

Commercial Landscape Horticulture Ornamentals and Turf News from

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Greetings!

Please note we have gone electronic and won't be mailing class notices and newsletters. Look for a limited number of hard copies at various chemical and fertilizer suppliers (Naples Fertilizer, John Deer, Gulf Coast Landscape Supply and American Fertilizer & Supply Co., etc.). We also welcome additional e-mails of people wanting to get this type of information- Please email them to Peggy at pmcdonou@ufl.edu.

FICUS WHITEFLY HITS NAPLES



Ficus whitefly portrait by Holly Glenn (UF/IFAS).

Damage by other landscape-attacking insects pales in comparison to this new invader. The ficus whitefly (*Singhiella simplex*) arrived in the Miami River area in late 2007. It was confirmed in Naples for the first time in January 2009 at several addresses in the Shirley Street area. In January, I was expecting the whitefly to have spread faster than it has; but since September it really seems to have picked up steam. In mid-September, I was at a community with the largest amount of damage I've seen. This isn't a happy scenario for privacy hedges (if the news clips are still posted, see,

<http://cbs4.com/video/?id=42272@wfor.dayport.com&cid=5> .

In an e-mail on October 9, 2007, Miami-Dade County Extension Educator, Adrian Hunsberger observed, "This whitefly is causing complete defoliation of *Ficus benjamina*, including mature trees. Almost all of the ficus in a 4 mile area (if not a larger area) are dropping their leaves. This is the most devastating pest I have seen and is quickly spreading!" These whiteflies pose a lethal threat to the many local ficus hedges. If this insect itself isn't lethal, once the ficus hedges start to flush out after a whitefly attack, the ficus thrips move in and curl the leaves like a pea pod causing more leaf drop.

Typically when an out-of-country insect pest arrives, it doesn't show up with its native complex of parasites and predators which keep the populations from swelling into damaging outbreak proportions. Usually, there are some native biologicals which will fill in the gap. Or the U.S. Department of Agriculture searches out attack insects from the pest's place of origin (Burma, China and India) which can be released after a period of testing to make sure the attack insects won't become a nuisance. To date, field investigators have found five lady beetle species, 2 parasitic wasps and green lacewings attacking the whitefly in Florida.

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FICUS WHITEFLY HITS NAPLES (cont.)

What to Look For: Heavy feeding by the adult and the immature stages, which are immobile, flattened and translucent with red eyes, cause yellowing of the foliage and significant defoliation. The undersides of leaves are coated with a pebbly-like, whitish residue, which consists of the empty casings or “skins” left behind by the immature stages as they molt and develop into the adult stage. Early infestations of ficus whitefly may be easily overlooked. If one shakes the foliage, tiny white, gnat-like, adult whiteflies fly from the foliage, but they are hard to see compared to other species of whiteflies. The body of the adult whitefly is yellow in color and the wings are white with a faint grey band towards the middle of the wing and a grey longitudinal bar on the inside of the back edge of each of the front wings. Prevention is the best strategy with this threat if one wishes to keep the protection of their ficus hedges!

These ficus were rapidly defoliating in a Naples community in mid-September, 2009.



What To Do: Dr. Catharine Mannion has found some effective, systemic soil-applied root drenches using neonicotinoids. See info at: http://miamidade.ifas.ufl.edu/Pests_HT.shtml . These products are a little pricey, but think of the cost of replacing an established hedge or, worse, a specimen banyan tree. There are new products coming into the market place for this pest as this goes to press. Do your homework to determine how much pesticide you will need and the best price. Some new products such as granular (dinotefuran or imidacloprid or clothianidin or thiamethoxam products) and even a marble size pellet (Bayer CoreTect with imidacloprid). There is also one product (dinotefuran) labeled for a bark spray application. The good thing is these systemics will also manage the thrips and the whitefly for 6 to 12 months with one application depending on the product and the dose you use. One must take care to follow the label and not use too much water with root-soil treatments to avoid ground water contamination. Foliar sprays are discouraged in order to protect the beneficial insects.

Attend a Public Forum on ficus whitefly at the Naples Regional Library on Tuesday, December 15 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Located at 650 Central Ave. **Doug Caldwell will be presenting updates on managing this pest.**

Which yard represents a more Florida-Friendly Landscape™?



