



Know, Sow, Grow Flagler County

UF/IFAS Extension Flagler County

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Brazilian Pepper

Mimi Vreeland

Residential Horticulture Agent,
UF/IFAS Extension Flagler County

Brazilian peppertree is an attractive yet extremely invasive weed that outcompetes and eventually displaces native vegetation in Florida. Because Brazilian peppertree is the most abundant and widely distributed invasive species in the state of Florida, it is considered one of the worst offenders that continues to negatively impact our state's natural ecosystem.

This shrubby tree species is native to South America and was introduced to Florida in the mid-1800s as an ornamental plant. Because of its decorative red berries which begin to mature by December, it has been traditionally used for Christmas decorations. Even though state, county, and citywide efforts to control this species have continued for decades, many Florida residents are still unaware of its invasiveness and assume that the plant is a friendly native.

To differentiate this plant from other types of native, berried species such as yaupon and other native hollies, it is important to look for some of its distinguishing characteristics.

This tree has a short trunk with a dense tangle of long, contorted branches which give this tree a rangy habit. Some distinguishing characteristics of the leaves are that they have a reddish mid-rib and contain 3-13 leaflets with finely toothed margins. This species is "dioecious" which means that separate plants are either male or female. Both male and female plants have white flowers, but only females produce fruit. The berry color begins as a glossy, light green and then develops into a bright red color as the berry matures.

Birds and mammals disperse the seeds of these berries over long distances. Because Brazilian peppertrees produce an enormous yield of berries every year, management of this plant species requires endless monitoring and constant application of a variety of different chemical and mechanical control practices.

Three different types of chemical control practices typically used to control Brazilian peppertree are as follows: 1) **Cut Stump Application** – The Brazilian peppertree is cut down and the tops of the stumps are treated with herbicides, 2) **Basal Bark Application** – An herbicide is applied to a 12-18 inch band cut around the lower part of the trunk, typically in the fall while Brazilian peppertree is flowering, and 3) **Foliar Herbicide Application** – Herbicide is applied directly to the foliage, but this technique requires a considerable amount of herbicide to be effective and is considered the least recommended method.

County and city governments can only implement control programs for Brazilian peppertree on public property such as rights-of-way, medians, public parks, and government grounds. Unfortunately, these control programs become somewhat futile while Brazilian peppertrees continue to spread on private properties or vacant lands right back into public lands and waterways.

It is up to us as Florida residents to be aware of Brazilian peppertree's negative impact on our local ecology and the significant taxpayer costs of its control. If you suspect that you might have Brazilian peppertree on your property or a neighboring property, please contact us for more information on removal and control of this noxious invasive plant.

WANTED

Dead or Alive!

BRAZILIAN PEPPERTREE



Photo is Courtesy of UF IFAS Extension

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Florida Friendly Landscaping Principle #1 – Right Plant, Right Place

Mary Ellen Setting, Master Gardener Volunteer

Are you guilty of buying plants before researching their growing requirements and with little understanding of the site conditions in your landscape? It is a common misstep, especially if you are new to Florida gardening and are used to gardening with the same plants in another state. Unfortunately, the results are often less than satisfactory, and it can be an expensive lesson when plants do not survive and must be replaced.

To address this issue, the University of Florida developed the Florida Friendly Landscape (FFL) program, with nine guiding principles. The principles were listed in the last issue of this newsletter (see “How to Create a Florida Friendly Yard”). The cornerstone of FFL is Principle #1 – Right Plant, Right Place. Simply put, a plant’s cultural needs (light, water, soil) are paired with a specific area in the landscape that meets these needs. The plants are less stressed under the proper growing conditions, are healthier, and require less water, fertilizer, pesticides, and maintenance. Thorough planning is necessary to achieve this goal.

