

Your UF/IFAS Extension, Lake County Master Gardener Volunteers hope you enjoy these articles.

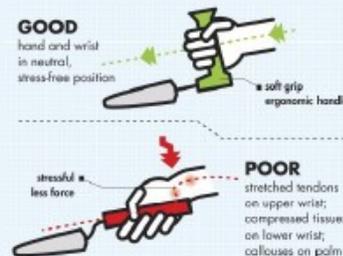
We welcome all feedback and article requests!

## OH, MY ACHING BACK!

We garden because we love to see the plants, birds, bees, and just nature be a part of our yard. So many find the act of gardening therapeutic, but unfortunately for many of us we also suffer the aches and pains of gardening. To minimize discomfort a few things are important to remember. First, know your limit. Be sure your garden is a size equal to your time and strength. Second, take breaks and do your tasks in small time allotments. Third, use tools designed to cause less strain on joints and muscles; they are called, ergonomic tools.

The day of the wooden handled tool is past. The grips have changed and are designed to cushion our hands and provide less tension and possibility of creating or causing carpal tunnel syndrome. Grips also place hands in a way that allows for the whole hand to grip (different sizes) and in neutral position.

For your knees consider more than just knee pads but a kneeler that has handles on each side so you can use your arms to push yourself up rather than your back. Or consider one of the many models of clippers that have a rotating handle and non-slip plastic grips. The pruner allows fingers to move naturally, thereby reducing hand fatigue and blisters— and requires up to 30% less effort than conventional models. You can also have garden tools with longer handles to use your arm and shoulder to dig instead of your wrist. There are even extensions to add to your existing tools if you don't want to purchase new ones.



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### Lake County MG Mission Statement

The mission of UF/IFAS Lake County Master Gardener Volunteers is to assist extension agents by providing horticultural education programs and current research-based information to the public through plant clinics,

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<http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/lake/>

# PLANT FAVORITES

There are three key people that help lead all MGVs to a successful plant sale. The two co-chairs, Daun Barrett and Reggie Doherty along with Carol Hoffman the Lead of the Discovery Garden's greenhouse. These three, along with over 50 MGVs, bring about this annual event.

When asked what their favorite plant was out of the over 3,000 being sold, the results were truly "Florida-Friendly".

Carol said, "For the overall impact of a plant in your yard I think my favorite plant is the Sweet Almond Bush. You can't beat the aroma and the bees and butterflies are in love with it too." The plant is also known as Almond Verbena or *Aloysia virgata*. Its name is very appropriate because of the sweet, fragrant, almond smell of the white blossoms. The plant is a rapid grower and unless trimmed can reach heights of up to 15 feet or more. It can be kept under control with regular pruning after each blooming in the spring, summer, and fall. The plant is drought tolerant and likes the full sun.



[edis.ifas.ufl.edu](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu)

Reggie enjoys and was surprised "by the *Lespedeza liukiensis* or 'Little Volcano'. "I'd never seen one (being from NJ) and was amazed at how quickly it bushed out and had gorgeous pink flowers for a good part of the summer & fall." With cascading branches and lavender blooms, this 4 to 5 foot shrub adds beauty and interest to any landscape. It grows in zones 6 to 10 and will lose its leaves in colder climates but come back in the spring.



Daun said, "My Night Blooming Cereus (*Epiphyllum oxypetalum*) blooms 3-4 times a year. When it blooms, the air is filled with a "jasmine smell. It is wonderful."

This night blooming cactus can grow in warm climates or as a house-plant. Blooms appear after the plant is four or five years old.



SCAMGA.ORG



Hello,

I have a question about ferns, I have an area that is being overtaken by ferns. I would like to get rid of them so they don't come back.

I was just going to cut them down but assume they will just grow back. The area keeps getting bigger every year .

Thank you in advance.

Barbara

Useful Links: [EDIS](#) | [UF/IFAS](#) | [Gardening Solutions](#) | [Ferns](#)

Good Morning,

Unfortunately, ferns are difficult to get rid of since they spread through runners and/or by spores. At this time, the ferns spread runners that have little ball shapes attached to the roots.

