



The Green Gazette

The Collier County Master Gardener Newsletter
Volume 2 Issue 2 April 2011

Master Gardeners Join “Heart of Immokalee” Project

When Texas Roadhouse Café and Immokalee Foundation officials asked area organizations to partner with them to bring positive change to Immokalee, twelve Master Gardeners joined Extension Director Robert Halman to answer the call. And on Monday, April 18, 2011, three Immokalee locations will feature Florida Friendly landscaping and gardens as a result.

Every year, the Texas Roadhouse restaurant chain selects a service project, partnering with a non-profit organization in the community where they hold their company conference. This year, as company officials planned their conference activities in Naples, they were inspired by the infectious hope of Immokalee’s residents, who persevere despite daily struggles, and by the positive impact that the Immokalee Foundation has had on the community’s youth and families. So Texas Roadhouse CEO Gerald Hart announced that Immokalee will be the beneficiary of a \$ 2 Million service project, with some of the labor provided by 1,200 company volunteers attending their week-long conference. And Collier County organizations and businesses are joining to maximize the grant’s value to the community.

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Master Gardeners discuss community garden expansion at Sanders Pines Apartments.

View from the Corner Office

By Robert Halman, Extension Director

Our Master Gardeners have been very busy! The Workshop Series team completed a successful 2011 series, our video production crew developed horticultural videos, four teams designed landscapes for the April 18th Immokalee Humanitarian Day, all while supporting numerous Plant Clinics around the county and welcoming the new graduating Master Gardener class.

Administratively, we have been preparing a job description for the new Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) and Master Gardener Coordinator for the Collier County office. In addition to a working knowledge and experience with horticulture, the individual hired will manage, promote and evaluate a comprehensive Florida Friendly Landscape Management educational program for homeowner clientele. Emphasis will be on coordinating the activities of and the motivation of a volunteer workforce.

So to all Master Gardeners, “Thank You” for your dedication during these exciting times.



The Frugal Gardener

By Leah Ray

Recently a child asked me when I was “bitten by the gardening bug.” I couldn’t answer the question. When have I **NOT** been addicted to gardening? Even as I write this, it’s taking everything I’ve got not to run outside and do my usual obsessive neurotic gardening. But I do try to find ways to save a buck. Here are some that come to mind. Let us know some of your favorites too.

Oak leaf compost Are you or your neighbor’s oak leaves STILL on the lawn or sidewalks? Offer to rake them. Use leaves for compost or spread in bedding areas. Oak leaves have a pH of 3.8. (pine needles pH 3.7) With our high alkaline soils, it’s a good thing.

Landscape maintenance contract Save time, energy, and frustration by reviewing and updating your landscape maintenance contract with your landscaper. [UF article SS-ENH-09 sample contract](#) can help homeowners. [UF article ENH1080 sample contract](#) provides guidance for HOAs. And you can [find Collier County certified contractors](#) here.

More tips on page 2

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Master Gardeners Join "Heart of Immokalee" Project

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Master Gardeners have focused their efforts on three Immokalee locations. At Sanders Pines Apartment Complex, Judy Hester, Elaine Sima, Faye Hunt and Barbara Gaffney designed Florida Friendly landscaping for resident courtyards, planned the community garden expansion, and recommended additional plantings for common areas. Marilyn Gross and Susan Craig developed a sitting garden overlooking the planned playground adjacent to Friendship House. Liz Reo, Dianna Donnelly, and Pat Cicogna created Florida friendly plantings for each home and the Recreation Center at Timber Ridge Housing Development. Designs for butterfly gardens at Sanders Pines and Friendship House were developed by Mike Malloy, while Mary Jane Cary and Betzy Hussmann designed fruit orchards and residential fruit tree plantings for Sanders Pines and Timber Ridge.



Master Gardeners plan a sitting garden beside Immokalee's Friendship House.