The first step is to do a site analysis of your yard. Determine your soil type and soil pH levels (See EDIS SL281/SS494: *Soil Sampling and Testing for the Home Landscape* at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ss494>). Look at the orientation of your home and observe the movement of the sun in the landscape. Identify sun and shady areas, dry and wet sections, and decide how much room there is for mature plants. Exposure to salt spray or salty irrigation water must be considered. Include structural limitations like utility lines, fences, sidewalks as well as views of the landscape from in and outside of your home. Decide how you want to use the area, e.g., for family activities, pets, vegetable garden or entertainment.

Select Florida Friendly plants and turfgrass that match your site’s soil, light, water, and climatic conditions. Use the FFL Plant Guide ([FFL Plant Guide \(ufl.edu\)](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ffl)) to select trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, etc. Select native plants that benefit wildlife and pollinators. Group plants with similar needs. Buy quality plants and aim for plant diversity.

By adopting this first principle, you are on your way to creating a landscape that will have fewer problems later, will save you time, money, and effort, and will be more enjoyable in the long run.

For more information, visit: [ENH1156/EP416: Right Plant, Right Place: The Art and Science of Landscape Design - Plant Selection and Siting \(ufl.edu\)](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/enh1156/ep416) and [Microsoft PowerPoint - FFL 101 2019 Right Plant Right Place.pptx \(ufl.edu\)](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep523).

Why You Should Avoid Using Weed-N-Feed Products

Lori Powell, Master Gardener Volunteer

Weed and Feed products contain an herbicide and fertilizer that are designed to kill weeds and fertilize grass in a single application. These are frequently used products due to their popularity for convenience.

One problem with the use of these products is that it can lead to uneven, excessive application of herbicides. Herbicides applied to the whole lawn instead of where they are needed can be harmful to humans, pets and wildlife. Applying too much fertilizer can be harmful to your lawn and to the environment.

Another problem is the timing of the application. Applying a weed and feed product that contains a pre-emergent herbicide and a fertilizer will lead to the fertilizer being applied at the wrong time. To be effective, pre-emergent herbicides must be applied prior to weeds sprouting. In our area, this is usually the time when the lawn is still dormant. The roots of the grass cannot absorb fertilizer when it is in a dormant state. The grass must be growing to effectively absorb and utilize nutrients from the fertilizer. Overapplying fertilizer that cannot be taken up by the roots leads to excess run-off into storm water systems and eventually into waterways such as ponds, lakes, waterways that can lead to algae blooms.

Only apply herbicides and fertilizers when and where they are needed. Apply iron sulfate or chelated iron to the lawn to make it green without using high concentrations of nitrogen. Always read and follow the directions on the label.

Always perform a soil test prior to applying fertilizer to determine whether your lawn needs any supplemental nutrients. Bring your soil sample to our office and we will test it for free.

Proper fertilizing, mowing and watering will keep your lawn healthy. Healthy lawns crowd out weeds and provide shade to soil that prevents the growth of weeds.

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/fertilizer/right-fertilizer-right-place.html>, <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep575>, and <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep523>.



Photo credit: UF/IFAS



Happy Spring Blooms!

Kathi Wright, Master Gardener Volunteer

Celebrate a new spring season starting Saturday, March 20, by seeing what is in bloom in our area.

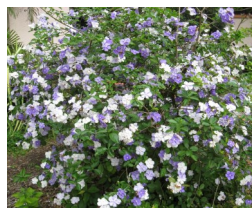


Look up to see the white, slightly fragrant flowers of the Fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*). This Florida native grows 12 to 20 feet tall with flowers that emerge from stalks.

A wonderful show of dark purple, light purple, and white flowers will draw your eye to the Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow shrub (*Brunfelsia grandiflora*). It makes a great specimen plant and can grow to 10 feet but can be easily pruned to 4 to 8 feet.

Fringetree, Photo credit: UF/EDIS

Indian hawthorn (*Raphiolepis spp.*) is a small, compact flowering shrub that fits nicely in most home landscapes. Small white flowers cover the shrub though there are varieties with other color choices available.



Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow Shrub, Photo credit: UF /IFAS Pinellas County Extension



Another wildflower blooming now is Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*).

