

Bradford County  
Extension Service  
2266 N. Temple Ave.  
Starke, FL, 32091

# The Cutting Edge

904.966.6299  
E-mail:  
lcompton@ufl.edu

Bradford County Extension Service Master Gardener Newsletter



January, 2013

Inside this issue:

Happy New Year and Mayhaws.....	1
Plant & Wildlife	
Calendars.....	2,3,4
Whats Buggin You.....	5
Meet the M.G.'s.....	6
Wildflowers.....	7
M.G. Website.....	8

## Happy New Year!

Although we haven't had much of a winter so far, it's likely that we will have a freeze or two before it's all over, so keep those blankets and plant covers handy, just in case. For ideas on what to plant and what to do in the garden in the coming months, see pages 2, 3 and 4. If you would like to grow some fruit trees, consider trying mayhaws. Since antebellum times, mayhaws have been highly esteemed for making jelly, sauces and wine. See the article below for more on mayhaws. On page 5, Wendy has an article for you on an insect you are sure to recognize, the earwig. Ag Agent, Jim DeValerio has written an article on page 6 about our newest Master Gardeners. In past years we attended classes in Duval County, so this was our first ever graduating class from Bradford County! On page 7, one of our new Master Gardeners, Monica Kish, has written a great article on Wildflowers for North Florida. Not only can you see them along the roadsides, you can have them in your garden, too! And, finally, on page 8, there is a preview of what you will find on the University of Florida's Master Gardener website. You don't have to be a Master Gardener to visit the website and it is full of informative and timely gardening articles. Happy New Year!

Laurie

## Mayhaws

If you love growing fruit and you've tried the more common fruit trees in your home orchard, you may consider growing mayhaws, a less common fruit tree native to our area. Mayhaw (*Crataegus* spp.), are in the rose family and may be found growing naturally in North and Central Florida. A medium-sized tree that produces white blooms in the spring, mayhaws are also valued as an ornamental species. They usually bloom in late February and sometimes sustain crop loss due to late winter freezes. The fruit usually ripens in early May. Mayhaw trees are cold hardy and, if properly conditioned, they can survive hard freezes. Mayhaws are often found along river bottoms, streams, and in swamps from North Florida to North Carolina. Although they are found in low areas that are subject to perennial flooding, mayhaws perform best in well-drained soils. Historically, mayhaws have been collected from native stands; however, there are many named cultivars.



By Laurie Compton

## In the Garden: What to Plant in January

It's not too late to add some color to your garden. The primary winter **annuals** are violas and pansies, but also try ornamental cabbage, kale, Swiss chard, dusty miller and calendulas. You can also plant dianthus, snapdragons, nemesia, sweet alyssum and petunias now, although they won't bloom very well in winter. However, they will grow now and flower that much better in spring. Now is the best time of year to plant **trees and shrubs**, including deciduous fruit trees such as apples, peaches, nectarines, mayhaws and grapes. Water new transplants at least 2 times a week, unless it rains. **Vegetables** to plant include beet, cabbage, lettuce, broccoli and sugar snap peas.

Source: [http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn\\_and\\_garden/calendar/](http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/calendar/)



Nemesia

## In the Garden: What to Do in January



Red Rocket Crape myrtle

Although winters can be mild for us here in North Florida, January will almost certainly bring hard freezes. Plan to protect tender plants by bringing them in to the house or garage, or putting them into a cold frame. Fertilize cool season **annuals** with a little fertilizer, such as 15-0-15, every 4 to 6 weeks. Use no more than 1/2 pound per 10x10 feet of bed area. Keep it off the foliage and stems, because it can burn. **Crapemyrtles** do not require pruning but removing seed pods, crossing branches, suckers and twiggy growth will improve the appearance and form of the plant. Control **scale** on citrus, shrubs,

camellias and deciduous fruit trees by applying horticultural oil while plants are dormant. Florida celebrates **Arbor Day** on the third Friday of January. Consider planting a hurricane resistant tree for your yard or community, such as live oak, cabbage palm, bald cypress or crape myrtle.

