



# The Green Gazette

The Collier County Master Gardener Newsletter  
Volume 2 August 2010

## Coordinator's Corner

*By Cathy Feser, Urban Horticulture*

Welcome ... In this issue of the Green Gazette, the Collier County Master Gardeners bring news on a variety of topics. Now is the time to begin preparations for Fall vegetable planting, so be sure to see Susan Craig's timely article on soil solarization, with the Spanish translation courtesy of Betzy Hussmann. With the 'growing' interest in home food production, fruit trees are receiving more well deserved attention and Mary Jane Cary shares some news about growing peach trees in Florida, with the Spanish translation courtesy of Betzy Hussmann.

On a much sadder note, Collier County MGs are already feeling the loss of MG Charles 'Chuck' Ray, who passed away on July 21st. Chuck wore many hats for almost ten years as a Master Gardener. He was our 'Citrus man', and our 'vegetable man', among other things, and a favorite of all who met him. I was honored when Chuck asked me to assist in fulfilling a lifelong dream: writing a book on Florida trees. The book is finished and awaiting publication, and through his work, Chuck will remain a part of us. But with or without his book, Chuck will forever be in the hearts of Collier County Master Gardeners.

## Top Zone10 Performer

*By Faye Hunt*

The Peregrina *Jatropha integerrima* is an evergreen multi-stemmed shrub or tree, with deeply cut leaves. Bright coral-red flowers in very showy terminal clusters produce year-round color, particularly when planted in full sun.

Peregrinas tolerate many soil types, are drought tolerant once established, and wind resistant with effective pruning, but are not salt tolerant. With a 10-15 foot height and width, they perform well as an accent tree, or in a shrub border.



The seeds of this water wise shrub are toxic: something to consider if you have children or pets. But you'll enjoy watching butterflies and hummingbirds visit this low maintenance colorful shrub.

For more information, see the UF article [Jatropha integerrima: Peregrina](#).

## Easy Garden Preparation using Sunshine!

*By Susan Craig*

Like to find a way to take the labor and expense out of maintaining your garden? Soil solarization may just be your answer. This method is proven to be effective in reducing plant-parasitic nematodes, soil borne insects, fungi and diseases, and some weeds. Soil solarization is also a simple, safe, and effective alternative to costly soil treatments.



Solarization is a technique in which clear polyethylene plastic is used to cover garden areas during the hot summer months when the sun is the strongest here in Southwest Florida. The radiant

energy from the sun is trapped under the plastic layer, creating higher soil temperature that soil borne pests cannot survive. Solarization also improves plant nutrition by increasing the availability of nitrogen and other essential nutrients.

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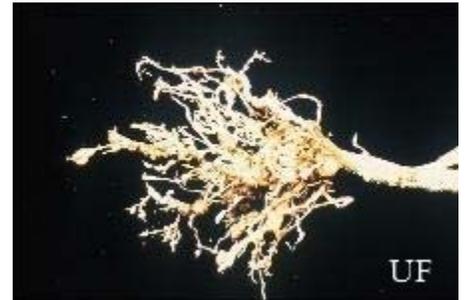
## Easy Garden Preparation using Sunshine!

*Continued from Page 1*

So a little solarization now will yield garden areas ready for planting season in early October!

To prepare your garden for solarization, smooth the soil, removing any rocks or large clumps. Water the ground well, or just wait for one of our daily showers. Spread a layer of clear Polyethylene plastic that is 1.0 – 1.2 mil thick over the garden area. Clear plastic is most effective, enabling the sunshine to penetrate the soil to the greatest depth. Finally, secure the edges of the plastic with rocks, plastic containers filled with sand, or purchased staples. Leave the plastic in place for 6-8 weeks or longer, removing it when you're ready to plant. For more complete details about this valuable technique, review the UF article [ENY-902 Solarization for Pest Management in Florida](#).

Solarization is one of the few effective methods for managing plant-parasitic nematodes, one of the most damaging and hard to control plant pests. Master Gardener Chuck Ray has shared his firsthand experience with the damage these pests can inflict on tomato plants, including root galls like those shown here. Many other common vegetables, such as peppers, beans, cucumbers, squash, eggplant, okra, peas, potatoes, and melons are also susceptible. See [ENY-012 Managing Nematodes for the Non-Commercial Vegetable Garden](#) for additional information about these pests and guidance for solarization, and other effective management methods.