Its common name may indicate it is a grass, but this Florida native is actually in the Iris



Blue-eyed Grass, Photo credit: UF /EDIS

family. True to the name, the small flowers are a showy blue.

Book Review:

NATIVE PLANTS for Florida Gardens by Stacey Matrazzo and Nancy Bissett

Donna Frangipane, Master Gardener Volunteer

Native Plants are a great addition to our backyard gardens. They adapt to many different soil types and are low maintenance, drought tolerant and provide food and cover for wild-life species.

This book is a great tool for all gardeners interested in learning more about the native trees, shrubs, vines, and wildflowers that will flourish in our landscaping. I highly recommend this book for both the experienced and the novice gardener. The photographs are amazing and along with the Quick Reference Key will assist you in choosing the “Right Plant, Right Place” for your yard. The book is extremely well organized and includes an introduction and glossary that will expand your knowledge of many native species. As the title indicates, the entire book and the 100 native plant profiles are options for residential landscaping. The Quick Reference included



Photo credit: Amazon

with every plant profile details the bloom color and season, the optimum sun or shade exposure and required soil moisture.

There are tips for propagating and explanation of other species as well as cautionary data.

The book was published in 2020 and is available through Amazon. It would be a great addition for the gardener’s home library here in Flagler County and one that you will constantly be referring to for information and inspiration regarding the native plant possibilities that can enhance your home gardens.

Time to Adjust Your Irrigation System

Lori Powell, Master Gardener Volunteer

Changing your clocks to Daylight Savings Time means a change in residential irrigation restrictions. Residential irrigation is limited to twice a week from Sunday March 14 through Sunday November 7, 2021.

Watering is limited to Wednesday and Saturday for addresses that end in an odd number and Thursday and Sunday for addresses that end in an even number. In addition, irrigation is not permitted between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm on these scheduled days. Each irrigation zone is limited to one hour of watering time per zone. Hand watering is permitted anytime. These restrictions apply to both private wells and water supplied from public and private utilities.

This is a good time to also check your irrigation system’s rain shut-off device to ensure it is working properly. If it is working properly it will shut off the irrigation system while it is raining. If your irrigation system is watering your grass while it is raining, then the device needs to be replaced. These are inexpensive devices that can be purchased where irrigation products are sold.

Check for any missing or cracked sprinkler heads and ensure that they are adjusted properly to water your grass and not the street, driveway or sidewalks.



Photo credit: UF/IFIS

Watch the weather. If a lot of rain is in the forecast, turn off your irrigation system and purchase a rain gauge. Turf grass only needs 1/2—3/4 inch of water per week. Overwatering can lead to lawn disease.

For additional information on watering restrictions visit <https://www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions/>. For irrigation system maintenance visit: <https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/tools-and-equipment/irrigation-system-maintenance.html>



VEGETABLE GARDEN

W S T E Z I O Q S U D C B L H H I E
 T H W G T W X A K K M D J E M Q Q G
 R C O E N V S T F E N N E L E D E C
 A H E S E E N S C N Q F V M W T H C
 D A G S Q T U R T M Q W Z T S Y S U
 I R G G P U P B E L L P E P P E R C
 S D P I I N A O R M Z U B F S W B U
 H O L N O A J S T Z T Q H B V Z A M
 B E A G D K Y Q H A R A D I S H S B
 X H N E V J R W E L T P E A S E I E
 V D T R P A N A Y S F O G W O S L R
 T X L P A R S L E Y U Q X K Q U F K

- BASIL
- BEETS
- BELL PEPPER
- CHARD
- CUCUMBER
- EGGPLANT
- FENNEL
- GINGER
- OKRA
- PARSLEY
- PEAS
- RADISH
- SQUASH
- SWEET POTATO

Spring Planting Guide

Vegetables

- Arugula
- Beans
- Cantaloupe
- Corn
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Kohlrabi
- Okra
- Peas
- Peppers
- Potatoes
- Radishes
- Squash
- Tomatoes

Annuals/Perennials

- Begonia
- Blanket Flower
- Blue Daze
- Celosia
- Coleus
- Coreopsis
- Lantana
- Lavender
- Mexican Heather
- Salvia
- Penta
- Periwinkle
- Persian Shield
- Verbena
- Zinnia

Herbs

- Anise
- Basil
- Dill
- Fennel
- Ginger
- Nasturtiums
- Parsley

UF/IFAS Extension provides a printable garden calendar. Planting dates and other vegetable gardening information are also available as a free mobile app called 'Florida Fresh.' Access an app provider for your mobile phone or download it from <http://m.ifas.ufl.edu>.

