

Gardening Tips

By Wendy L. Wilber

Fall 2009

Fall is a great time to garden. The weather is cool, the bugs are few and the weeds don't grow as fast. This is a great time to sow wildflowers seeds, plant a fruit tree or start your fall vegetable garden so you will have plenty of greens to go through the winter.

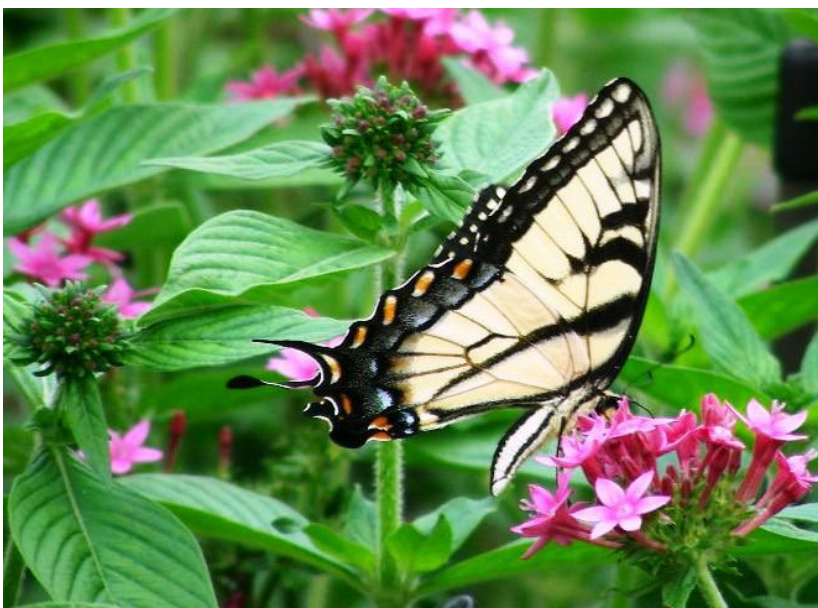
If this newsletter has helped you out this year please drop me an email and tell me, especially if it has helped in plant selection, fertilization, irrigation or pest management wilbewl@ufl.edu

Vegetables

Plant hardy vegetables like beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, collards, carrots, kale, mustard, onions, kohlrabi, leeks, shallots, radishes, spinach and turnips before the end of November for harvest during the winter.

Gardens planted early this fall may already be producing. Yet, in spite of the cooler temperatures, many gardens are still experiencing pest problems.

Powdery mildew may be problem on cucurbits, like cucumbers, squash and pumpkins. The fungus



Pentas will bloom and attract butterflies until the first freeze.

will appear as a white, powdery growth on the leaves. Severely affected leaves lose their normal green color and become pale yellow, then brown and shriveled. Fruit may sunscald as a result of loss of foliage. Use a fungicide like Bayleton or copper sulfate to control powdery mildew.

Vegetables in the cabbage family (crucifers), such as broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, collards, kale,

mustard, radish, rutabaga and turnips may have a problem with downy mildew.

The fungus is evident as angular, yellow spots on the upper leaf surface. As the spots enlarge, a general leaf yellowing develops, followed by browning and death of leaf tissue.

The mildew spots on leaves of cabbage impair the appearance and may spread into the inner leaves. Basic copper sulfate sprays



For more information,
contact the Alachua County Extension Office at
2800 NE 39th Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32609
(352) 955-2402 or TDD/TYY (352) 955-2406

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This is the best time to plant your strawberries for an early harvest.

or maneb fungicides can be used to control downy mildew.

For information, obtain the Florida **Vegetable Gardening Guide (SP 103)** from our office.

Herbs

Best bets for growing though the winter are coriander, (cilantro in other words) chervil, chives, dill, fennel, garlic, lovage, oregano, parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme.

Fruits and Nuts

Harvest citrus as late as possible when sugars are at their peak but before any freeze below 28 degrees. To protect young citrus trees, bank the trunk with clean soil prior to onset of cold weather. Mound soil bands over the bud union and up into the scaffold limbs. Other options for cold protection include thermal trunk wraps, heating and covering.

Plant strawberries from now until December. Buy certified disease-free plants and plant so the crown is even with the surrounding soil. Since strawberries are sensitive to environmental conditions like

day length and temperature, it is important to select varieties adapted to our area. Suggested varieties are Sweet Charlie, Florida 90, Chandler and Osa Grande.

Pecans are maturing now. They can be knocked down with a pole or allowed to drop naturally. Harvest the nuts before the squirrels decide to collect them.

Watch for twigs that appear cut and have fallen from the trees. This may be the work of an insect called a twig girdler. Make sure you dispose of the twigs because the girdlers lay their eggs in them.

Containerized fruit trees may be planted now. Make sure to plant recommended varieties for Alachua County. Ask for the publication, **Fruit and Nut Varieties for Alachua County (Fact Sheet #8)**, from the Extension Office.

Flowers

There are still a few flowers that can be planted at this time. Candy tuft, China doll, carnation, dianthus, fox glove, ornamental cabbage/kale, nasturtium, pansies, petunia, snap dragon, Shasta daisies and sweet peas may be planted now. For more information you can obtain **Bedding Plants: Selection, Establishment and Maintenance (Cir 1134)** from the Extension Office.

