindings, and other materials. When cockroaches run over food they leave filth and may spread disease. They secrete an oily liquid that has an offensive and sickening odor that may ruin food. This odor may also be imparted to dishes that are apparently clean. Excrement in the form of pellets or an ink-like liquid also contributes to this nauseating odor. Some people are allergic to cockroaches and become ill.

Kinds: The kinds of cockroaches most commonly found in and around Florida homes are the Florida Woods Roach, American (Figure 1), smokybrown (Figure 2), brown (Figure 3), Australian (Figure 4), German (Figure 5) and Asian. The smallest cockroaches, the German, Asian, and brownbanded (Figure 6), are close to the same size and the adults are seldom more than 5/8" long. The larger cockroaches, the American, Australian, brown, and the smokybrown, are 1 1/4" - 2" long and are often called palmetto bugs. Though they are generally found outdoors, they can become an indoor problem when they migrate or are carried indoors. The largest cockroach, the Florida woods roach, will also enter dwellings from the outside or from beneath the house. Outdoor cockroaches do not survive well indoors and many times



the female German cockroach carries the capsule protruding from her body until the eggs are ready to hatch. There may be from 30 to 48 eggs in the capsule of the German cockroach, but capsules of other cockroaches may have only 10-28 eggs. The newly hatched nymphs have no wings and shed their skins (molt) several times before becoming winged adults. German and brownbanded cockroaches may have several generations per year, but the outdoor species may require a year to develop from egg to adult.

Where are they? Cockroaches hide in dark, sheltered places during the day and come out to feed at night. They may be found around the kitchen sink or drain board, in cracks around or underneath cupboards and cabinets or inside them (especially in the upper corners), behind drawers, around pipes or conduits (where they pass along the wall or go through it), behind windows or door frames, behind loose baseboards or molding strips, on the underside of tables and chairs, in the bathroom, and in radio and TV cabinets. The German cockroach is usually found in the kitchen and bathroom, although it may be found all over the house. The other kinds of cockroaches prefer damp, warm places and usually develop in garages, sewers, attics, storerooms and similar locations. They then enter the home from outside breeding sites.

"Bugs are not going to inherit the earth. They own it now. So we might as well make peace with the landlord." ~ Thomas Eisner

and the Bugglies (cont.)

Managing Cockroaches: An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach is the most effective method of cockroach control. The least effective control method is the use of chemicals alone. Using chemicals alone results in insecticide resistance and, ultimately, very poor control. Homeowners may undertake their own IPM plan for cockroach control with good success, or they may elect to contract the services of a professional pest control operator. Professionals have the equipment and training to do a thorough job and have access to products not available to homeowners. If you decide to contract the services of a professional pest control operator, get estimates from several reputable firms before you decide on one.

Prevention and Sanitation: Successful cockroach control requires prevention and sanitation. Vacuuming will eliminate cockroach skins and feces that cause cockroach allergies. Cockroach feces also contains a chemical (aggregation pheromone) that attracts cockroaches to an area. Eliminating the cockroach feces by scrubbing with hot, soapy water will decrease the amount of aggregation pheromone available to attract cockroaches to the area. Prevention and sanitation can be divided into four categories: exclusion and elimination of food, water, and harborage. Following the recommendations in the four categories will likely eliminate the most important factors that affect cockroach establishment.

Exclusion: Eliminate the entry of cockroaches to your home by, for example, inspecting shopping bags, cardboard boxes, securing doors and windows, and other gaps in possible entries to the home.

Elimination of Water: Remove sources of water, whether inside or outside the home, like leaky or sweating pipes, sink water, refrigerator condensation drip pans, pet water bowls, cans, hollow trees and water butts

Elimination of Food: Basically keep food cleaned up and/or tightly sealed, including leftovers, pet food, kitchen scraps, rinsing or washing dishes after use, cleaning food out of sink strainers, and vacuuming regularly will help to eliminate food sources used by cockroaches.

Elimination of Harbors: Cockroaches like dark places to hang out in, like piles of newspapers, cardboard boxes, clothes, and mulch, which also provide inadvertent “no pesticide” zones where roaches can escape to.

IPM Approach for Indoor Cockroaches:

- Thoroughly vacuum and wipe the premises with hot soapy water.
- Place baits (gel and station type) according to label directions.
- Check baits monthly until populations decrease, then quarterly.
- Replace empty bait stations because they provide additional harborage for cockroaches when empty.
- If populations are very high, a "clean-out" using a liquid insecticide mixed with an insect growth regulator, such as hydroxyflorfen or pyriproxyfen, in cracks and crevices may be needed to knock down the initial population.
- Place baits in areas not treated with liquid insecticide or place baits 4 to 6 weeks after spraying.