Collier County landscape companies and fruit growers are joining Extension 4-H volunteers and Master Gardeners to turn these plans into reality on Monday, April 18th. *If you or your company are interested in providing materials, labor, or time to "The Heart of Immokalee" project, please contact Extension Director [Robert Halman](mailto:Robert.Halman@colliercountyfla.gov) at (239) 353-4244.*

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Join Free Cycle Members of this community post a note about an item they would like to give away, or an item they are seeking. Items range from plants to furniture. The only requirement is that the transfer of items MUST be FREE. Membership is free. Sign up at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Naples_FL_Freecycle/

Save water by putting a bucket under the faucet while you wait for the hot water in the shower or tub. Let the chlorine dissipate and water your plants with it. At least no water is wasted.

Make plant lists Determine the plants you need before you buy them. It's just like making a list before going to the grocery store. Before you go to the nursery, determine what you want in your landscape, which plants will do well, and how many you need of each.

Create plant ties Cut old pantyhose into 1" wide circle strips. Then cut the circles. They will roll up, yet have enough stretch to prevent damage to vines and orchids that need tying.

Avoid 6-6-6 fertilizers It has been said that it is one step up from kitty litter. Seek out those fertilizers that have a higher analysis and micronutrients. Plants need 16 different ingredients to grow. The standard N-P-K fertilizers only covers three.

Strive for a 20/20 yard Yard perfection is expensive, time-consuming, and over-rated. Instead, aim for a 20/20 view—a yard that looks good from 20 feet away while traveling by at 20 mph!



Store seeds in those little zip lock bags with buttons inside that come attached to garments.



We'd love to publish YOUR nifty, thrifty gardening tips! Email them to the Frugal Gardener at CollierMG@ifas.ufl.edu

Second Chance plants Take in those unwanted half dead plants from your neighbors. And don't forget to ask garden centers for their castaways. Two years later, I'm still enjoying my expanding bed of "done-for" Christmas Amaryllis bulbs.

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Now Playing In SW FL Gardens...

By Leah Ray

Robin Williams says "Spring is Nature's way of saying Let's party!," and I could not agree more! My garden "To Do" list is growing faster than St. Augustine after rain. I recommend a calendar, whether online, in your phone, or on the wall, to remind you of what needs to get done. Recruit family members to help. My husband said that if I collect any more plants, he just may have to leave me. Darn, I'm going to miss that man.

Turf: If you had chinch bugs problems in the past or expect a problem in St. Augustine lawns, follow [UF article ENY325 Chinch Bug Management Guide](#). Scout for newly hatched mole crickets and tunnels in Bahia lawns and follow [UF article ENH6 Bahia Maintenance](#) recommendations.

If weeds are out-competing your turf, see [UF article ENH1039 New Turf Weed Management Options](#). Avoid spraying in temperatures above 85 degrees because turf stress and damage is likely.

Mowing: The [recommended height for mowing](#) St. Augustine and Bahia grass is 4 inches. If your lawn care service is mowing lower, they are costing you and everyone more money.

Irrigation: Follow the [Collier County landscape irrigation restrictions](#), and coax your yard to go without so much water. Allow the grass to wilt a little - it won't hurt it. UF studies indicate if the grass wilts a little, it grows a deeper root system.

Fertilization: Since the [City of Naples bans fertilizer applications from June 1—September 30th](#), plan your applications by May 31. Use slow release fertilizers to feed turf, palms, ornamental shrubs, fruit trees, and vines.

Pruning: Avoid [palm hurricane cuts](#) and [green frond removals](#), since they increase storm damage risk. Dr Dougbug encourages you to [Learn to "Say No to GTO" in his latest tree pruning video](#). And [avoid trimming your hedges to the same height](#) year after year. Reach down in and trim some of the branches 6-8" each year. Severe pruning week after week is just not natural.

Citrus: [Apply recommended fertilizer quantities](#), avoiding the area near the trunk. Remember that one pint of mixed fertilizer weighs about one pound. Do not use a one pound coffee can to measure a pound. Such a can may actually hold nearly three pounds of fertilizer.

