

June Gardening Guide 2008

By: Patricia Porchey

For some, June is synonymous with the beginning of summer and school being out. For gardeners it means the rainy season is finally here, but accompanying the needed moisture comes the hurricane season. This year it also signifies the start of a 4-month hiatus from fertilizer applications to the landscape.

What are all the implications of these three phenomena? Our drought is coming to an end and aquifers will be replenished. Our plants will reward us with much anticipated growth and bountiful flowers and/or fruit. The regular weekly rains are also a signal to homeowners to turn off the automatic sprinklers and run them on an “as needed” basis only.

The new fertilizer ordinance makes it illegal to apply Nitrogen and Phosphorus during the rainy summer months. The reasoning behind this is to prevent stormwater runoff into our bays and lakes. During the rainy, season fertilizer is more apt to run off our property or quickly leach through our sandy soils, thus negating the application’s benefit to our landscape, but significantly impacting where it ends up. If your turf needs greening up this summer, you can apply chelated iron.

There are preventative measures you can take to make your landscape more “hurricane ready.” Giving your palms a “hurricane cut” is not one of them as this actually weakens the bud and exposes it to wind damage. Did you know that it is illegal to give palms this “hurricane cut” in Broward and Miami-Dade counties? Their experience with hurricanes has taught them that healthy palms withstand a hurricane better than stressed palms. Every time a palm is “hurricane cut,” it is stressed. When pruning palms, only remove the brown fronds

Here are more tips to protect your trees from wind damage.

- Select trees to plant with good limb structure – even spacing up and around the main stem.
- Prune young trees to encourage good limb structure.
- Avoid planting trees in restricted spaces – know the tree’s mature size.
- Avoid planting too close to structures – a large tree should be at least 25 feet from the foundation.
- Avoid species prone to damage.
- Select a species that can survive flooding in low areas.
- Remove dead, broken, diseased, and crossing branches.
- Thin the canopy to allow air movement, but do not top trees as this makes the trees more susceptible to damage from insects, disease, and wind.

Blooming and planting guide:

- Vegetables & Herbs (plant herbs from transplants and vegetables from seeds or transplants): Basil, borage, catnip, collard and mustard greens, eggplant, lemon

balm, marjoram, mint, okra, oregano, rosemary, southern peas, summer savory, sweet potatoes, thyme and turnip.

- Annuals: Begonia Celosia, Coleus, Crossandra, Gazania, Gerbera daisy, Gomphrena, marigold, Melampodium, Nicotiana, periwinkle, Portulaca, Salvia, Torenia, and Zinnia.
- Perennials: Blue daze, Gaillardia, Coreopsis, daylily, Pentas, *Ruellia caroliniensis* (native), Salvia, Shasta daisy, society garlic, Stokes aster and Verbena.
- Fruits in season: Banana, blueberry, Carambola, guava, citrus (calamondin, key lime, lemon and lime), Jackfruit, fig, kumquat, lychee, macadamia, mango, papaya and pineapple.
- Blooming plants: African tulip tree, Allamanda, beautyberry, bird of paradise, Cannas, crape jasmine, crape myrtle, dwarf Poinciana, Gardenia, Jacaranda, Jerusalem thorn, Magnolia, Mexican flame vine, ponytail palm, Plumbago, Plumeria, royal Poinciana, thryallis, and Yucca.

Upcoming educational classes:

You may now register for classes on-line at our website:

<http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/EdSched.htm> or call 861-9900.

- “Creating your Florida Yard” at North Port Library, June 3 at 12:30 p.m.
- “Ants, Ants, Ants” at 2817 Cattlemen Road, June 4 at 10:00 a.m.
- “What is the Master Gardener Program?” at 2817 Cattlemen Road, June 4 at 4:00 p.m.
- “Reduce Stormwater Runoff” at Shamrock Park, June 5 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Sustainability Theatre-Alternative Energies Film & Discussion” at Jacaranda Library, June 5 at 6:00 p.m.
- “Sustainability Theatre-Alternative Energies Film & Discussion” at Gulf Gate Library, June 13 at 1:30 p.m.
- “Master Wildlifer Certification Course” at Crowley Museum begins June 14.
- “Creating your Florida Yard” at Fruitville Library, June 16 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Container Gardening” at Jacaranda Library, June 17 at 10:00 a.m.
- “Sustainability Theatre-Organic Foods” at Fruitville Library, June 17 at 6:00 p.m.
- “Pests in and around the Florida Home” at 2817 Cattlemen Road, June 18 at 10:00 a.m.
- “Wildland-Urban Interface” at 2817 Cattlemen Road, June 18 at 4:00 p.m.
- “Bed Bugs” at Shamrock Park, June 19 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Sustainability Theatre-Global Warming Film & Discussion” at North Port Library, June 19 at 5:30 p.m.
- “Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Workshop” at 2817 Cattlemen Road, June 25 at 4:00 p.m.

For information

If you have questions concerning your landscape, please call or visit the **Master Gardener Help Desk** at 861-9807. The **Help Desk** is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m.-Noon and 1:00-4:00 p.m. We have weekly satellite help desks at the four south

county libraries and every third Saturday of the month at the **Downtown Farmer's Market.**

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