

September Gardening Guide

By: Patricia Porchey

A recent trip to Tallahassee led to tours of two estates from the late 1800s and early 1900s. One estate's landscape was dominated by spring-blooming azaleas, camellias and formal boxwood hedges which were all being irrigated. The other estate was unassuming and even had signs throughout the landscape assuring visitors that the imperfect look was intentional to be true to the original landscape. Shade from the grand old oaks provided much relief from the 100+ temperatures. What does this have to do with gardening in Sarasota?

The importance of planting drought-resistant plants has never been more important than this year when even our summer rains have been disappointing. We have seen that those plants indigenous to this area can tolerate stresses better than most of the imported "pretty" exotic plants. When water is at a premium, it makes sense to minimize water-guzzling plants and return to native plants.

Another noteworthy lesson from the tours was the need to be self sustaining and grow our own food. In those early days, growing their own food was essential to their survival. Now is a good time to embark on the road to sustainability and plant a fall garden. It's also an excellent time to plant fruit trees. We are fortunate to be living where one can have fresh fruit every day of the year in one's own dooryard. The abundance of fruits now in season include Atemoya, avocado, banana, carambola, citrus (calamondin, lemon, and lime), fig, guava, kumquat, monstera, muscadine grape, papaya, pomegranate, sea grape, and sugar apple. The trees can also serve as a specimen tree in the landscape or provide shade for energy savings on our electric bill.

Gardening activities:

- Monitor for lace bugs on avocado and azalea plants and control with horticultural soap or oil.
- Monitor for turf grass pests such as chinch bugs, mole crickets, sod webworms, and armyworms and spot treat. Hear entomologist, Dr. Fred Santana, tell you more on September 20 at 2:00 p.m. at Shamrock Park.
- Bare areas in turf can be re-sodded now or over seeded with Bahia or Bermuda seed. However, if the daily rain doesn't come, supplemental watering will be needed.
- Read labels on herbicides before treating weeds in turf grass as most have a warning not to use the product if the temperature is above 85 degrees. Wait until our weather cools to apply these products.
- Thin trees with dense canopies to prevent damage from high winds. This does not mean topping trees.
- Do not hurricane-cut palm trees. Retaining their green fronds will aid in their survival and longevity.

Blooming & Planting Guide:

Vegetables & Herbs: Basil, beans, Borage, broccoli, cabbage, celery, chervil, collards, coriander, corn, cucumber, cumin, eggplant, fennel, leek, lettuce, marjoram, mint, mustard, onions, peas, pepper, radish, rosemary, sage, squash (summer & winter), thyme, tomato, and watermelon.

Annuals: Ageratum, Alyssum, Begonia, calendula, Celosia, Coleus, Cosmos, dusty miller, marigold, Melampodium, periwinkle, Portulaca, Salvia, and Zinnia.

Perennials: African iris, Amaryllis, beach buttercup, blue daze, bush daisy, calla lily, cigar plant, Coreopsis, elephant ears, Gaillardia, Gerbera daisy, gloriosa lily, goldenrod, iris, Kalanchoe, Liatris, Mexican petunia, milkweed, Pentas, Salvia, society garlic, Verbena, whirling butterflies.

Blooming plants: Allamanda, bird-of-paradise, bottlebrush, Cassia, Cordia, crape myrtle, dwarf Poinciana, false dragonhead, firespike, golden raintree, Lantana, marlberry, red and yellow shrimp plants, rouge plant, Plumbago, rose, Salvia, thryallis and Tibouchina.

Upcoming educational classes:

You can now register for classes online <http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/EdSched.htm> or call 861-9900.

- “Grow Your Own Bouquets” at Twin Lakes Park, September 5, 10:00 a.m.
- “Pests In and Around the House” at Twin Lakes Park, September 5, 2:00 p.m.
- “Florida-Friendly Landscapes” at Gulf Gate Library, September 5 at 1:30 p.m.
- “Right Plant, Right Place” at Shamrock Park, September 6 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Florida-Friendly Landscapes” at North Port Library, September 10, 10:00 a.m.
- “Invasive Plants” at Twin Lakes Park, September 12, 10:00 a.m.
- “Rodent Management” at Twin Lakes Park, September 12, 2:00 p.m.
- “Florida-Friendly Landscapes” at Jacaranda Library, September 10, 10:00 a.m.
- “Butterfly Gardening” at Jacaranda Library, September 17, 10:00 a.m.
- “Butterfly Gardening” at North Port Library, September 10, 12:00 p.m.
- “Florida-Friendly Landscapes” at Elsie Quirk Library, September 19, 10:00 a.m.
- “Stinging Insects – Wasps, Bees, Ants & Caterpillars” at Twin Lakes Park, September 19, 2:00 p.m.
- “Chinch Bugs and White Grubs” at Shamrock Park, September 20 at 2:00 p.m.

If you have questions concerning your landscape, please call or visit our office at Twin Lakes Park on Clark Road east of I-75. The **Master Gardener Help Desk** is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m.-Noon and 1:00-4:00 p.m. (941-861-9807). We have satellite help desks at the four south county libraries and at the **Downtown Farmer’s Market** every third Saturday of the month.

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