



Highlights in

Horticulture

Baker County

August 2016

Dear Extension Friends,

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August temperatures can be brutal for gardeners, so join us again this month for another good indoor class that includes seeds for your fall garden. If you plan to work outside, please stay safe by drinking plenty of water and taking regular breaks. It is easy to overdo it and not realize until it's too late.

Best Regards,

Alicia

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Raised Bed Vegetable Gardening

Friday, August 26th ~ 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm**\$5 registration due by August 24th**

Learn the basics for growing vegetables in raised beds plus get fall vegetable gardening tips for success and receive a vegetable seed variety pack (includes broccoli, cabbage, carrots, kale, lettuce, and radish).

WHAT TO PLANT IN NORTH FLORIDA



Species Spotlight: Firefly Firebush

'Firefly' is a cultivar of the Florida native Firebush, *Hamelia patens*. This plant is a compact form of the species with leaves and flowers about half the normal size. Orange-red tubular flowers cover the plant most of the year, and are followed by black berries and foliage that turns a bronze-orange color in fall. This soft-stemmed shrub makes a nice specimen or accent, and attracts butterflies and hummingbirds to the landscape.



FLOWERS

Angelonia	Begonia, wax
Celosia	Coleus
Crossandra	Dusty Miller
Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost'	
Impatiens	Kalanchoe
Marigold	Melampodium
Moss Rose	New Guinea
Ornamental	Impatiens
Pepper	Pentas
Torenia	Tropical Sage
Vinca	Zinnia



VEGETABLES

Beans (bush/pole/lima)	
Beets	Broccoli
Brussels Sprouts	Cabbage
Carrots	Cauliflower
Celery	Chinese Cabbage
Collards	Cucumber
Eggplant	Endive/Escarole
Kale	Mustard
Onions, bunching (green & shallots)	
Peppers	
Squash (summer/winter)	
Tomato	Turnips



Photo by Alicia Lamborn

Although labeled for cold hardiness zones 9-11, it has proven to be root hardy in the Baker County Extension Office's butterfly garden (Baker County is zone 8b which is slightly colder than zone 9). For many years, this plant has returned in spring, quickly growing from the roots to reach 3-5

feet and is covered with blooms from summer to fall. The plant is moderately drought tolerant and will tolerate occasionally wet soils.

Firebush flowers best in full sun, and will have a fuller canopy than when grown in shade. Fertilize sparingly and mulch the root zone to keep out competing grass and weeds. It can take heat and drought, but may require supplemental irrigation from time to time. This native shrub is quite tender in the colder regions of North Florida and should be planted in a slightly protected location and/or kept mulched in an effort to keep the roots warmer during winter.

Generally speaking, Firebush makes a nice addition to the landscape, attracting wildlife to the garden and requiring little maintenance.

For more landscaping ideas, visit the Baker County Extension butterfly garden to see this plant and many others that perform well.

PLANTING & FERTILIZING TIPS

Florida soils benefit greatly from the addition of organic matter such as compost.

RESOURCES :

Gardening with Annuals in Florida
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/files/MG/MG31900.pdf>

Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/files/VH/VH02100.pdf>

Enjoy a fall harvest of beans, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, squash and tomatoes by planting early this month.

All other vegetable crops listed can take the cold as we head into winter.

Controlled-release fertilizers provide a continuous nutrient supply over an extended period of time. For best results, apply at the labeled rate or based on your soil test results.

Avoiding Damage to Ornamentals and Turf from Herbicide Applications

Proper use of herbicides is one of the cornerstones of a good weed control program – but bad things can happen when they are not used correctly. Compared to insecticides or fungicides, herbicides have a much greater potential to damage valuable ornamentals or turf, in some cases even when small mistakes are made. Luckily, if you follow a few key principles damage can be avoided and you will provide your customers with the best results possible.

Calibrate. Applying the wrong amount of herbicide is the number 1 reason for causing damage to turf or ornamentals and the number 1 cause of weed control failures. Herbicides are designed to work within a narrow range – apply too much and damage can occur. Apply too little and weeds will not be controlled. The best way to prevent causing damage (also called phytotoxicity) is to properly calibrate equipment and use herbicides only in sites where they are labeled.

Identify the weed species. Properly identifying the pest you are trying to control is the first step in an Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM). Herbicide labels will contain tables showing the rates needed for a particular weed species or for a particular size of the weed. The lowest rate should be chosen for the weed species you are trying to control to improve the safety profile of that herbicide.

Know how far tree (and shrub) roots can extend.

Many herbicides that are commonly used in turf areas contain warnings such as “Do not apply in areas that contain roots of desirable trees or ornamentals.” How far do tree roots extend? On average they extend close to three times the spread of the drip line (tree canopy) - which in some cases means well into turf areas. In these situations, choose herbicides that are not as prone to leaching or being absorbed by tree roots. Many turf herbicides are also prone to causing damage to nearby ornamentals through drift or volatility (i.e. 2,4-D and others) and should only be used in recommended areas.



Figure 1. Herbicide drift damage on ‘Emily Bruner’ holly from a contact herbicide.

Know how long it takes the herbicide to work. Damage can occur due to multiple applications being made in a short period of time. This is sometimes done because the herbicide seems to not be working, and the applicator thinks a repeated application is needed. For some herbicides, symptoms may not be noticeable for a week or longer depending upon environmental conditions. Know how long it will take the herbicide to work and then re-apply as needed. Note that some weed species will almost always required repeat applications for 100% control – each application should be made at the proper rate. Never apply higher than the labeled rate to try and achieve better or faster results. Following label recommended split applications (applying a lower rate at multiple timings) has also been shown to improve weed control and reduce phytotoxicity with many different herbicides.

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Avoiding Damage to Ornamentals and Turf from Herbicide Applications

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Use adjuvants and surfactants carefully. Adjuvants and surfactants are often needed and/or recommended for use with certain herbicides but they may also increase the risk of temporary phytotoxicity to the turf. Only use the specific types of adjuvants or surfactants recommended on the product label and do not use more than the intended amount.

Use contact herbicides if spraying close to ornamentals. Glyphosate is a great product but if even a little gets on an ornamental it may never recover. Be careful using systemic herbicides around ornamentals (including thin barked trees and plants with green stems) or try to use contact action herbicides for small and annual weed species. Even if the ornamental is contacted by these herbicides, it will not move throughout the plant and is likely to recover.

Use good judgement. It seems obvious but it still happens – avoid herbicide applications in strong winds and use lower pressure to avoid potential herbicide drift damage (Figure 1). Always clean and flush hoses and tanks, especially when applying fungicides, insecticides, and herbicides from the same equipment. Only a small, residual amount of a herbicide such as atrazine left in the bottom of a spray tank can kill many different types of ornamentals, notably annual and perennial flowers (Figure 2). Also note label recommendations pertaining to weather and other environmental conditions. There are many herbicides that can cause unwanted damage to turf at high temperature (above around 90°F) but are safe during cooler times of the year.



Figure 2. Zinnia several days after being treated for insect damage. The sprayer was not properly cleaned after applying a herbicide the day before.

Always read the label. We all know we are supposed to read and follow pesticide labels but the time invested reading herbicide labels is the most valuable time you can spend in developing and implementing your weed control program. Reading and following all parts of the label is the best way to ensure applicators are safe, the product performs as it was intended, and that we are protecting the environment.

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