

The Dirt

Weed All About It!



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A Note from Lisa

Ag & Natural Resource Agent



LANDSCAPE DILEMMA?

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™



Are you frustrated with your current landscape? All shade? Full sun? Sandy soils? It IS possible to have a yard that will survive in drought or in constant wet areas. Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) principals can guide you to a landscape that is aesthetically pleasing, has little maintenance, requires minimal water once established, and is environmentally friendly, protecting pollinators and wildlife. Florida-Friendly Landscaping Program™ is a collection of practices involving design, installation, operation, and maintenance which are intended to reduce irrigation, protect water quality from the over-use of fertilizers and pesticides and reduce stormwater runoff. The science-based educational program was designed to maintain landscapes that will thrive in Florida's climate. A committee of trained Master Gardener Volunteers can provide you with insights into the criteria for yard recognition and guide you through the process of creating beautiful, eco-friendly landscapes that fit your specific situation. If you are serious in creating a sustainable outdoor space or want find out more about the FREE Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Home Yard Recognition Program, contact the Taylor County Extension Office at the number below. We will also hold a FFL 101 Workshop on September 9th, at the Taylor County Extension office. To learn more go to UF/IFAS Florid-Friendly website <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu> and make the pledge. Work with Florida's environment rather than against it.



Make sure to "Like" us on UFIFAS Taylor County Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/TaylorCountyExtension/>

What's This???



Editorial Team: Leigh Ann Grubbs, Jaya Milam, Vicki Shaver, and Lisa Strange

Rosemary - The Versatile Herb

by Vicki Shaver, Master Gardener Volunteer

Can you think of another plant that flourishes in the Florida sun, smells wonderful, resists pests and disease, has medicinal uses, and is delicious in savory dishes and baked goods? Rosemary *Rosemarinus officinalis* comes to mind.

From the Latin words "ros", meaning "dew" and "marinus," meaning "sea" - it translates to "dew of the sea." Common names for plants are often



derived from legends passed down. As for Rosemary, the Latin name may have come from the Greek Goddess Aphrodite when she appeared out of the sea, she was adorned with rosemary. Another common name, "Rose of Mary" arrived when the Virgin Mary laid her blue cloak on a blooming rosemary bush the white flowers changed to blue.

According to the USDA hardiness zone map, the evergreen herb thrives in zones 8-10. It can grow big and bushy or maintained small with regular pruning in your garden or grown in a container. It easily starts from cuttings rooted in water. Avoid seed propagation due to the low rate of germination. Before you know it, you'll have so much rosemary you'll be searching for creative ways to use it. Search "Uses for rosemary" on Google or Pinterest and be inspired! My favorite non-culinary use is tying bunches together and hanging them upside down to dry. Use the bunches as fragrant fire starters to keep the bugs away.



NO KNEAD RUSTIC ROSEMARY BREAD

Recipe by [ThreeOlivesBranch.com](https://www.threeolivesbranch.com).

Ingredients:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon instant yeast
- 1 ½ Tablespoons dried rosemary (Note: Tastes even better with fresh! Same measurement.)
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 ½ cups water

Instructions:

1. Combine all the ingredients in a large mixing bowl. The dough will not be overly sticky but should come together. Add just a little water at a time if needed to incorporate all the flour.
2. Cover the dough with plastic wrap and put a towel over the top to help it seal. Set the bowl aside for at least 8 hours to rise (I have gone as long as 24 hours).
3. When ready to bake, heat oven to 450°F. Place a large cast iron pot (Dutch oven) on the medium or medium low rack while preheating for it to get hot.
4. Shape the dough in a circle and drop the straight into the pot. Place the lid on the pot and cook at 450°F for 30 minutes.
5. Remove the lid, let cook an additional 15 minutes to further brown. If it looks or smells done sooner, remove from oven. Cool completely on a cooling rack.

For a sweet treat try Lemon Rosemary Shortbread Cookies. You can find the recipe at <https://www.createdby-diane.com/2020/12/lemon-rosemary-shortbread-cookies.html>.

A bit more complicated than the bread, but oh so scrumptious!

No Pollution is the Solution by Jaya Milam, Master Gardener Volunteer



Photo left to right: Dawn Perez, Director of Taylor County Chamber of Commerce and Jaya Milam, Master Gardener Volunteer

Programs on littering and recycling and the flare for décor, inspires the visitors of our wonderful Taylor County to keep landscapes clean and healthy for all (plants and animals) to enjoy. The gorgeous recreation areas around Steinhatchee and Taylor County such as, parks, rivers, and beaches need everyone to help pitch in to dispose of their trash in the appropriate place - the trash can. A solution comprised of a friendly sign was installed to encourage everyone to use the trash receptacle located in public locations, such as boat ramps, parks, and community common areas. These signs around the community are serving as a friendly reminder to the public, both locals and visitors, to utilize the existing trash receptacles already maintained by Taylor County.