An IPM Approach for Outdoor Cockroaches: An 80 percent reduction in cockroach abundance was achieved using the following IPM approach.

- Only use a thin layer of mulch around the home that extends 1 foot out from the foundation. This will allow drying time and make conditions less conducive to cockroach survival.
- Apply control products within 3 feet of the home in pine straw, fallen leaves, or ivy, and next to other cockroach habitats such as garden borders, large rocks, or railroad ties. Always follow the label.
- ◆ Treat sheltered cracks and crevices such as porch corners, under ledges, in crawl space gratings, and under garage doors. Baits or liquid products can be used, but not both at the same time in the same place.

"Bugs are not going to inherit the earth. They own it now. So we might as well make peace with the landlord." ~ Thomas Eisner



Fresh from Florida

by Sharon Treen, County Extension Director

Winter Squash

Winter squash are hard-skinned edible members of the gourd family. In contrast to tender, young summer squash, winter squash are harvested at a mature stage when the skins have grown hard. Because of these protective skins, winter squash have a much longer storage life than their summer counterparts. The most common varieties of winter squash include Acorn, Butternut, Hubbard, Spaghetti and Turban. They will store for at least a month in a dry and cool location (50-55 degrees). Storage in the refrigerator will cause squash to deteriorate more quickly, but is acceptable for a week or two. Cut squash will keep for up to a week if tightly wrapped and refrigerated.

Though many varieties are available year round, winter squash is best from early fall through winter. The season for winter squash grown in Florida differs somewhat with the varieties, being available primarily November through January. Some varieties are also available April through June.

Packed with nutrients, winter squash is high in Vitamin A, C and niacin. Winter squash is also high in fiber and complex carbohydrates.

Winter squash vary greatly in size. Choose winter squash that are heavy for their size. Slight variations in skin color does not influence flavor, but avoid squash with cuts, punctures, sunken or moldy spots on the rind. A tender rind is a sign of immaturity and should be avoided.



Deep color is also a sign of a good winter squash. Green acorn squash may have splashes of orange, but avoid any that have orange on more than half the surface; butternut squash should be uniformly tan with no tinge of green. If possible, choose squash with their stems

attached. The stems should be rounded and dry, not collapsed, blackened, or moist.

Though they have a range of flavors, most varieties can be substituted for one another in recipes. The one exception is spaghetti squash, which has uniquely textured flesh that pulls apart in slender strands.

In preparing to use squash, rinse off any dirt. The hard skin of some types of winter squash can prove challenging to cut. Use a heavy chef's knife or cleaver. First, make a shallow cut in the skin to use as a guide to prevent the knife blade from slipping. Then place the blade in the cut and tap the base of the knife (near the handle) with your fist (or a hammer) until the squash is cut through. Scoop out the seeds and fibers and cut the squash into smaller chunks if desired. Add squash chunks alongside roasting meats or add chunks to hearty soups and stews. You can also boil or steam chunks of squash for 15-20 minutes until tender. You may peel the squash before or after. It is easier to peel after cooking, but must cool first.

Squash may also be baked in their shell. Slice the squash in half lengthwise, scoop out the seeds and place face down on a cookie sheet. Water may be added around the squash to avoid drying out and hasten cooking. The squash flesh may be basted with oil or butter. Cook until very tender. Acorn squash is very good baked face up with a little melted butter, brown sugar or syrup.

Spaghetti squash can be baked the same way. Bake until tender and when cool enough to handle, take a fork and begin to scrape at the squash flesh. The flesh will separate into strands. Serve spaghetti squash with your favorite pasta sauce or chill the crunchy strands and toss them with a light vinaigrette dressing, fresh herbs and chunks of fresh tomato.

Florida Winter Squash

Selection: Choose winter squash that are heavy for their size and have a hard, deep colored rind. Slight variations in skin color do not influence flavor, but avoid squash with cuts, punctures, sunken spots or with moldy spots on the rind. A tender rind is a sign of immaturity and would result in poor eating quality. Buy 3 to 4 pounds for 4 servings, generally.

Storage: The hard skin of winter squash protects the flesh and allows it to be stored longer than summer squash. It does not require refrigeration and can be kept in a cool dark place for a month or so depending on the variety. A temperature of 45 to 50 degrees F is ideal.

