

August Gardening Guide 2009

By Patricia Porchey

During these hot muggy summer days, we tend to gravitate to that picnic table under a tree's canopy or park in the space shaded by a tree. We know that the temperature will be significantly reduced in the shade of a tree compared to open spaces in the glaring sunlight. Trees shading your home can translate into energy savings.

Did you know that car speeds are reduced by 7-12 mph when driving down a canopied road? There is a definite correlation between our emotional and physical well-being when it comes to trees. Property values are increased by 5-9 % when there are existing trees. We like trees.

The City of Sarasota values trees and has been a designated "Tree City" for 23 years by the Arbor Day Foundation. This is a "national recognition for greener communities" and it "tells visitors that here is a community that cares about its environment." The national Millennium Arbor Day celebration was celebrated in Sarasota in 2000 on the grounds of the Ringling Museum. The Millennium Tree Trail was planted with 43 trees, large and small, native and non-native, all suitable for our area.

The city's Street Tree Program has resulted in the planting of over 100,000 trees in the city right of ways. Sarasota County has a successful Neighborhood Initiative Grant Program and a Grand Tree Ordinance; both are intended to respect the beauty of trees and their intrinsic value to the environment.

What are the benefits of trees to you as a homeowner? They

- lower temperatures in summer & reduce energy cost by 1/3
- improve air quality by reducing air and groundwater pollution and release oxygen into the air
- channel air flow and provide air-insulating space
- create privacy and deflect wind
- provide habitat for wildlife
- produce food – berries, fruits and nuts
- provide seasonal color with flowers and leaves
- give emotional comfort with their aesthetics

For more information about the above programs, contact the county call center, 861-5000 or the city of Sarasota at 365-2200. For information on selecting and planting trees, contact the Master Gardener Help Desk at 861-9807.

Timely reminder:

Read the label carefully before applying weed control products to turf since many products cannot be used when the temperature is over 85 degrees.

Blooming & planting guide

- Vegetables (seeds at end of month) & Herbs (plants): Basil, broccoli, celery, collards, corn, eggplant, lemon balm, marjoram, Mexican tarragon, mint, okra, onions, oregano, pole beans, pumpkin, rosemary, southern peas, summer squash, thyme, and watermelon.
- Annuals: Begonia, Celosia, Coleus, Cosmos, Dahlia, dusty miller, marigold, Portulaca, periwinkle, Salvia, and Zinnia.
- Perennials: African iris, beach buttercup, blackberry lily, Caladium, Coreopsis, firespike, Gaillardia, Gaura, Iris, Jacobinia, Kalanchoe, milkweed, Pentas, Salvia, society garlic, and Verbena..
- Blooming plants: Cordia, crape myrtle, gingers, gloriosa lily, goldenrod, Ixora, Lantana, Magnolia, Oleander, orange jasmine, yellow Poinciana, red and yellow shrimp plants, rouge plant, Plumbago, Thryallis, Tibouchina and Thunbergia.
- Fruits in Season: Avocado, banana, Barbados cherry, blueberry, carambola, citrus (calamondin, lemon, and lime), cocoplum, fig, guava, jaboticaba, kumquat, longan, mango, Monstera, muscadine grape, papaya, passionfruit, pineapple, sea grape, and sugar apple.

Upcoming educational classes:

Call 861-9900 to register for the following classes.

- Market Gardening: Introduction, Twin Lakes Park, 6:00 p.m. August 19
- Market Gardening: Holistic Management, Twin Lakes Park, 6:00 p.m. August 24
- Organic Vegetable Gardening, Orange Blossom Community Garden, 18th & Orange, 1:00 p.m. August 1
- Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Nine Principles, North Port Library, 6:30 p.m. August 4
- Household Pests, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. August 5
- What to do about Ants, Shamrock Park, 2:00 p.m. August 6
- What to do about Ants, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. August 12
- Organic Vegetable Gardening: Vegetable Pests, Laurel Park, 9:30 a.m. August 15
- Termites in the Home, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. August 19
- Farm to School Program, Twin Lakes Park, 4:00 p.m. August 19
- After the Hurricane: Caring for Storm-damaged Plants, Shamrock Park, 2:00 p.m. August 20
- Invasive Insects, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. August 26
- Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Creating Your Florida Yard, North Port Library, 6:30 p.m. September 1
- Green Pest Management, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. September 2
- Is that a dangerous Spider? Shamrock Park, 2:00 p.m. September 3
- Trees in the Landscape, Gulf Gate Library, 1:30 p.m. September 4
- Organic Vegetable Gardening, Orange Blossom Community Garden, 18th & Orange, 1:00 p.m. September 4

For information

The **Master Gardener Help Desk** now has an email address: mghelpdesk@scgov.net to answer questions. It is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m.-Noon and 1:00-4:00 p.m.

You can call (941-861-9807) or visit our office at Twin Lakes Park on Clark Road east of I-75 with landscape questions. We also have weekly satellite help desks at the four south county libraries and every third Saturday of the month at the **Downtown Farmer's Market**.

(Patricia Porchey is an Urban Horticulture Agent with University of Florida/IFAS Sarasota County Extension. Website: <http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu>)

Submitted: July 28, 2009