Comment? Question?  
Want to Subscribe?  
We'd love to hear from you!  
Email us at [CollierMG@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:CollierMG@ifas.ufl.edu)

## Now Playing In SW FL Gardens...

*By Leah Ray*

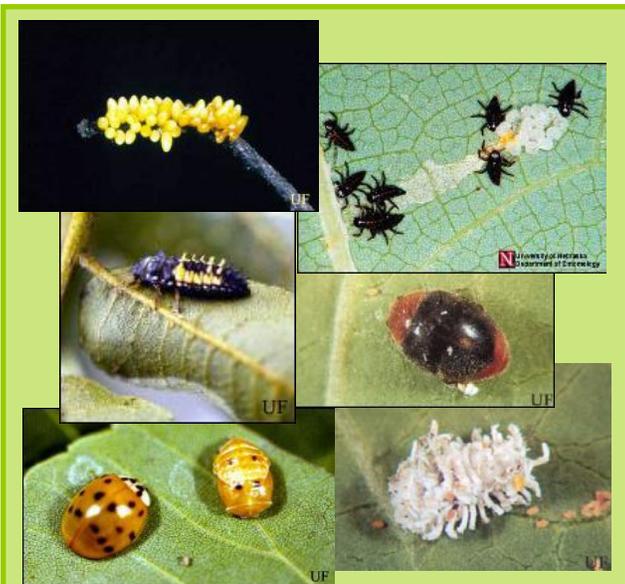
**Citrus and Fruits:** Continue fertilizing citrus with a citrus special each month through September. And continue monthly feedings for banana, papaya and pineapple plantings.

**Herbs and Vegetables:** Plant heat-tolerant herbs like Basil, Mexican Tarragon, Mints, and Rosemary while you prepare your fall garden area. Best to postpone planting vegetables until late September.

**Turf:** Chinch bugs seem to be worse this summer, and fall armyworms, mole crickets, and sod webworms are still active. If you see moths, check your lawn for sod webworm larvae and apply *Bacillus thuringiensis* (BT). Treatment might be most effective if applied in the early evening when larvae begin feeding. Give lawns a fall feeding around the end of September.

Ask your lawn service to alternate mowing patterns to reduce soil compaction. Also, mow at recommended heights, and whenever possible, avoid mowing when grass is wet to minimize disease spread.

**Water:** Need to supplement our summer rains? Be sure you follow the [current Collier County Irrigation Restrictions](#).



### “Better Bugs in Gardens” Challenge

What do all these bugs have in common?  
E-mail your reply to [cffeser@ufl.edu](mailto:cffeser@ufl.edu)

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## Loquat: Why Would Anyone Want This Tree?

By Cathy Feser

The Loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*), largely under-utilized in the landscape, is a beautiful little evergreen tree, perfect for making a big statement in a small space. Generally only 25' at mature height, the Loquat has a compact, symmetrical, rounded—crown growth habit. Young leaves are bright green and pubescent (hairy), and mature to a smooth, dark green. The 8-12" long leaves can be 1–3" wide and the toothed margins and prominent pinnate veins (12-15 pairs) combine with the deep green color to provide a very tropical ambience to the garden.

The Loquat, also called Japanese Plum, is a winter bloomer, with fragrant whitish colored flowers appearing in terminal panicles from October through February. The 1-1½" round fruits are yellow-orange in color and are borne in clusters, maturing February to April. The flavor is slightly tart, best and quite tasty fresh from the tree, and Loquat preserves, jams, jellies, and pies are said to be delicious.



Native to China and southern Japan, the Loquat does best in subtropical climates. Adaptable to many soil types, drought tolerant and not fussy about fertilizer, the Loquat needs relatively little pruning, pest problems are few and far between and mature trees are cold tolerant to 10°F.

Despite its status as a non-native, the Loquat fits all the cultural criteria of a Florida-friendly plant. In addition, the only trick to making preserves, jams and jellies just might be harvesting the fruit before the birds do.



## Murphy wins "Name that Plant" Challenge!

Master Gardener Mary Lynn Murphy correctly identified the Cherokee Bean *Erythrina herbacea*. Plant this 16 foot tall native year-round in South Florida in well-drained fertile sandy soil, preferably in full sun or light shade. This drought and salt tolerant multi-stemmed shrub produces red blooms in Spring, may re-bloom in the fall, then sports colorful (but poisonous!) seeds in constricted pods.