Two New Laws

SENATE BILL 2080:

FLORIDA-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING™

SENATE BILL 494:

THE WATER QUALITY BILL

How can the Senate Bill 2080 be summarized?

Source: Annemarie Post at <http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/FYN/askFYN.shtml>

This bill deletes references to “xeriscape”; requires water management districts to provide model Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ ordinances to local governments; requires each district to use materials developed by FDEP, UF/IFAS, and the Center for Landscape Conservation & Ecology/ Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program; **states that a deed restriction or covenant may not prohibit any property owner from implementing Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ on his or her land; states a local government ordinance may not prohibit any property owner from implementing Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ on his or her land; says local governments must use the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ standards and guidelines** when developing landscape irrigation and Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ ordinances.



To see the bill, click here: <http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2009/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s2080er.pdf>

For more ideas of what Florida-Friendly Landscaping entails and other good links see: <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Doug Caldwell explains some of the basics on accurate fertilizer calibration during a recent BMP class at Rookery Bay.

Senate Bill 494, The water quality Bill.

This Bill covers irrigation and water conservation practices. The fertilizer section, Implementation of the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Fertilizer Use on Urban Landscapes starts on page 8.

A new acronym—LCULCFA or Commercial Fertilizer License for short!

On June 18, 2009 Gov. Charlie Crist signed SB 494 into law. **Every** commercial fertilizer applicator in Florida must comply with the law and have received their LCULCFA—that’s a mouthful of an acronym, which stands for: Limited Certification for Urban Landscape Commercial Fertilizer Application by January 1, 2014. Apparently, a person possessing such certification is not subject to additional local testing. The training is under the pesticide arm 482-Bureau of Entomology and Pest Control of DACS, the Department of Agriculture Consumer Services.

Some FAQs answered by Dr. Laurie Trenholm in the Florida Pest Pro August 2009, pages 5-8.

Question: **What must I do to receive the LCULCFA certificate if I have already completed an approved local Green Industries BMP from DACS?**

Answer: Individuals applying for the LCULCFA certificate must provide a copy of the training certificate demonstrating successful completion of the IFAS Green Industry BMP training; a completed DACS application form; and remit a \$25 fee for the cost of the certificate.

Question: When will DACS begin issuing the LCULCFA certificate for fertilizer applicators?

Answer: The Bureau of Entomology and Pest Control has created an application form and designed the LCULCFA certificate that will be issued to those individuals that qualify following successful completion of the Green Industry BMP training provided by IFAS or other approved trainers. The Bureau is currently beta-testing the changes made to its licensing database and will begin issuing LCULCFA certificates beginning **September 1, 2009**.

Question: Are renewals required for this fertilizer license?

Answer: Yes. You will be required to obtain four Continuing Education Units (CEUs) within four years to keep the certificate current. Two CEUs will need to be specifically on fertilizer best management practices.

Question: Will the local fertilizer ordinances go away?

Answer: Most likely not. Any local ordinance which was adopted before Jan. 1, 2009 may remain in place. Local governments may adopt more stringent requirements if they are within a watershed of a body that is considered impaired by nutrients and if they have considered all relevant scientific input on the need for more stringent measures.

Question: ¿Is the class offered in Spanish?

Answer: Yes, training in Spanish is available and all of the training materials, printed materials and tests are available in Spanish. See this website for Spanish class availability: http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/professionals/bmp_training_schedule.htm

See this bill in its entirety at <http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2009/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0494er.pdf> (Remember, the fertilizer guidelines start on page 8.)

Some other FAQs are at the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection at: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/WATER/nonpoint/faq.htm>

Other websites:

Diagnosing woody ornamental nutrient problems:
<http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/nutdef/index.shtml>

For diagnosing palm problems, see:
http://flrec.ifas.ufl.edu/palm_prod/palm_diseases.shtml

Ornamental Outlook, besides offering free on-line CEUs, has started a new series of podcasts tune in at: <http://www.ornamentaloutlook.com/oov/?cid=3> ; there is a new segment on micro-irrigation and a nice one on site selection and palm trees by Stephen Brown and Doug Caldwell and palm pruning.



As always, I am available to help with landscape trouble-shooting.

Please call me at 353-4244 and set up an appointment!