Later, spores form on the underside of the leaves and fall to the ground when the wind blows or you touch them.



Presence of tubers are a positive identification for tuberous sword fern.

Now is the time to pull the ferns by hand. Pull out as much of the root as you can. Make sure to pull out the little balls (tubers) at the end of the roots. They are easy to pull. Afterward, you can treat the soil with a pre-emergent. Till the preemergent as deeply into the soil as you can. You can use a weed killer that contains glyphosate, but that only kills the part of the plant above ground and will attack anything green around it. Do not wait until the spores form.

The Tuberous Sword Fern is often found in wooded areas, such as a [hydric hammock](#) community. This woody fern competes with native plants and can often displace them. Reproduction via spores allows the sword fern to reproduce quickly and in high numbers because it can produce thousands of spores year round. These spores can be spread by water or by wind and grow quickly into dense undergrowth ([MacDonald et al. 2008](#)).

This *Nephrolepis cordifolia* fern is also a [Category I invasive](#).

Tuberous sword fern (*Nephrolepis cordifolia*), not native to Florida.



Photograph by J. Baniszewski.

Photos: UF/IFAS

# FAMOUS WOMEN GARDEN DESIGNERS IN HISTORY

BY Delphine Salai MGV

Many women, famous and not, have been creating stunning garden designs throughout time. Unfortunately, until the early 20th century, women regardless of social standing or wealth were barred from having a career in horticulture. Nevertheless, it is difficult to keep the brightest lights under a bushel as evidenced by many talented women.

**Gertrude Jekyll** (1843-1932) is one of the most famous and sought after garden designers. She created over 400 gardens in the U.S., Europe, and the U.K.. Most of her life was spent in Surrey, England where she propagated many plants and operated her garden center. Her approach to design departed from the formal, manicured gardens of the wealthy. Instead, she used color, unusual plant combinations, and overflowing borders mixing annuals, perennials, and vegetables. [[Jekyll gardens](#)]



Photo by Krista Taylor

**Norah Lindsay** (1873-1948) had no formal training in garden design or horticulture. Lindsay developed and refined her skills in her backyard. In Oxfordshire, England. Influenced by Jekyll, her work created dramatic color and texture displays. She enjoyed working with the spontaneity of self-seeding plants. She is credited with moving rose

bushes out of formal gardens, which had been a strictly observed practice. [[website](#)]

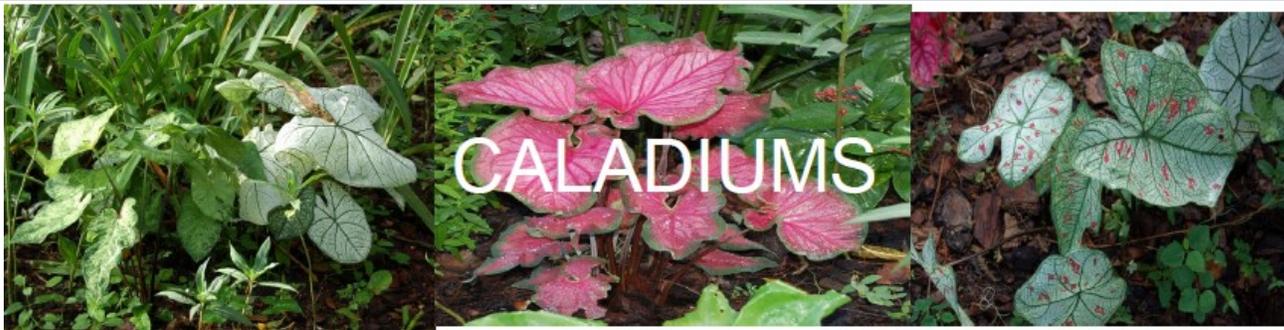


Photo Naturalist

**Edith Vane-Tempest-Stewart** (1887-1959) is a talented woman who not only created unusual garden designs, but was a suffragist as well. One of her most famous creations is the [Mount Stewart](#) garden in Northern Ireland. So infatuated with her work, she would jump out a window of her mansion to get out to the gardens quickly, followed by her 14 dogs. Because of a very calm microclimate, she was able to produce striking borders that would not have survived in other areas of Ireland.



