

## September Gardening Guide

By: Patricia Porchey

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a weed is “a plant that is not valued where it is growing and is usually of vigorous growth; especially one that tends to overgrow or choke out more desirable plants.” Those of you, who have been watching the mechanical removal of Brazilian pepper, *Schinus terebinthifolius*, along I-75, know how quickly this plant grows and overtakes the surrounding vegetation.

Another invasive weed is the air potato vine, *Dioscorea bulbifera*. With its glossy heart-shaped leaves, it is quite attractive until you notice it is covering every plant within 60 feet of its roots. Along its stems it produces numerous aerial tubers, bulbils. One vine can produce as many as 200 bulbils in a season. Once the bulbils drop on the ground, they sprout new vines, whether they are full grown to 5 inches or only ½ inch in diameter.

Control Brazilian pepper and air potato with an herbicide containing the active ingredient glyphosate or triclopyr. Spraying it on the foliage is not always possible without damaging other plants. It's best to cut down the Brazilian pepper to a stump if it's too large to dig out the roots. Within five minutes spray or brush on the herbicide to the stump. Severing the stem from the roots of the potato vine will cause the upper vine to die and the remaining stem can then be treated with the herbicide. For the best results with eliminating potato vine, herbicides should be applied late in the growing season, typically August through October. Remove all bulbils, and place them overnight in a freezer to kill them.

It's best to remove invasive plants when they are young, but spotting them is not always easy. The volunteer seedlings often pop up in our yards among other ornamentals as a result of being windblown or deposited by a carrier animal such as a bird. Be aware the aromatic sap of Brazilian pepper can cause skin reactions (similar to poison ivy) in some sensitive people. Learn more about protecting our natural areas from invasive plants with this publication. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AG108>.

“Growing like a weed” applies to many of our landscape ornamentals and turfgrasses during the rainy season. However, weeds are also popping up in our beds and turfgrasses. The same non-selective herbicides mentioned above can be applied to weeds in beds where the herbicide can be safely applied to the weeds only. Some ornamentals can tolerate an overspray of certain herbicides where the weeds have severely impacted the bed. Read the herbicide label for a list of tolerant plants.

Selective herbicides must be used in turfgrasses to kill the weeds to prevent injury to the turfgrass. Herbicide companies research some of the more common weeds to determine if their product actually controls them. These weeds are listed on the label. Even weeds not listed may still be affected by the herbicide.

Before shopping for a weed and feed, there are two things to remember. First, we are still in the restricted season in Sarasota County when you are not allowed to fertilize. This restriction is lifted October 1, but it also carries some slow-release and nutrient analysis requirements. Second, when temperatures are over 85 degrees, injury can result to your turfgrass from herbicides. Read the label carefully before applying any herbicide or fertilizer.

### **Upcoming educational classes:**

Each of the eight libraries in Sarasota County are featuring special classes this month to celebrate Sustainability Month. A class on composting is being taught by Master Gardeners at each of the libraries; dates and times are listed below. You may now register for classes on-line at our website: <http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/EdSched.htm> or call 861-9900.

- “Composting” at Elsie Quirk Library, September 6 at 10:00 a.m.
- “Composting” at Jacaranda Library, September 6 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Composting” at Fruitville Library, September 9 at 1:00 p.m.
- “Wildlife Habitat Creation in & around Urban Ponds” at Twin Lakes Park, September 10 at 10:00 a.m.
- “Ants, Ants, Ants” at Twin Lakes Park, September 10 at 1:00 p.m.
- “Composting” at Venice Library, September 11 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Composting” at Selby Library, September 12 at 1:00 p.m.
- “Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Nine Landscape Principles at Gulf Gate Library, September 12 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Composting” at North Port Library, September 13 at 1:00 p.m.
- “Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Nine Landscape Principles at Fruitville Library, September 15 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Bed Bugs: a Growing Menace” at Twin Lakes Park, September 17 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Composting” at North Sarasota Library, September 17 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Trees in the Landscape” at Shamrock Park, September 18 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Nine Landscape Principles at Selby Library, September 23 at 10:30 a.m.
- “Trees & Shrubs in the Landscape” ” at Twin Lakes Park, September 24 at 10:00 a.m.
- “Integrated Psest Management Principles” at Twin Lakes Park, September 24 at 1:00 p.m.
- “Composting” at Gulf Gate Library, September 25 at 30:00 p.m.
- Step by Step Florida-friendly Landscape Training” (first of 5 classes) at Twin Lakes Park, September 24 at 10:00 a.m.

### **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.

Fruits in Season: Atemoya, avocado, banana, carambola, citrus (calamondin, lemon, and lime), fig, guava, kumquat, monstera, muscadine grape, papaya, pomegranate, sea grape, and sugar apple.

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.

### **For information**

If you have questions concerning your landscape, please call (941-861-9807) or visit the **Master Gardener Help Desk** at our office at Twin Lakes Park on Clark Road east of I-75. 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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