

# The Baker Bulletin



The UF/IFAS Extension Office is available to help you with your farming, gardening, landscaping, and 4-H youth development needs by providing educational programming, free consultations and information. Contact us at:

## UF/IFAS Extension Baker County

1025 W. Macclenny Ave. Macclenny, FL 32063

Phone: (904) 259-3520

Email: [baker@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:baker@ifas.ufl.edu)

Hours: M—F 8:30 am to 5:00 pm (Closed Noon to 1:00 pm for Lunch)

## County Agents

Alicia Lamborn, Horticulture Agent

Shaina Spann, 4-H Youth Development Agent

Alicia Halbritter, Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent



[sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/baker](http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/baker)



[blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/bakerco/](http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/bakerco/)



[Agriculture in North Florida](#)

[Baker County Garden Spot](#)

[Baker County 4-H](#)

## June 2024



Native Flora & Fauna p. 2

Horticulture p. 3

Agriculture p. 4

4-H Youth Development p. 5



Extension Tidbits p. 6

## Programs & Events

June 7-27

**Ag Entrepreneurship & Farm Business Planning** - A 3-week course to help aspiring and beginner farmers start their business plan. The course is available online and includes 3 live meetings.

For details and registration visit: <https://tinyurl.com/Agbiz24>

June 8

**Elderberry Field Day** - 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM @ North Florida Research & Education Center - Suwannee Valley, Live Oak. Program includes presentations in the conference room and a walk through the elderberry plots. Light refreshments provided. Register: <http://tinyurl.com/mrukx39b>

Online

**Butterfly Gardening** - Learn the basic garden design elements for a successful butterfly garden. Helpful resources and seeds for your garden included! Free, self-paced course. [Register here.](#)

# Florida's Native Flora & Fauna

2

By Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent



## American Basswood

The Basswood tree, also known as the American Linden, can reach 80 to 100 feet in height, but is most often seen at 40 to 50 feet in height with a spread of 40 feet.

The tree is pyramidal when young but develops into a striking specimen with an upright, oval canopy atop a tall, straight trunk. The lower branches remain on the tree and gently drape toward the ground before sweeping up in a gentle curve.

The heart-shaped leaves are dark green throughout the year fading only to pale green or yellow before dropping in autumn. In June, the trees produce abundant clusters of very fragrant, light yellow blooms which are extremely attractive to bees, who make a delicious honey from their harvests. The small, grey nut which is later produced will persist on the tree until midwinter.

This tree is large and needs plenty of room to develop. Plant it as a specimen or shade tree where there is plenty of soil space available for root expansion. Be prepared to remove sprouts periodically from the base of the trunk.

This tree prefers moist, fertile soils, acid or slightly alkaline, in full sun or partial shade. It is more shade-tolerant than many other large trees. The leaves will show browning and scorching after a particularly dry season, but the tree appears fine the following year.

## Osprey

The osprey is a species of raptor that is sometimes mistaken for the bald eagle. Smaller than the bald eagle, the osprey's 5 to 6-foot wingspan is impressive nonetheless. Ospreys have a white underside and head, and a brownish upper body with a black line across the eyes that extends to the wings.

Ospreys, also known as "fish hawks," are expert anglers. In Florida, common prey include saltwater catfish, mullet, spotted trout, shad, crappie, and sunfish from both coastal habitats and freshwater lakes, rivers, and swamps.

Different from other birds of prey, the osprey has short spines on the undersides of their toes plus a reversible fourth toe which are all used to grasp slippery fish as they fly over the water.

Found year-round in Florida, ospreys build nests in the tops of trees (live and dead) as well as manmade structures such as utility poles, channel markers, and nest platforms. Females lay 2 to 4 eggs that are incubated for around 32 days. Both adults tend to the eggs and nestlings. Young osprey take their first flight around 55 days after hatching, and the adults feed young until they are approximately 100 days old.

**OSPREY CAM IS LIVE - CHECK IT OUT!**

<https://wec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/ospreycam/>



## HIGHLIGHTS IN HORTICULTURE

By Alicia Lamborn, Environmental Horticulture Agent

# Tropical Spinaches aka “Summer Greens”

For anyone that has struggled to grow true spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*) in their winter garden, tropical spinaches work as a great alternative and can keep you harvesting leafy greens all summer long.

