



# The Green Gazette

The Collier County Master Gardener Newsletter

June 2010, Vol. 1

## Coordinator's Corner

By Cathy Feser, Urban Horticulture

Welcome to the first edition of the Green Gazette, a newsletter for Southwest Floridians by the Collier County Master Gardeners. This bi-monthly (every two months) publication features the activities of the Master Gardeners, information about the latest 'bug about town' (if there is one), top performing plants or new varieties on the market, plant disease outbreaks, creative methods of recycling, upcoming programs and training, and a variety of other topics.

A newsletter is a great way to provide information directly to the public and accumulate MG hours, even if you are out of town for a few months. It's also a great way to learn: selecting a topic (plant, insect, disease, etc.) you're interested in learning more about and researching the particulars adds to your knowledge base, and by submitting that knowledge to your newsletter, you are helping each other gain knowledge.

Congratulations to Mary Jane Cary who came forward as Editor, and Leah Ray and MaryLynn Murphy as contributing reporters for this issue. Your Master Gardener Newsletter encourages suggestions, ideas and article submissions. Please contact Mary Jane if you are interested in helping develop your newsletter or contributing content.

## Top Zone10 Performer

By MaryLynn Murphy

What is evergreen, thrives in heat and humidity, displaying bright yellow daisy-like blooms with a chocolate brown eye? It's *Helianthus debilis* Beach Sunflower.

This perennial grows best in full sun, reaching 18 to 24 inches high, and approximately 36 inches across. With high drought and salt tolerance, low nutritional requirements and a long life span, this plant makes a great choice for coastal gardens. Birds and butterflies are attracted to its year round blooms. The Beach Sunflower is a terrific addition to our Collier County landscape.



Visit UFL's [Beach Sunflower Factsheet](#) for more information.

## Is your Landscape Storm-Ready?

By Mary Jane Cary

Southwest Florida summers bring the possibility of tropical storms and hurricanes. And while there are no guarantees of a storm-proof landscape, you can take steps before the storms to reduce potential property damage.

### Examine your Trees and Palms

Are any trees leaning towards power lines, your house or other valuable property? Do you see branches that are dying, broken, hanging, or rubbing other branches? Is the trunk or any major limb cracked, hollow, or decaying? Do your palms have brown fronds or coconuts? If the answer is yes to any of these questions, now is a good time to remove these potential hazards.

### Prune safely and effectively

Regular maintenance of trees and palms should include removing diseased and dead wood, brown fronds, seed pods and coconuts, malformed and crossed branches, and structural thinning of tree canopies for greater air circulation and wind resistance.

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## Is your Landscape Storm-Ready? *Continued from Page 1*

### Prevent Harmful Pruning

Avoid "topping" trees, where main branches are reduced to stubs, or "hurricane cutting" palms, where many green and yellowing fronds are removed. These extremely harmful practices reduce the tree or palm's ability to sustain growth or survive storm damage, as shown in this [video of poor palm pruning](#). Instead, practice proper pruning methods described in [Pruning Shade Trees in Landscapes](#) and [Tips for Pruning Palms Correctly](#).

### Rely on Professionals

But before you consider standing on a ladder with a chainsaw, better to engage a locally licensed and certified arborist. You can find these professionals, certified by the International Society of Arboriculture, in the yellow pages, or visit the ISA website to [find a local licensed tree care service](#).

### Become Storm Wise

Palms with injuries at their base, or trees with weak branch structures, root systems, or those in end stage decline, are more likely to endanger lives as sustained or gusting winds. In addition, many introduced species such as C Palms, Norfolk Island Pines, and Washington Palms are susceptible to wind damage. Consider replacing these trees and palms with these [wind resistant species](#). Visit [UFL's IFAS Trees and Hurricanes website](#) for more storm wise tips.



## FYN Program Update

Master Gardeners Virginia Williams, Dianna Donnelly, Faye Hunt, Barbara Gaffney and Diane Breithaupt have been working hard and learning much assisting with the site evaluations and finding solutions for the HOAs, landscape committee, and property managers.