Mount Stewart Garden  
Royal Oak . Org



L to R: Frog in a Blender, Candidum Jr., Sizzle, Strawberry Star

BY Reggie Doherty MGV

One of the wonderful things about Florida I've come to love is that you can plant almost anything, anytime of the year, and it WILL GROW!! Of course, there are times of the year it's more preferable to plant this and not that (EDIS [Gardening Calendar](#)). With that being said, it's time to plant tubers/bulbs in Central Florida (don't plant when soil temps are below 70° or tubers can rot).

Among my favorites here are [Caladiums](#). I'm originally from the North, so these beauties were limited to summertime and with limited time span for growth. Down here, they grow without limits to their size and bloom period! I was thrilled to see my bulbs flourish for months and how large the leaves got – not to mention they're shaped like hearts so there's "love" in my gardens. My neighbor loves them in her long hanging baskets attached to her house. They look fantastic and add striking color to her home.

Caladiums (*Caladium x hortulanum*) are hardy in Central Florida and can stay in the ground year-round. Leaf/vein colors, leaf shapes, and even inflorescence (yes, they can bloom) are unique to this species of plant. They love the heat and humidity – welcome to Florida! Plant where they won't get full sun all day – shady spots and minimal direct sun will encourage more vibrant colors. About 50 cultivars exist, several of which perform well in full sun. Always read the plant specs to see where it wants to grow.

So, how do you plant a tuber/bulb in the ground?

- ◆ Pick a shady or minimal sunny area where there's adequate drainage (no "wet feet")
- ◆ Plant the tuber with the "puckered" side up, dented side down (pucker raised point will be the leaf stalk)
- ◆ Plant 2" deep and 8 - 12" apart – they multiply!

Have some fun with it and plant different colors and leaf styles with each other for a unique look. In the header you'll see Caladiums from my yard that I bought at the Lake Placid Caladium Festival – the World's Caladium supplier.



Caladium bulb that is planted in the Spring. Photo Credit Classic Caladium LLC

Resources: [Gardening Solutions](#) | [EDIS](#) | [ENH1006](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [GREC](#) Fact Sheet | UF/IFAS [cultivars](#) | Growing [needs](#) | Bates Farms [growing tips](#)

Annual Events: Nehrling Garden [Festival in April](#) | Lake Placid Festival at the [end of July](#) | UF/IFAS cultivar sale



# REFUGE FOR WILDLIFE

Liz Schold Presentation  
Summary K.S.Kennen

Your backyard is a perfect place to create diversity that will attract and support wildlife. It is important to establish even small areas that can help wildlife live and flourish. Parks and areas of preservation exist for wildlife but our backyards can establish links or stepping stones for wildlife between these established habitats and are very important.

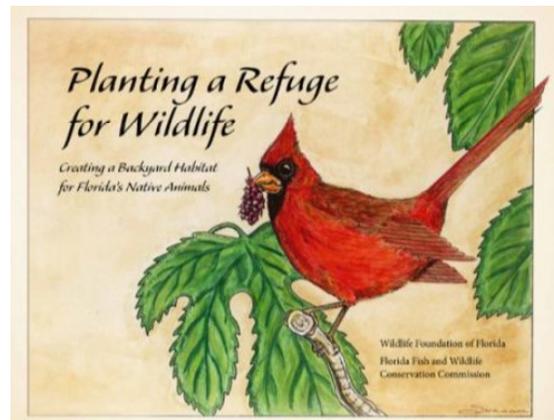
There are four things that are necessary to support habitat diversity: water; food; cover; and room to raise their young. Water is probably the easiest to supply. It can be as simple as adding a birdbath that is placed near a small tree or tree overhang so birds can land and have a drink or bathe and fly away easily to a branch to preen and dry off. Be sure the water is kept clean and changed often.

When considering food, a bird feeder is acceptable but remember that baby birds do not eat seeds. Be sure you have insects for them by not using any insecticides. Growing natives that have berries the animals can eat is also helpful in your refuge. A few possibilities are beautyberry, blueberry, or firebush.