Use and preparation: Baking is the most popular way to prepare winter squash, but it can also be steamed, simmered or mashed. It is a popular main dish, side dish or can be used to make desserts or soups. To freeze squash, cut into cubes and remove seeds. Cook covered in water until squash is tender. Remove rind and mash the squash. Pack into containers leaving 1/2" headspace. It can also be baked and frozen, and will keep for about a year. To bake, wash, cut into halves or individual servings, remove seeds. Bake at 350 degrees F. For Butternut, place cut side down in shallow pan. For Acorn and Hubbard, place cut side up in shallow

Autumn Squash Casserole

Yield: 8 ½-cup servings

Time: 70 mins

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2½ cups sliced and peeled winter squash, such as acorn, butternut or hubbard
- ◆ 1½ cups sliced cooking apples, such as Macintosh, Granny Smith or Rome
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ ½ teaspoon nutmeg

Preparation:

1. Wash and prepare squash and apples. For extra fiber, keep peel on apples.
2. Alternate layers of squash and apples in 8x8 inch pan; end with apples.
3. Sprinkle spices over top layer.

4. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 350 degrees for 45-60 minutes until squash is tender.



Butternut squash

Roasted Acorn Squash

Yield: 8 servings

Time: 70 mins

Ingredients:

- ◆ 1 small acorn squash
- ◆ 2 teaspoons light brown sugar
- ◆ Vegetable cooking spray
- ◆ ¼ teaspoon salt
- ◆ 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- ◆ 1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
- ◆ ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preparation

1. Cut squash in half crosswise. Remove and discard seeds. Cut squash halves into quarters.
2. Place squash, skin side down, on large baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Note: Squash quarters need to remain level and upright to hold the spiced butter. A shallow casserole dish sometimes holds the squash in place better for baking than a flat sheet.

3. Combine butter with remaining ingredients and brush evenly over cut sides of squash.
4. Cover loosely with foil and bake at 350°F for 30 minutes.
5. Uncover and bake 30 more minutes or until squash is tender.



Acorn squash



The Urban Forest

UF/IFAS EDIS Fact Sheet
ST-568

Winged Sumac

Introduction: Winged Sumac is well-suited to natural and informal landscapes where the underground runners spread to provide dense, shrubby cover for birds and wildlife. This species is the best of the sumacs for ornamental planting because of its lustrous dark green foliage which turns a brilliant orange-red in fall. The fall color display is frequently enjoyed along interstate highways, as the plant readily colonizes these and other disturbed sites. The tiny, greenish-yellow flowers, borne in compact, terminal panicles, are followed by showy red clusters of berries which persist into the winter and attract wildlife.

General Information:

Scientific name: *Rhus copallina* (pronounced roose kop-al-EYE-nuh).

Common name(s): Shining Sumac, Winged Sumac

Family: *Anacardiaceae*.

USDA hardiness zones: 5 through 10.

Origin: Native to North America.

Uses: Winged sumac can be planted in containers or above-ground planters. It is recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway. Winged sumac has been successfully grown in urban areas where air pollution, poor drainage, compacted soil, and/or drought are common.

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

Description:

Height: 12 to 18 feet.

Spread: 12 to 18 feet.

Crown uniformity: irregular outline or silhouette.

Crown shape: round; upright.

Growth rate: medium.

Use and Management:

Winged Sumac grows well on dry, sandy soils in full sun to part shade and requires little care. It is best used as a component of a shrub border, where its deciduous habit adds interest to an evergreen landscape. This makes a good roadside plant due to its drought tolerance and seasonal interest. It has not been widely used as a specimen or small tree but with some training and pruning makes a nice small tree located in a groundcover or near the deck or patio in a home landscape. Seasonal pruning would be needed to eliminate suckers and root sprouts.

Propagation is by division of the suckers.

Pests

Aphids suck plant juices. Aphids may be dislodged with a high pressure water spray from the garden hose. Scales can usually be controlled with horticultural oil.

Diseases

Several fungi cause cankers leading to dieback. Fertilize to keep plants healthy and prune out infected parts. Fusarium wilt infects roots, causing the leaves to droop and wilt. A light infection causes only gradual dwarfing or yellowing and premature red leaf coloration. A leaf spot causes gray spots with purplish margins that merge, giving the leaves a scorched appearance. Various genera of powdery mildew-forming fungi form a white coating on the leaves. Verticillium wilt causes wilting of individual stems, followed by death of the foliage. Eventually the entire plant dies. Prune out infected branches. Do not replant in the same spot with sumac or other susceptible plants.



Winged Sumac with berries



Winged Sumac, showing branch and leaf arrangement

Garden Calendar

*Taken from Guide to Successful Gardening
by the Flagler County Master Gardeners*

O ctober

General

If it does not rain, water as needed every seven to ten days, putting down approximately one-half to three-fourths inch of water each time.