Source: [http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn\\_and\\_garden/calendar/](http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/calendar/)

## Wildlife Calendar

- Male cardinals begin territorial singing later in the month.
- Nesting activity can be seen by ospreys, sandhill cranes, hawks, and owls.
- Look for red-tailed hawks perched in trees along highways.
- Gray foxes, bobcats, and raccoons begin breeding this month.
- Deer reach the peak of the rutting season in north Florida.

[http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife\\_info/happenings/](http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/happenings/)

### Did You Know?

If you have a cut Christmas tree, put it to good use. Use it to start a brush pile near your bird feeder. Not only will it provide good year-round cover for birds, but it won't take up space in your county landfill.



Scotch Pine

## In the Garden: What to Plant in February



Red maple foliage

Temperatures can drop to freezing this month, so new **bedding plants** added to the garden have to withstand the cold. Try dianthus, pansy, viola and dusty miller. Dahlia, crinum and agapanthus **bulbs** can be planted now. Provide adequate water to establish and mulch to protect from cold. Many **trees and shrubs** will bloom now including red maple, spirea, and star magnolia. Plant **potatoes** now. Buy healthy seed pieces from a nursery and plant them 3” deep. Do not add lime to the planting bed.

Source: [http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn\\_and\\_garden/calendar/](http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/calendar/)

## In the Garden: What to Do in February

If your **palm trees** have been damaged by cold, proper care may prevent loss of the tree and encourage recovery. Avoid the temptation to remove dead or dying leaves until the danger of additional cold weather has passed. Even dead leaves provide some insulation value to the palm. Cold temperatures may also injure **citrus**. Do not prune until spring. **Roses** should be pruned this month to remove canes that are damaged and to improve the overall form of the plant. Fertilize after pruning and apply a fresh layer of mulch. Blooming should begin 8 to 9 weeks after pruning. After temperatures rise to 65°F for 4 to 5 days, apply a pre-emergent weed killer (NOT a weed and feed fertilizer) to **lawns** this month to prevent warm season weeds.

Source: [http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn\\_and\\_garden/calendar/](http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/calendar/)



Knockout Rose

## Wildlife Calendar

- Ospreys will begin nesting in north Florida near the end of the month.
- North Florida woodcocks begin courtship behavior. Listen at dusk for their "peenting" in open fields.
- Pileated Woodpeckers begin their mating season and will start announcing territories by ‘drumming’.
- Little Blue and Tri-colored Herons, Wood and Mottled Ducks, and Snail Kites begin nesting.
- Striped skunks and pocket gophers begin their spring breeding season.

[http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife\\_info/happenings/](http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/happenings/)

**Did You Know?** The American Woodcock is a shorebird that lives in forests, and is most frequently encountered at dusk when the male's chirping, peenting aerial displays attract attention. Otherwise the superbly camouflaged bird is difficult to discover on the forest floor where it probes for earthworms.



American Woodcock

## In the Garden: What to Plant in March

Cool-season **annuals** will continue to flourish, but you can plant warm season annuals such as angelonia, wax begonia, and zinnia at the end of the month. Amend bulb beds with organic matter, and plant dahlia, canna, and gloriosa **bulbs** for spring and summer flowering. Provide stakes as needed to support growth. **Herbs:** When temperatures warm, consider growing edible ginger. Plant a rhizome in well drained soil in full to part sun. Warm season **vegetable** crops, such as bean, tomato, squash, and corn can be planted early in the month for late spring harvest. You may still have to protect them from frost.



Gloriosa lily

Source: [http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn\\_and\\_garden/calendar/](http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/calendar/)

## Garden: What to Do in March



Azaleas

**Prune** spring flowering trees and shrubs after blooming. If azaleas need hard pruning to shape or produce a fuller plant, do it just after plants finish blooming. To guard next season's blooms, begin pruning after the last flowers fade but before new buds set. Some insects should be encouraged in your yard! Identify and conserve **beneficial insects**. **Fertilize** palms, azaleas, camellias, and other ornamental shrubs if needed. Choose a fertilizer that has at least 30% of its nitrogen as slow release. **Irrigation:** Now is the time to check sprinkler systems for issues such as broken heads or inefficient spray patterns. **Mulch** conserves moisture during dry weather and minimizes weeds in landscape beds. Organic mulches add nutrients to the soil.