Having cover for the wildlife will also attract them to your backyard refuge. A brush pile can easily serve as a home for toads, rabbits, and even snakes that can all be part of the wildlife and make your backyard a refuge.

As far as a place to raise young, specifically birds, it is a little more complex since species have different requirements. Some birds need trees with cavities or snags that can

provide an ideal nesting place. Knots in trees and birdhouses are known as secondary nesting places and will be used when a natural place is not available. An excellent resource is the pamphlet called, *Planting a Refuge for Wildlife*. It can be purchased at <https://myfwc.com> or downloaded from [UF/IFAS](https://www.ifas.ufl.edu/).



A necessary part of having food for birds is to have a garden that will attract insects. A pollinator garden is a crucial part of the eco-system. Over 4000 native bee species, butterflies, flies, and moths need plants that you can grow. Butterflies are especially needy in specific host plants (place for egg and larva). Knowledge of what plants to have for larva and nectar is helpful when you want to attract insects to your garden.

Be sure to know what will feed, sustain, provide habitats for wildlife and you can successfully become a stepping stone for nature.

Resources: EDIS [CIR1429](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/CIR1429) | EDIS [Wildlife](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/Wildlife) | [FWC](https://www.fwc.com)



BY Reggie Doherty MGV

There are 338 known species of hummingbirds found only in the Americas. Sixteen species are found in the U.S. and three are found in Florida: Ruby-throated, Black-chinned and Rufous. While Ruby-throated is the most common in Lake County, I've also seen Calliopes at my feeders in July. You may also see: Bahama Woodstar, Buff-bellied, Anna's, Broad-billed, Broad-tailed, and White-eared hummers.

Hummingbirds are among the smallest birds in the Americas. They are from 2.8 to 3 inches long and weigh from 2.4 to 4.5 grams which is equivalent to a penny and a nickel. Their nest holds two eggs the size of navy beans and is really hard to see because of it is so small.



[Birdsandblooms.com](http://Birdsandblooms.com)

One way to attract hummers to your yard is by having a feeder made specifically for them. It is easy to make sugar water that will give them energy. Use ¼ cup of sugar dissolved into 1 cup



of water. Be sure to change every 3 days to avoid bacterial growth that can harm the bird. The sugar water will give them energy, but they also need nectar from flowers and insects to feed their young.

One excellent flower for the birds is trumpet vine since it has a lot of nectar and attracts hummers with its bright-red tubular bloom.



<https://birdwatchinghq.com/>

Firebush is another native favorite of hummingbirds. It is such an easy grower with its drought tolerance and blooms from spring until first frost. Having a feeder and native plants in your yard is a way to welcome Florida hummingbirds to your yard. Have fun watching them flit from feeder to plants as their wings beat 50 to 200 beats per second making their humming sound.



Resources: [EDIS WEC21](#) | Hummingbird [Plants & Trees](#) | [Beauty of Birds](#) | Hummingbird [Gardens](#) | [5 fascinating migration facts](#) | [25 facts](#) | [Migration](#)



# Calendar of Events

- ◆ **Monday-Friday: Plant Clinic:** 9-3pm @ Lake County Ext., 1951 Woodlea Rd, Tavares  
Bring your questions, soil samples, etc. for a Master Gardener Volunteer to answer in person or email us at, [lakemg.ifas@ufl.edu](mailto:lakemg.ifas@ufl.edu)

To help stop the spread of Covid-19, our annual plant sale scheduled for 3/28 is postponed until further notice.

**Annual Plant Sale**  
**FREE**  
**POSTPONED**

Lake County Ext., 1950 Woodlea Rd,  
Tavares

Be sure to catch our *From the Extension* monthly articles in the *Daily Commercial*! Read about [Caring for Roses](#) and [Mother Nature's Lifeblood](#). Remember [Watering Restrictions](#) are on two days per week now!

Grow an Indoor Garden, [Read more here!](#)

## Pruning Mnemonic:

*Spring blooms...prune by June*

*Summer flowers...prune after Summer showers*

*Winter bloom signs...prune by Valentines*

For more information contact: UF/IFAS Extension, Lake County

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