Do not use insecticides unless absolutely necessary. Many beneficial insects are active in the fall and if allowed to live will help reduce bug problems next spring.

Lawn

Do not fertilize after mid-October. If you missed the September fertilization, do not compensate by fertilizing late this month.

Due to slower growth at this time of year, you can reduce your mowing frequency.

Remember, only one third of the grass blade should be cut at a time.

If you need to over seed with ryegrass to fill in bare spots in the lawn, you may do so this month.

Food Garden

Ornamental gourds are ready to harvest. Wait until dry on the vine to pick.

Plant this month: beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, collards, endive, rutabaga, kohlrabi, mustard, onions, radish, kale, spinach, strawberries, Swiss chard, and turnips.



Florida Strawberries – R Miceli

Fruit

Navel, Hamlin, and Parson Brown oranges should be checked for ripeness starting this month. They may still be green—you will have to pick one and taste to determine ripeness. Do **not** wait until they turn yellow/orange to check for ripeness.

If you did not fertilize your citrus last month, then you can still do a final fertilization by the second week of this month.

Landscape

Mulch flower and shrub beds for winter. Apply up to two inches of mulch.

Annuals to plant are bachelor buttons, calendula, dianthus, delphinium, hollyhocks, foxglove, larkspur, ornamental cabbage, poppies, pansy, petunia, Shasta daisy, snapdragon, and sweet alyssums.

Bulbs may be planted this month! Many reliable varieties include agapanthus, African iris, amaryllis, Aztec lily, calla, daylilies, hurricane lily, narcissus, spider lily, walking iris, and zephyr (rain) lily.

If you missed fertilizing your palm trees last month, you can do the final application no later than the second week of this month.

Poinsettia, Christmas cactus and kalanchoe require uninterrupted periods of decreasing light to bloom. If you have them indoors, put them in a closet each evening for four to six weeks to give them time to set blooms. **Outside**, ensure that they do not get unexpected light after it gets dark. If the dark period is interrupted, flowering will be delayed or not occur at all.

N_{ovember}

General

Water every ten to fourteen days or as needed, putting down one-half to three-fourths inch of water each time.

Potted houseplants that have been outdoors all summer and fall can be injured by temperatures as low as fifty-five degrees. Now is the time to bring them back in. Clean up and inspect plants for insects prior to bringing them back inside.

Black widow spiders are full grown and active by this time of year. Be careful when reaching into dark areas in the garden or garage.

Lawn

Brown patch disease may begin rearing its ugly head this month if weather is rainy and soils stay wet. If an area begins to turn yellow and stolons begin to decay or rot, spot treat with a fungicide labeled for use on lawns as needed. Reduce watering frequency to the recommended rate and frequency to help culturally control this disease problem.

If you were plagued with dollarweed this summer, you can treat the lawn with a pre-emergent herbicide now. Follow the directions on the label.

Food Garden

Early in the month you can plant arugula, parsley, sage, thyme, chives, and rosemary for fresh herbs for your recipes!

You can also plant beets, broccoli, cabbage, collards, endive, kohlrabi, mustard, onions, radish, spinach, and Swiss chard.

If no soil pH test has been done in over two years, have it checked at the Extension Office.



Navel Oranges, J. Resser

Fruit

Many varieties of citrus are ripe by this month, check routinely.

Landscape

Any trees and fully grown shrubs that need to be transplanted should be root pruned this month. Late fall and winter is a good time to transplant.

Annuals and perennials that can be planted are calendula, dianthus, delphinium, foxglove, larkspur, flowering cabbage, flowering kale, pansy, petunia, Shasta daisy, verbena, violas, snapdragon.

You can also plant agapanthus, African iris, amaryllis, Aztec lily, calla lily, daylily, hurricane lily, kaffir lily, walking iris, narcissus, and zephyr (rain) lily.

D_{ecember}

General

If it does not rain, water every ten to fourteen days or as needed, putting down one half to three-fourths inch of water each time.

If you have not had a soil pH test in more than two years, you should have one done at the Extension Office.

Lawn

The warm season grasses (St. Augustinegrass, Bahiagrass, Zoysiagrass, and Bermudagrass) should be going dormant at this time of year. It is perfectly fine to have a brown (dormant) lawn from now until February or March. St. Augustinegrass weed control can be done at this time. Products such as Atrazine may be used during the cool season for controlling broadleaf weeds. Follow the label instructions for application rates and frequency.