Source: [http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn\\_and\\_garden/calendar/](http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/calendar/)

## Wildlife Calendar

- Carolina wrens are nesting now.
- Plant columbine, coral bean, and other wildflowers to attract hummingbirds.
- Wild turkey and quail begin breeding in central and north Florida.
- Hummingbirds return.
- Largemouth bass spawning throughout central and north Florida
- Chickasaw plum and crabapples bloom in north Florida

[http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife\\_info/happenings/](http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/happenings/)



Coral bean

**Did You Know?** Coral Bean (*Erythrina herbacea*), also known as

Cherokee bean, is a native that will grow to a height of 5 to 10 feet. Coral bean attracts hummingbirds and butterflies to its stalks of tubular red flowers in spring and summer. The seed pods mature in the fall, splitting open to reveal bright red seeds inside. In North Florida, coral bean is a perennial that grows to 6' tall before freezing to the ground in the winter. Keep them away from kids and pets– the seeds are poisonous!

## What's Buggin' You

By: Wendy Helmey-Hartman

In Florida, we typically find two different species of earwigs: the ringlegged earwig and the European earwig. Although the ringlegged earwig is more common than the European earwig, neither species is usually found in large numbers in Florida.

Both species of earwigs are usually brown in color and approximately ½ inch in length as adults. They can live more than 200 days as adults. Their most prominent feature is a pair of pincer-like projections (known as cerci) from the posterior end of the adults. These cerci can be used for defense, frequently against another earwig. The juvenile earwigs (nymphs) are similar in appearance to the adults but smaller. The eggs are pale in color and are deposited in the soil. Interestingly, the mother earwig tends the eggs, protecting them both from mold and predators.

Earwigs are primarily active at night but can be found in dark locations, such as leaf litter and under rocks, during the day. When active, earwigs will feed on both plant and animal matter. These insects can be minor pests on plants such as lettuce, radish, potato, and cauliflower. They will feed both below-ground and above-ground on plants. However, they are also beneficial predators of other plant pests such as aphids, caterpillar pupae, and scale insects. Earwigs can also be cannibalistic.

Earwigs do not normally need to be artificially suppressed. The natural enemies of earwigs are primarily parasitic flies and fungi. However, the cannibalistic behavior of adult earwigs also regulates the survival of eggs and nymphs. Earwigs are also typically susceptible to residual insecticides as well as baits for control of mole crickets. If earwig abundance is a problem, moistened rolled newspapers can be placed in a garden overnight and disposed of as the newspaper makes a convenient trap.

Earwigs have an interesting appearance and rarely cause significant damage in a home garden. In fact, they often provide as valuable service as predators of other garden pests. As a result, earwigs are likely an insect that you can enjoy seeing in your garden (if you're up at night or looking in dark hiding places)!

Sources: EDIS Publication #EENY-483, European earwig, *Forficula auricularia* Linnaeus (Insecta: Dermaptera: Forficulidae) by John L. Capiner and EDIS Publication #EENY-88, Ringlegged earwig, *Euborellia annulipes* (Lucas) (Insecta: Dermaptera: Carcinophoridae)



European earwig male and female



Adult female with eggs and young

## Our Newest Master Gardeners

Welcome and congratulations to our new Master Gardeners! Eight individuals completed the first ever Bradford County Master Gardener course from September to November 2012. Master Gardeners complete 50 hours of in-depth plant related classes including sessions on plant propagation, soils & fertilizers, plant diseases, vegetable gardening, insect identification and control and much, much more!

Master Gardeners donate 75 hours back to the community by assisting with University of Florida educational outreach efforts for homeowners and school aged youth. Plant clinics, teaching in workshops, helping with school gardens and writing newsletter articles are just some of the ways Master Gardeners enrich our community. They enjoy helping others and constantly learning about Florida Friendly Landscapes.