Flagler County Master Gardeners

Spring Plant Sale

&

Florida Friendly Landscaping Presentation

May 7, 10 am - 2 pm
Flagler County Extension
150 Sawgrass Road, Bunnell

About the Plant Sale

We'll have a variety of plants, including Florida natives and other low maintenance plants.

Remember to bring a wagon or cart for easy transport from the garden to your vehicle.

About the FFL Presentation

We will provide a guide map & lead you to 9 stations where Master Gardeners will present information on Florida Friendly Landscaping principles.

Presentations will start hourly, and each station presentation will take about 5 minutes.

Pre-registration is Required

Please register by emailing Horticultural Agent, Mimi Vreeland, at:
mvreeland@ufl.edu
to schedule a reservation for 10 am, 11 am, 12 pm, or 1 pm.

Masks required. We will be following CDC guidelines.





UF/IFAS Extension Flagler County Master Gardener Volunteers

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Our Mission

To assist Extension Agents in providing research-based horticultural education to Florida residents.

Our Vision

To be the most trusted resource for horticultural education in Florida.

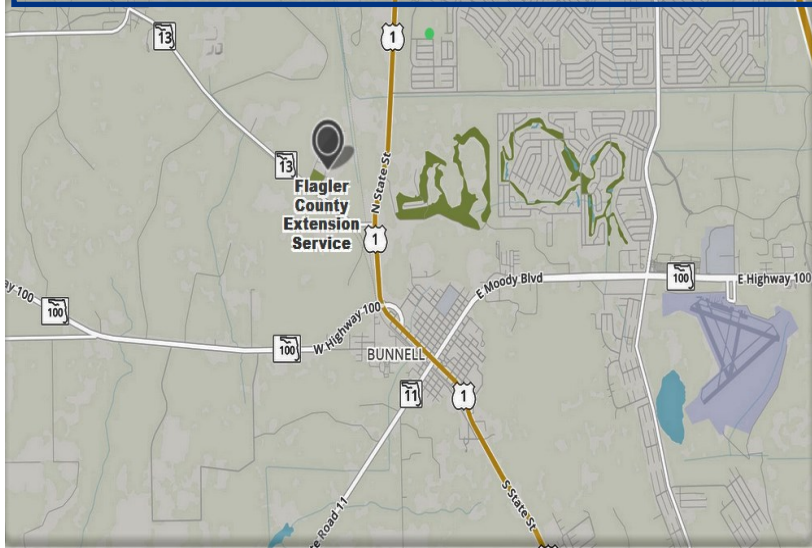
Florida Friendly Homeowner Recognition Program

If you have implemented the nine principles of the Florida Friendly Landscaping program in your yard it could be formally recognized as a Florida Friendly yard.

A Florida Friendly Landscape (FLL) is a landscape that is designed, installed and maintained according to the nine Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles.

Contact our office and a site visit will be scheduled for your home to evaluate how you have incorporated the nine Florida Friendly principles in your landscape.

If you want to learn more about the FFL program or need assistance in how to implement the principles into your landscape contact us or visit: <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/about-ffl/landscape-recognition/> for more information.



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Stay Connected!

Flagler County Extension: <http://flagler.ifas.ufl.edu>

University of Florida Solutions for Your Life: <http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu>

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™: <http://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu>

UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions: <http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/>

University of Florida Master Gardener: <http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener>

The Flagler County Master Gardener and Horticulture program is open to all regardless of gender, race, color, nationality, creed, or disability.