Winter annual and broadleaf weeds in Bahiagrass lawns can be controlled with 2,4-D, which is a post-emergent herbicide. Follow the label instructions for application rates and frequency.

Food Garden

Peppers, eggplant, and strawberries planted in September should be ready to enjoy.

Crops that can be planted: broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, collards, kale, kohlrabi, leek, lettuce, mustard, onions, parsley, English peas and radish.



Poinsettia

Fruit

Many orange, grapefruit, and tangerine varieties will be ripe this month; check their progress.

Landscape

Any cold sensitive plants should be covered on nights when the temperature is expected to drop below thirty-five degrees. Be sure to uncover them the next morning so they will be exposed to the sunlight.

Bedding plants to plant this month include: carnations, digitalis, pansies, petunias, shasta daisies, and snapdragons.

Happy Holidays!!



Master Gardener Spotlight

By Ruth A. Micieli, Horticulture Program Assistant and Master Gardener Coordinator

A Garden Made in the Shade

Summer rains gave a big boost to our demonstration gardens at the Extension Service, including the weeds! Master Gardener volunteers were very busy this past month and a half cleaning up and giving some of the gardens a facelift.

The Shade garden is one that stands out with all its vibrant color. Master Gardeners Angela Hill and Doris Boyden are the key 'Garden Heads' for that particular garden along with Kathy Warner and Bev Fox, who have kept the area managed during the summer months.

One of Angela's many talents she possesses is a colored pencil artist. She has an eye for color, texture and movement in the garden and has applied her talents to the Shade Garden over the past few years. As you walk through the garden, it not only feels cooler, but your eye is drawn to the many colors and elements within it.

They are now in the process of expanding the garden to the other side of the walkway to 'mirror' the existing garden.

We invite you to come out and enjoy the scenery!



(Continued from page 1)

ral habitat of our animal neighbors, they will start to be seen more frequently in places we rarely used to see them. Deer are very large animals and can be voracious eaters. They can put a real hurt on ornamental and vegetable plants alike. If you are being plagued by deer, a fence is probably the best remedy if that is something justified by the expense of whatever the deer are consuming. Another option is deer repellent. These products can be expensive and short-lived during rainy periods. Many are applied to the plants and have a foul odor or taste. For a lot more information on this issue, see UF IFAS EDIS Publication #WEC135.

Q• My trees are turning brown and the leaves are still hanging on. What's happening to them? Are they dead?

A: Depending on the tree, they may not necessarily be dead, yet. Laurel wilt disease affecting the Redbay trees have devastated our entire state. However, if it is not a Redbay tree, then the most likely cause of this problems is over-watering. The recent heavy rains and inattention to home irrigation systems has resulted in many places getting WAY too much water. Like many things in gardening, just enough (enough water, fertilizer, pesticide, herbicide) is better than too much.

Q• Should I fertilize my citrus, lawn, ornamentals, etc.?

A: Mid-September is the best time to do the last fertilizer application in the landscape. However, if you missed that timing, then no later than mid-October for your last fertilizer application. Otherwise, wait until next spring. We do not want to encourage new growth over the winter months for our deciduous plants and lawns. They need to rest in winter.



Honey Bees

Honey bees are amazing insects that not only produce honey, but through pollination, also help produce one-third of the food we eat.

A single bee colony can contain up to 60,000 bees, including worker bees, drones, and a queen. Each type of bee serves a specific role. The drones mate with the queen to produce new worker bees, and the worker bees perform all of the labor tasks like gathering pollen and nectar from flowers.

You can make your garden safe for honey bees by using pesticides only when needed. Don't spray when plants are flowering or in the mornings when bees are most active.

You can even set up your own hive. The bees will help pollinate the plants in your garden, and you'll be able to harvest the delicious honey they produce.

Want to find out more about becoming a beekeeper? Go to <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/IN/IN84700.pdf> or ask your local Extension office for a copy of Florida Master Beekeeper Program Requirements, ENY155.

UF Resources For Gardeners

- Solutions For Your Life
<http://solutionsforyourlife.com>
- UF/IFAS Publications (EDIS)
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>
- Florida Yards & Neighborhoods
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>
- UF Environmental Horticulture Dept.
<http://hort.ufl.edu/>
- Florida Master Gardener Program
<http://mastergardener.ifas.ufl.edu>
- Florida-friendly Landscaping
<http://www.floridayards.org/>

For more information, contact your county Extension office or visit GardeninginaMinute.com.

Gardening in a Minute is a production of the University of Florida's Environmental Horticulture Department, IFAS Extension, and WUFT-FM.