The graduation ceremony was held in Gainesville at the UF plant science greenhouse complex. After the ceremony they toured the annual poinsettia cultivar breeding show and the Florida Museum of Natural History Butterfly Rainforest Garden.

By: Jim DeValerio



Who knew?! University of Florida plant breeders contribute regularly research on developing poinsettia for commercial production. Look at those colors!



L-R: Monica Kish, Emily Schaefer and Diana Touchstone rate poinsettias and coleus. Their input will have an impact on what you find for sale at the nursery next year!



Bradford County's newest Master Gardeners!

Front, left to right: Beckie Burkett, Emily Schaefer, Ag Agent, Jim DeValerio.

Back: Union County Director Basil Bactawar, Monica Kish, George Schaefer, Diana Touchstone, Richard Touchstone.

Not pictured: Judy Jull, Tim Harvey

## Wildflowers for North Florida

By: Monica Kish

Wildflowers give us bursts of color along roadsides or we see them on a walk through the woods. They appear to grow effortlessly in natural settings, but you may find yourself wanting to have them around your own home. This can easily be done since many of our wildflowers can be found at local nurseries or other stores and are generally easy to grow when planted in conditions that mirror their natural environment.



Red Columbine

One of the great added benefits is that many wildflowers attract butterflies and hummingbirds. Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) for instance, blooms in March and April in North Florida and attracts hummingbirds. Columbine comes in red and yellow, grows from one and a half to two feet tall and prefers slightly moist soil under the shade of hardwoods. One of the best things about using wildflowers like Columbine, is that many are perennial. Maybe, like many of us in this part of the country, you have sandy soil in a sunny spot and you are looking for something different to plant.

One solution could be Blue star (*Amsonia ciliata*). This lovely powder blue perennial blooms from April to November and grows one to three feet tall.



Passion flower

Another wildflower that is truly beautiful and intricate is the purple Passion-flower (*Passiflora incarnata*). The Passion-flower, also called Maypop, grows on a vine either creeping or climbing and blooms from April to August. This perennial prefers slightly dry to slightly moist soil with filtered to full sun.



Blue star

These are only a few of the many and diverse wildflowers we could enjoy in our own garden areas without having to venture any further than our own yards. Remember, with only a little planning, you too could have a wildflower garden that will bring pleasure for many years to come.

*Source: Wildflowers for North Florida*

**You don't have to be a Master Gardener to visit the Master Gardener website, hosted by the University of Florida IFAS Extension.** Whether you are a seasoned gardener with lots of hands on experience and knowledge, or if you are just starting out and want to learn more about fruits, vegetables, landscape plants or houseplants, check out the Florida Master Gardener website at:

<http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/>

Who knows? Maybe you will decide to become a Master Gardener!

Here's just a sample of what you will find:

## Plant Identification Learning Module

Don't know your dianthus from a daylily? Learn about 200 vegetables, fruits, flowers, and landscape plants.

There's even a self-test option to judge your progress.

This Plant Identification Learning Module is an online tool for learning about plants. It is useful to plant enthusiasts as well as Florida 4-H Youth and Master Gardeners preparing for state contests. Images and information on 200 vegetables, fruits, flowers and landscape plants are included. Use the handy self-test option to judge your progress. The module is broken into four plant categories: fruits and nuts, vegetables, flowers and indoor plants, and ornamentals. After choosing a category, you'll find a list of plants that are included in the competition. Each of these links will take you to a page going into more detail about that plant.

At the end of the list, there is a self-guided quiz you can take.

## Florida Yards & Neighborhoods

Protect the environment and preserve our heritage.

The Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Program looks at the landscape in a holistic fashion. It will guide you in the design, selection of plants, and care of the landscape. Follow the program's nine principles and learn to care for your landscape and protect the environment at the same time.

## Think Vegetables!

Start planting your summer vegetable garden now.

Florida summers are famously hot and humid, but that's no reason to give up on fresh vegetables from your own garden. There are vegetables that will grow in the Florida heat, including corn, green beans, melons, squash, sweet potatoes, southern peas, cherry tomatoes, and okra.