For more information about the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Program, visit [Florida-Friendly Landscaping](#).



### Play Name that Plant!

E-mail your reply to [cffeser@ufl.edu](mailto:cffeser@ufl.edu)

## Now Playing In SW FL Gardens...

*By Leah Ray*

Join us in —Following the **SEA**" principle. This means

**SURVEY**—Look for pests, disease, and deficiencies;

**EVALUATE**—Identify those situations where treatment is necessary to restore plant health; and

**ACT**—Apply the appropriate remedy to affected plants.

**Bests:** Find out if an insect is the culprit, then treat only the affected area. Bake out nematodes by covering moist soil with plastic for 8 weeks.

**Turf:** Lawn insects are very active. Inspect turf for chinch bugs and sod webworms, treating if necessary. Read labels carefully and avoid treating stressed turf.

**Water:** Turn off irrigation timers. Let your plants tell you when to water.

**Citrus:** Expect some fruit drop during June. Spray trees with a low toxicity oil product to control greasy spot, mites and scale. Complete summer feedings.

**Pruning:** Flowering shrubs (hibiscus, oleander, and crepe myrtle) benefit from frequent light pruning. Trim trees to prevent wind damage during summer storms.

**Stay Cool:** Heat exhaustion can be serious. So start early, applying sunscreen and drinking water often.

Wear a hat, and work in the shade during the heat of the day.

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## Welcome new Master Gardeners!

The Collier County Master Gardeners extend a hearty congratulations to our newest members. Pat Cicogna, David Kocker, Rosemary Hamtil, Betsey Hussman, Claudia Tester and Roberta Ury all passed their certification examinations with flying colors on May 19, 2010.

Sea Grant agent Bryan Fleuch (*far left*) has the attention of new MGs (*left to right*) David Kocher, Claudia Tester, Betsy Hussmann, Rosemary Hamtil, Roberta Ury, and Pat Cicogna on a field trip to Keewaydin Island.



## Native Wins "Name that Plant" Game

Simpson's Stopper *Myrcianthes fragrans* is the winner of April's —Name that Plant□ Game. This 10-20 foot tall native is occasionally seen around SW Florida wearing green foliage on reddish stems, and sporting white fragrant flowers or red fruit periodically through the year. When asked about plans following the big win, this attractive shrub or small tree said, —I just plan to bask in roots through the moist by all those ador-ing birds rule personal ap-pearances [smell like Nutmeg.com](http://www.smelllikeNutmeg.com).



## MG Gardens Renovation Begun

Thanks to Jo-Anne Lewis and the Gardens Committee, Barbara Gaffney and Liz Pedersoli, we've had four successful Garden Days, and it's starting to look real pretty. Big THANKS to Bill Gaddis and Nick Nicholson who did the 'ground' work and laid the pipes for the addition of an automatic 'float' valve for the pond. The Native Garden pond plants underwent removal and root washing, the pebbles found a new home and the rocks have been pressure-washed.

On June 8th, the next Garden Day, Master Gardeners will focus on the Vegetable/Recycle Garden and the MG Color Garden. Garden Days are currently planned through September, so contact Jo-Anne to volunteer.

## Calendar

See *Collier Extension Calendar* for more details.

Call 239 353 4244 to register for classes.

### JUNE

- June 7** May MG Volunteer hour logs due
- June 8** Garden Day with Liz 8:30 a.m. – Noon
- June 12** FYN Class 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
- June 14** Dr. Dougbug Walk-in Clinic at **Landscapers Choice**, 218 Sabal Palm Rd. 11:00 a.m.– 1:00 p.m.
- June 15** MG Meeting: 10:00 a.m.– Noon Lunch follows; Education TBA
- June 24** FYN Class 10:00 a.m.– Noon
- June 26** Dr. Dougbug Walk-in Clinic at **Home Depot**, Davis & Airport-Pulling. 10:00 a.m. – Noon
- June 26** Garden Day 8:30 a.m.– Noon
- June 28** 4-H Summer Workshop: Jr. MG
- June 29** **Landscape 101 Series Begins** Classes every Tuesday until August 3  
Part 1 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- June 30** 4-H Summer Workshop: CSI-4-H