Master Gardener Volunteer and Florida Master Naturalist Jaya Milam, spear headed this campaign and so far, it has been very successful with keeping our great landscapes clean and enjoyable for all. With a little bit of ingenuity, the cultural and behavior changes can be made gently. For more information on how to recycle, compost, build and install a rain barrel, plant a vegetable garden, calibrate your sprinkler system and much more visit the UF/IFAS Florida-Friendly Landscape™ website at <http://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu>. Scroll down and click on SUBSCRIBE to receive emails regarding educational opportunities through the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) program. Play a role in protecting Florida's natural resources by taking the FFL pledge, go to <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/about-ffl/ffl-pledge/>. Lets show Taylor County cares, and get us on the map!

July/August/September

What to plant:

Annuals/Bedding Plants: Vinca, gaillardia, and coleus. In September, plant ageratum, celosia, zinnia, and wax begonia.

Bulbs: Butterfly lily, Aztec lily, walking iris, gladiolus, and society garlic can be planted during the middle of the summer

Herbs: Bay laurel, ginger, Mexican tarragon, and rosemary

Palms: Continue planting palms while the rainy season is in full swing

Vegetables: July - Start your tomato and Halloween pumpkin seeds! Cucumbers, peppers, and southern peas can be planted. In August, many cool season crops can be started. September is the time to establish strawberry plants.

Things to do:

July: Determine the cause of any lawn problems before taking action. Use summer heat to solarize garden soil for fall planting. Install inexpensive rain shutoff device on irrigation equipment to conserve water and save money. Prepare for hurricane season by pruning trees and checking for weak branches.

August: Check palm fronds for yellowing as it may indicate magnesium or potassium deficiency. Pinch back mums to allow time for buds to form.

September: Divide and replant bulbs and perennials that have grown too large. Last application of fertilizer to lawns should go down by mid-month. Choose a fertilizer with little to no phosphorous. Prepare fall vegetable garden.

For more information go to: edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/EP451

Everglades Tomato- A Must-Have for Your Florida Vegetable Garden

by Vicki Shaver, Master Gardener Volunteer

If growing tomatoes has been a frustrating endeavor for you; try growing the Everglades variety. With little effort on your part, the dime-sized, salty-sweet fruit will keep on giving all summer long!

Often called a currant tomato due to its small size, Everglades is very durable and can grow 12 to 15 feet tall, sprawling just as wide. They love the heat and tolerate humidity and drought conditions well. Resistant to most diseases and pest, makes for the best small tomato in Florida!

Unfortunately, Everglades seeds are not readily available, often sold out from the few seed companies that do supply them. However, they pop up in your compost or anywhere else they have dropped a ripe, red tomato. If you're lucky enough to know someone growing them, all you need is a few tomatoes to throw into your compost and you'll find them sprouting up before you know it! Once you have a few established Everglades tomato plants, you may find them to be a challenge to contain.

These indeterminate plants can be grown in your spring or summer garden and will keep producing copious amounts of tiny fruit well into fall. They can even withstand freezing temperatures in early spring! Larger, square cages work the best, but if you have the space, letting them sprawl might be an easier option. Harvesting can be a daunting task, too. The trick is to cut the clusters even if there are a couple green ones in the mix. Not only is it quicker and prevents tearing the fruit when cutting off the vine.

Are you asking yourself what to do with all these tomatoes? Snacking on them straight out of the garden is fun and healthy. Try throwing some in a pot and cook down or roast them in the oven with a bit of olive oil for a quick tomato sauce. Add garlic, onion or any favorite fresh herbs. To enjoy that fresh from the garden taste all year round pour into a Ziplock bag and freeze for later.



Photos by Vicki Shaver, MGV

Upcoming Events

Ongoing: Take the Florida Friendly Pledge - <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/about-ffl/ffl-30th-anniversary/>

7/14 - Christmas in July Celebration - Presented by Taylor County Historical Society - Rosehead Park Downtown Perry, 6-9pm

7/20 - 24th Annual Livestock & Forages Field Day - Santa Fe River Ranch, Alachua, 8:30am - 1:30pm
<https://livestockandforages23.eventbrite.com>

8/27 - Peanut Field Day - UF/IFAS NFREC - Suwannee Valley, Live Oak, 9am - 1pm
<https://bit.ly/UFpeanut>

9/7 - Cold Hardy Citrus Workshop - 8:30am - 2:00pm
<https://coldhardycitrusworkshop.eventbrite.com>

9/9 - Florida Friendly 101 - 9:30-11:30am
FREE - RSVP - 850-838-3508

10/13 - Master Gardener Regional Conference - Alachua County Extension Office

10/26 - Cold Hardy Citrus Field Day - North Florida Research & Education Center, Quincy, 8:30am - 2:15pm
<https://citrusfieldday.eventbrite.com>

See our Facebook page for signup information
<https://www.facebook.com/TaylorCountyExtension>

Unless otherwise noted, all events are located at:
UF/IFAS Taylor County Extension Office
203 Forest Park Dr, Perry
850-838-3508



What's This? Answer! by Lisa Strange

If you see bird poop that moves – it's not bird poop. It would be the larval stage (caterpillar) of the Giant Swallowtail butterfly, one of the largest butterflies in the United States. I think it is the best camouflage tactic ever to ward off predators such as birds, lizards, ants, and humans! The eggs are laid on citrus plants so when hatched, the caterpillar feeds on the leaves of young citrus trees. They also can extrude a strong unpleasant odor to ward off potential predators. Mother nature's work at its best here!



Photo Credit: Jaret Daniels, UF