Use [UF article HS890 Dooryard Citrus Guide to Pests, Diseases and Nutrient Deficiencies](#) as you monitor your trees.

Gardenias: [Use these Florida Friendly tips](#) to keep your gardenias in good health.

SW Florida's Most Wanted!

Have you spotted any of these pests on your shrubs?

Learn what to do by viewing [Dr. Dougbug's video on Florida Wax Scale](#).



Top Zone10 Performer

By Faye Hunt

The American Beautyberry *Callicarpa americana* is such a versatile plant, native to the Southeastern U.S., flourishing in part sun to full shade locations. It has long arching branches and yellow-green fall foliage, but its most striking feature are the clusters of glossy, iridescent-purple fruit which hug the branches at leaf axils in the fall and winter. A less common variety *Callicarpa Americana* var. *lactea* produces bright white fruits among its darker green leaves. But all beautyberries provide spring color as well, producing flowers that are lilac in color, about 1/6" long in dense cymes around its stems.



This shrub is beautiful in mass plantings, especially when planted in front of all-green shrubs that show off its bright color. Prune the Beautyberry after fruiting, water carefully, and once the root system is established, you'll have a care free performer. And although this plant can grow to a height of 8 feet, it can also be used as a container plant.



Beautyberry combined with an under-planting of Lantana is particularly striking.

The American Beautyberry is tolerant of drought and cold weather, performing well in zones 8–11. You'll attract birds to your garden, since they're fond of its fruits. The fruiting stems also add flare to fall flower arrangements. To listen to an audio program and view more information about this dependable top performer and related varieties, visit [UF's Gardening in a Minute—Beautyberry](#).

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Your Dooryard Fruit Orchard - Irrigation

By Mary Jane Cary

Florida's average annual rainfall of 50–62 inches is the most important source of water for your dooryard orchard, and is capable of meeting the irrigation needs for young and mature fruit trees. But with the low water-holding capacity of our sandy soils, and with 2/3 of this rainfall occurring from May to October, supplemental irrigation of many dooryard fruit varieties becomes necessary.

Are You Water—Wise?

According to [UF Irrigation Research](#),

- Over 60% of the public water supply is consumed by residential use.
- Nearly 30% of the public water supply is consumed during April– June.

Our “rainy season,” generally May through August, is the best time to plant young fruit trees in the home landscape. Newly planted trees need to be watered immediately after planting, with additional watering every other day for the first week after planting. Since young trees need consistent irrigation to survive and grow, continue irrigating at least once weekly during the first year, particularly during extended dry periods.

As trees begin bearing fruit, irrigation is needed for tree and fruit size growth. Consistent watering during dry periods enables fruit trees to produce high quality fruit and to hold fruit until maturity. Irrigation is especially important for SFL peaches, discussed in our [August 2010 Green Gazette](#), since they typically ripen during late April and May when rainfall amounts are typically low. These bearing trees will need 1-2 inches every 10 days or more frequently in our sandy soils.

There are a few fruit varieties that do not need as much water. Established [mango trees](#) rarely require supplemental irrigation. In fact, irrigating, especially over-watering these trees, can reduce fruit quality. Established [avocados](#), [loquats](#) and [longans](#) are also less dependent on supplemental irrigation.

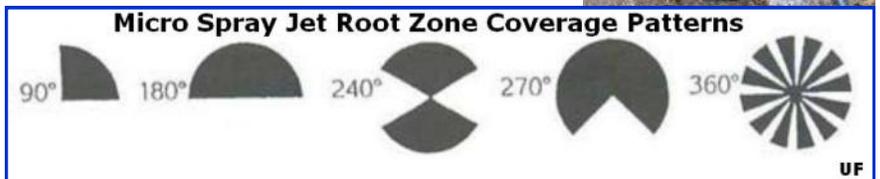
Homeowners and commercial growers are increasingly turning to micro irrigation systems to provide supplemental irrigation. These networks of valves, pipes, tubes and emitters provide moisture where it is needed for tree growth while minimizing loss from evaporation, thus using less water than most other irrigation methods. Since these systems apply water near the roots instead of irrigating the tree canopy, incidence of foliage and fruit fungal diseases is reduced. Micro irrigation is also proving useful for cold protection, and can enable use of water with higher salt content without affecting tree health.