### JULY

- July 6** Landscape 101 Part 2 6:00–8:00 p.m.
- July 7** June MG Volunteer hour logs due
- July 10** Dr. Dougbug Walk-in Clinic at **Home Depot**, Davis & Airport-Pulling. 10:00 a.m.– Noon
- July 11** Garden Day 8:30 a.m.– Noon
- July 12** Dr. Dougbug Walk-in Clinic at **Landscapers Choice**, 218 Sabal Palm Rd. 11:00 a.m.–1 p.m.
- July 13** Landscape 101 Part 3 6:00–8:00 p.m.
- July 20** Landscape 101 Part 4 6:00–8:00 p.m.
- July 27** Landscape 101 Part 5 6:00–8:00 p.m.
- July 28** Garden Day 8:30 a.m.–Noon

### AUGUST

- August 1** Next Newsletter
- August 3** Landscape 101 Part 6 6:00–8:00 p.m.



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

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## SW Florida's Most Wanted!

**NAME** Ficus Whitefly

**ALIAS** *Singhiella simplex*



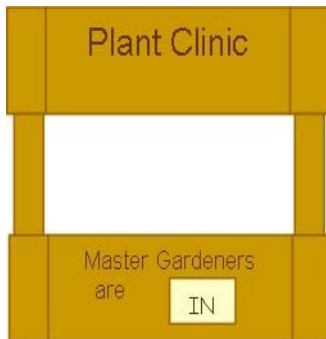
**Description:** Flying insect similar to some scale insects. Only 1 millimeter long! Its white wings have 2 pairs of faint grey bands, while its body is yellow.

**Occupation:** The whitefly and its immature stages feed on Ficus leaves with their sucking mouthparts. Can cause complete defoliation and dieback of Weeping Ficus, one of the most abundant shrubs here in South Florida. All Ficus tree and hedge species are potential host plants.

**Be on the Lookout:** Examine Ficus leaf undersides for a coating of pebbly, whitish residue, which represents the empty casings of immature stages of the this pest. To learn more about this pest, view this short video for [Tips to Identifying and Managing the Ficus Whitefly](#).

**What to do:** Natural enemies like lady beetles and parasitic wasps may help combat this pest. If you find an infestation, refrain from heavy pruning or shearing, since the Ficus will need those new leaves to help it survive. Chemical sprays such as horticultural oils may reduce whitefly numbers, but be sure to thoroughly wet foliage undersides. A better approach would be to use a systemic root drench that contains the active ingredient Imidacloprid. Products containing this ingredient are available at most nurseries and home improvement centers. Just be sure to read the label, and do not apply near water. To keep your Ficus healthy, reapply soil drench treatments once or twice annually.

If your Ficus loses its leaves, check the branches. If they are still flexible, your Ficus may re-foliate in a few weeks. If you are planning a new hedge, see [Native Shrubs for South Florida](#) and [Low Maintenance Landscape Plants for South Florida](#) for some terrific alternatives.



## Contact a Plant Clinic Near YOU!

Call, Email, or Walk in

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

**Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays 9:00 am - Noon and 1:00 - 4:00 pm**

Collier County Extension Office 14700 Immokalee Rd.

**Thursdays 9:00 am - Noon and 1:00 - 4:00 pm**

Naples Botanical Garden 4820 Bayshore Drive

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

### Plant Clinic News

MaryLynn Murphy is the new coordinator for the **Extension Office Plant Clinic**. Master Gardeners, please give her a shout whenever you can help out.

Mike Malloy is coordinating the newly established **Naples Botanical Garden Satellite Plant Clinic**, so he's the one to contact for Master Gardeners interested in volunteering on Thursdays.

The **Naples Central Library Satellite Plant Clinic** has closed for the summer season, but will re-open in October. Many thanks to Coordinator Frank Garofalo, and all of the Master Gardeners that assisted him. Master Gardeners can contact Frank to volunteer at this location.