## Calendar

See [Collier Extension Calendar](#) for more details.  
Call 239 353 4244 to register for classes.

### AUGUST

- Aug 1** [August South FL Garden Calendar](#)  
**Aug 9** Dr. Dougbug Walk-in Clinic at **Landscapers Choice**, 218 Sabal Palm Rd. 11:00 a.m.– 1:00 p.m.  
**Aug 28** Dr. Dougbug Walk-in Clinic at **Home Depot**, Davis & Airport-Pulling. 10:00 a.m. – Noon

### SEPTEMBER

- Sep 1** [September South FL Garden Calendar](#)  
**Sep 13** Dr. Dougbug Walk-in Clinic at **Landscapers Choice**, 218 Sabal Palm Rd. 11:00 a.m.–1 p.m.  
**Sep 14** **Landscape 101 Series Begins**  
Classes every Tuesday until Oct 19  
Part 1 6:00—8:00 p.m.  
**Sep 18** FYN Class 10:00 a.m.— Noon  
**Sep 21** Landscape 101 Part 2 6:00—8:00 p.m.  
**Sep 25** Dr. Dougbug Walk-in Clinic at **Home Depot**, Davis & Airport-Pulling. 10:00 a.m.– Noon  
**Sep 28** FYN Class 10:00 a.m.— Noon  
**Sep 28** Landscape 101 Part 3 6:00—8:00 p.m.

### OCTOBER

- Oct 1** **Next Newsletter**  
**Oct 1** [October South Florida Garden Calendar](#)

**Save these Dates!**

**October 30—31, 2010**  
**Yard & Garden Show**

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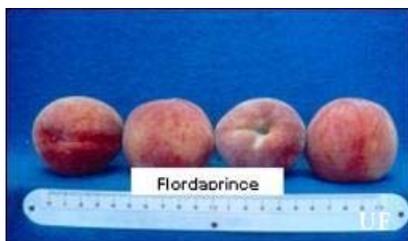
## Grow your own South Florida Peaches

By Mary Jane Cary

The joy of eating fresh, juicy peaches grown in your own backyard is now a reality for South Florida. New UF varieties of peaches are easy to grow, with flowering and fruiting that begins on second year growth.



Choosing the cultivar and its planting site are key to dooryard peach success. Cultivars grafted or budded onto red-leaved 'Flordaguard' peach rootstock are now considered best for South Florida. This rootstock is resistant to root-knot nematodes common to our soils.



UF article [FC23 Dooryard Fruit Varieties](#) identifies four peach varieties recommended for South Florida:

Tropicbeauty, Flordaprince, UFSun and Flordaglo. The UF variety Tropicbeauty, developed by Dr. Robert Rouse of the SWFL Research and Education Center in Immokalee, is a yellow flesh peach that ripens at the end of April. Flordaprince and UFSun are both yellow flesh peaches that ripen during mid-April, whereas Flordaglo is a white flesh peach that ripens late

April to early May. All produce fruit between 2.0 — 2.5 inches in diameter.

When selecting a site, be sure to avoid low areas or sites most susceptible to late spring frosts. And while peaches are tolerant of a wide range of soils, they perform best in well-drained soils with a pH of 6.0 - 6.5. Peach trees are more sensitive to standing water than citrus trees, so raised beds may be beneficial, particularly in areas with high water tables. For more information about site selection and overall care, see the UF article [HS-348 Florida Subtropical Peaches: Production Practices](#).

Whether you are planting bare root or containerized trees, it's best to plant during December or January, so you have time now to research your choices in cultivars and prepare your planting site. We'll bring you more information about peach tree planting and care in our December issue.

### Contact a Master Gardener Plant Clinic Near YOU!

Call us at (239) 353 2872, email [CollierMG@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:CollierMG@ifas.ufl.edu), or Walk In

Plant Clinic
Master Gardeners are <b>IN</b>

**Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays 9:00 a.m. — Noon and 1:00 — 4:00 p.m.**  
Collier County Extension Office 14700 Immokalee Rd.

**Thursdays 9:00 a.m. — Noon and 1:00 — 4:00 p.m.**  
Naples Botanical Garden 4820 Bayshore Drive

**Saturdays 10:00 a.m. — Noon**  
Home Depot Davis & Airport-Pulling Rd.

*See Calendar on Page 3 for Dr. Dougbug Clinics!*