Dripper irrigation uses emitters, located either above or below the soil surface, and spaced periodically along lateral piping, to drip water slowly near plant roots. When irrigating young trees, the dripper should be adjacent to but not touching the tree trunk to ensure moisture reaches the roots. When new tree growth begins, the dripper should be moved away from the tree trunk to promote lateral root growth. To learn more about dripper irrigation systems and their design and operation, see [UF article HS1144 Drip Irrigation Systems](#).



Micro spray jet emitters irrigate a larger area than dripper emitters, and are available in a number of spray patterns and ground coverage. Since 50–60% root zone coverage is needed for optimum fruit production, multiple dripper or spray jet emitters are typically needed for larger trees.



For additional information about micro irrigation system design, components, and operation, see [UF article AE70 Principles of Micro Irrigation](#).

[UF article HS887 Dooryard Citrus Guide Young Tree Care](#) provides recommended dripper and micro spray jet irrigation frequencies for fruit trees during weeks without rainfall. An additional industry article containing [UF recommendations for young citrus tree micro irrigation scheduling frequency](#) is also available.

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Need your Irrigation Checked?

The Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL) is a service available to homeowners, property managers, and condominium associations. MIL technicians conduct onsite evaluations, using the information they collect to provide the client with a written report, including recommendations for improving irrigation system efficiency.

This service is sponsored by the [Big Cypress Basin of the South Florida Water Management District](#), the [Collier Soil and Water Conservation District](#), and the [USDA Natural Resources Conservation District](#).

View the [Mobile Irrigation Lab Factsheet](#) for more information. To schedule a **FREE** irrigation evaluation, contact [Bill Gaddis](#) at (239) 455-4100.

Welcome new Master Gardeners!

The Collier County Master Gardeners extend a hearty congratulations to our newest members. George Ann Bardenheier, Barbara Crossley, Chris Gilbert, Jean Oldham, Jessica Owen and Ginger Peeler all passed their certification examinations with flying colors on March 19, 2011.



2011 Collier County Master Gardener Graduates (from left to right): Chris Gilbert, George Ann Bardenheier, Barbara Crossley, Ginger Peeler, Instructor Dr. Doug Caldwell, Jessica Owen, and Jean Oldham.

Want to be a Master Gardener?



We're always looking for people with a desire to learn more about Gardening, and a willingness to volunteer to share UF horticultural recommendations with others! To learn more about us, see our [Collier County Master Gardener program brochure](#), and view our [Policies, Guidelines and more](#). Call the Extension Office at (239) 353-4244 for an application and training course registration.

Calendar

See [Collier Extension Calendar](#) for more details.
All events held at Extension office unless noted.
Call 239 353 4244 to register for all classes.

April

- Apr 1** [April South FL Garden Calendar](#)
- Apr 13** **Tree Care—Planting, Irrigating, Pruning and Root Management**, with UF Arboricultural Researcher **Dr. Ed Gilman**, Naples Botanical Gardens, 4820 Bayshore Dr. 9 am. \$ 20/person. CEUs pending.
- Apr 18** "Heart of Immokalee" Humanitarian Day sponsored by Texas Roadhouse at various Immokalee locations. [Contact Robert Halman](#) for details or to volunteer materials, labor, or your time.
- Apr 18** [Florida Master Naturalist Program Conservation Science Module](#) registration closes. [Contact Bryan Fluech](#), CC Sea Grant Extension Agent, for details. First class is April 26 at Rutenberg Park.
- Apr 19** Dr. Dougbug Walk-in Clinic at **Landscapers Choice**, 218 Sabal Palm Rd. 11:30 am–1 pm.
- Apr 26** Final MG Seasonal Plant Clinic at the Naples Regional Library today. 9:00 am—Noon.