Bulbs that can be planted now include African lily, Aztec lily, calla, kaffir lily,

CURRENT EVENTS

Perennials & Butterfly Garden

October 28, 6:00-7:30 pm

This class will teach you to select great perennials to attract butterflies and caterpillars into your landscape. Class will be presented by Wendy Wilber, Environmental Horticulture Agent.

Groundcovers for Landscape

November 5, 6:00-7:30 pm

Learn how to choose the right groundcover for a low maintenance landscape in the shade, sun and difficult areas. Groundcover plants, when properly taken care of, provide dense soil cover, suppress weed growth, and prevent soil erosion. Class will be presented by Wendy Wilber, Environmental Horticulture Agent.

Shitake Mushrooms

November 14, 11:00 am

Learn the basics of shitake mushroom growing for your home garden. Shitake mushrooms are grown on oak logs. You will learn how to prepare and inoculate the logs for shitake mushroom production. Class will be presented by Wendy Wilber, Environmental Horticulture Agent.

Container Gardening

November 18, 6:00 - 7:00 pm

The simple concept of growing plants in pots or urns in addition to other objects offers you a variety of enjoyable and creative ways to maintain and experiment with your garden. Create containers for flowers, herbs, vegetables and more. Class will be presented by Wendy Wilber, Environmental Horticulture Agent.

If you would like to register for any of these classes please call 352 337 6209. If you have any questions about the class you can call 352 955 2402. The classes are free of charge.



marcia, morea, narcissus, snowflake, spider lily, watsonia, zephyr lily, anemone, grape hyacinth, leopard lily, pineapple lily and star of Bethlehem.

Tulips, most daffodils and hyacinths will flower here, but they must be pre-chilled at 40 degrees for 60 days before planting. Bulbs chilled in the refrigerator adjacent to ripening fruit may fail to bloom. Ripening fruits produce ethylene gas which can abort flower buds. Bulbs which require chilling should be planted immediately from cold storage. After blooming, discard plants as they rarely flower for more than one season.

WILDLIFE EVENTS

- Cedar waxwings come south for the winter. Their flocks can be seen on cedars, hollies, cherry laurels, privet, and other fruit plants.
- Hunting seasons for deer, turkey, quail and gray squirrel are in full swing.
- Look for downy, hairy, red-bellied and red-headed woodpeckers on suet feeders.
- Bald eagles begin their nesting season. Look for spectacular aerial courtship displays.
- As water temperatures lower, manatees begin to move to relatively warm waters at springs. Boaters beware of idle speed zones.
- November typically is the driest month of the year in north central Florida.
- Sandhill cranes return from their breeding grounds up north (Only a small number live here all year round).

Varieties of daffodils that will come back year after year with minimal chilling include; 'Carlton', 'Erlcheer', and 'Ice follies'. Now is a good time to start forcing bulbs like amaryllis and paperwhite narcissus in containers for a beautiful indoor display for the holidays. Be sure to select a stable pot and healthy bulbs; remember, the bigger the bulb, the bigger the flower.

Caladiums, begonias, gladiolus and dahlias need to be dug up, stored in vermiculite or sawdust and kept in a dry place. Divide and reset amaryllis and day lilies if they are too crowded. You can obtain the publication, *Bulbs for Florida (Cir 552)*, for more information.

Lawns

It is too late to fertilize lawn grass now. Wait until March to fertilize. With the cooler temperatures your turf grass will need less water. If you have a program clock controlling your irrigation, adjust to reduce the frequency of irrigation. If you want a lush lawn all winter, you can overseed your yard with annual ryegrass. Use 5 to 15 pounds per 1,000 square feet depending on how thick you want the grass.

If you have had winter weed problems, you can apply a pre-emergence herbicide now to prevent germination. However, do not use if you covered with ryegrass.

Trees and Shrubs

Look for fall flowering plants like golden rain tree, cassia and night blooming jasmine. Deciduous



The christmas senna's bright yellow blooms draw a lot of attention in the fall.

species like dogwood, sycamore, maple and tulip trees are also providing fall leaf colors.

Our camellia bushes are gearing up for their annual display. Be on the lookout for feeding damage on the camellia foliage that we sometimes see in the fall. Small holes all over the leaf are seen but the insect that is feeding is not usually noticed. The damage is caused by a small black beetle that lives at the base of the shrub and feeds on the leaves at night.

Spraying around the mulch below the tree with a liquid Sevin may control this insect if it is injuring your camellias.

Containerized trees and shrubs can be planted now. Wait until leaves drop to transplant deciduous species. Remember, never plant deeper than the plant was growing in the container.

Break up the root ball to encourage new root growth into surrounding soil and water every 2-3 days.

If your camellias, magnolias, gardenias, loquats and coniferous



evergreens have developed scale insect problems, apply an oil spray to control adults.

Leaf spotting diseases can be seen on some trees and shrubs. If the plant is deciduous, there is no need to spray. Just collect the fallen leaves and compost.

For great information from IFAS please check out the website www.solutionsforyourlife.com

And be sure to listen for Gardening in a Minute on WUFT 89.1 during the evening news show.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please e-mail Wendy at wilbewl@ufl.edu.

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Funding for the duplication of this publication is provided in part by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners.

For persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations, please contact Wendy Wilber at the Alachua County Extension Office, at least five working days prior to the program so that proper consideration may be given to the request.