May

- May 1** [May South FL Garden Calendar](#)
- May 6** UF Southeastern Pest Management Conference Live Broadcast—multiple speakers on pest management topics. 9:00 am—5:00 pm. Free.
- May 14** Final MG Seasonal Plant Clinic at the Farmers Market 3rd Street South today. 7:00 am—Noon.
- May 18** Florida Seafood Sustainability and Safety Brown Bag Webinar "Snapper." To sign up, [contact Bryan Fluech](#), CC Sea Grant Extension Agent.

June

- Jun 1** [June South FL Garden Calendar](#)
- Jun 1** **Next MG Green Gazette newsletter**



Subscribe to this newsletter by emailing us at CollierMG@ifas.ufl.edu

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“You’re a Peach!” *By Suzanne Fundingsland, Family Nutrition Program*

This expression originated from the tradition of giving a beloved friend a peach. It seems appropriate since the peach, a member of the rose family, has a sweet fragrance when ripe. And April and May are the months to harvest the four varieties of low-chill peaches recommended for South Florida gardens in our [August, 2010 Green Gazette](#).

When choosing peaches, look for those with a creamy to golden background. The amount of red color depends on the variety and is not always a sign of ripeness. Look for peaches with a well-defined crease and a good fragrance. Gently squeeze the peach in your palm, and if it gives a little to the pressure and smells sweet, it is ready to eat. If not, let them ripen at room temperature for a day or two. Shriveling at the stem or excessive softening mean the peaches are overripe, and should be eaten immediately.

Once peaches are ripe, store them in the refrigerator for no more than 5 days. Peaches can be dried, canned, frozen, made into jams, jellies and preserves, used as a filling in desserts, and used as an ingredient in many other dishes from appetizers to desserts. Ripe peaches can be sliced and frozen for up to 12 months. Visit the [National Center for Home Food Preservation](#) for guidelines for freezing and other preservation methods. And the University of Florida’s Educational Information Service offers [additional peach recipes and consumer tips](#). With only 40 calories per fruit, one medium size peach is a great source of fiber, potassium, vitamin A, niacin and vitamin C.

Peach Crumble - a [Mayo Clinic Healthy Recipe](#)

8 ripe peaches, peeled, pitted and sliced

Juice of one lemon

1/3 teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

½ cup whole wheat flour

¼ cup packed dark brown sugar

2 Tablespoons trans-free margarine

¼ cup quick cooking oats

Preheat the oven to 375F. Lightly coat a 9” pie pan with cooking spray. Arrange the peach slices in the pie plate. Sprinkle peaches with lemon juice, cinnamon and nutmeg.

In a small bowl, whisk together flour and brown sugar. With your fingers, crumble the margarine into the flour-sugar mixture. Add the oats and stir well. Sprinkle the flour mixture on top of the peaches.

Bake until the peaches are soft and the topping is browned, about 30 minutes. Cut into 8 slices.

Each slice has 140 calories, 3 g fat, 26 g carbohydrate, 40 mg sodium, 253 mg potassium, 3 g fiber. If you use oil to grease the pan, substitute butter for the margarine or add extra peaches, these nutritional values will increase.



Visit a [Master Gardener Plant Clinic](#) Near YOU!

Call us at **(239) 353 2872**, email CollierMG@ifas.ufl.edu, or Walk In

Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays

9 am — Noon and 1 — 4 pm

Collier Co Extension 14700 Immokalee Rd.

Tuesdays — through April 26

9 am — Noon

Naples Regional Library 650 Central Ave.

Thursdays

9 am — Noon and 1 — 4 pm

Naples Botanical Garden 4820 Bayshore Dr.

Saturdays — two locations

7:00 a.m. — Noon *through May 14*

Farmers Market 3rd St South Parking Lot behind Tommy Bahamas

10:00 a.m. — Noon

Home Depot Davis & Airport-Pulling Rd.