Malabar spinach (*Basella* spp.) is a vining plant with spinach-looking leaves that can be used the same way. Originally from India, this “non-spinach” prefers warm, rainy periods and a small amount of shade (although they can grow in full sun if moisture is plentiful). When cooked, Malabar spinach is less slick in texture than other greens. Generally, two vines is sufficient to provide a small family with greens during summer and fall. Grow from seeds or cuttings and don’t forget a trellis.

Okinawa spinach is another great heat-tolerant, leafy green and can create a low ground cover. The flavorful leaves can be added raw to fresh salads, steamed, juiced, used in stir fries, soups, smoothies, and quiches. Leaves and tender shoots have a mucilaginous (think okra) quality, especially when cooked. Plants grow in full sun to partial shade, need average moisture, and reach 2 to 3 feet tall. Although it will produce yellow flowers, it doesn’t produce seeds. Keep flowers cut back and harvest regularly to increase leaf production. Harvest the leaves and the top 4 to 6 inches of shoots; plants can take a severe pruning. To propagate, stick cuttings directly into the soil in your garden, or grow in pots in cold winter areas.



Malabar spinach



Bicolor Okinawa spinach

Article adapted and excerpted from: Tropical Spinaches, UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions, <https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/tropical-spinaches.html>

## Species Spotlight: Chinese Hat Plant

The Chinese Hat Plant (*Holmskioldia sanguinea*) is a large vine-like shrub with yellow, orange, or red flowers. In mild winter areas, the plant may be evergreen and bloom year-round. The flowers are distinctive with a round cup-like bract at the base of a tubular flower. Hummingbirds visit the flowers, and after the flowers fall, the bract (the "Chinese hat") remains. Reaching 5 to 8 feet tall and wide, it can be pruned to shape. Plant in full sun or partial shade and provide moisture during dry periods.



## BARNYARD BULLETIN

By Alicia Halbritter, Agriculture Agent

# Cost-Share Funding



How does free money sound? Sounds pretty good to me! There are many resources you, as an agricultural or timber producer, could be taking advantage of in order to reach operational goals. Organizations like the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) offer cost-share programs that refund you up to 75% of the cost of instilling certain management practices on your farm. Each department has various topics and goals they are concerned with and therefore certain management practices they will fund that helps them reach those goals, but most are typically environmentally focused.

- USDA NRCS EQIP Program - EQIP, or Environmental Quality Incentive Program, is a large program with many overarching goals that apply to agricultural and timberland owners. The priorities of this program include reducing pollutants, reducing emissions, reducing soil erosion and excess sediment accumulation, protecting existing habitats of endangered and threatened wildlife, and lastly creating or improving habitats for specific fish & wildlife species. There are certain initiatives that include various practices you may be approved for.
- SJRWMD prioritizes water conservation and a reduction of nutrient run-off on agricultural lands. An individual can receive up to 75% of their project annually, not exceeding \$250,000. Many of these projects include irrigation technology and equipment however there are some fertilizer and nutrient projects included.
- FDACS has a program for forestry producers, administered by the Florida Forest Service. The Southern Pine Beetle (SPB) Assistance and Prevention Program promotes activities like first thinning, prescribed burning, mechanical underbrush treatments, and longleaf or slash pine planting to reduce the impact of the Southern Pine Beetle. This program is open to forestry tracts between 5 and 5,000 acres, with a maximum reimbursement of \$10,000 per year. EQIP is also a great option for forestry producers.

Additional programs exist, like conservation easements, producer grants, new & beginner farmer loans, and more. I highly encourage you to reach out to the prospective organizations to discuss cost-share opportunities that are specific to your operation. Each organization will have different application procedures and funding cycles, so it's important to reach out as soon as possible so you are prepared when the next application period opens. These programs are an excellent way to advance your operation and improve your ability to conduct certain management tasks. Farmers, ranchers, and timberlands can benefit, but first you must apply!



# LUCKY CLOVER CHRONICLE

By Shaina Spann, 4-H Youth Development Agent

## Have your chicken and eat it, too!

Twenty-two youth raised 100 day-old Cornish Cross chicks for ten weeks and then harvested them. Unfortunately, not all made it to the ten week mark, but that is part of life. On June 1st, 19 members brought their chickens to the Extension Office and with the help of volunteers, processed their meat chickens.



This event would not have been possible without the help of our wonderful volunteers, Eddie Davis, Charley Harrold of Charley's Chicks, and Daryll Kozee. Additionally, 4-H would like to thank the Okefenoke Rural Electric Membership Corporation Foundation for their grant program that enabled us to purchase the necessary processing equipment for poultry production.

### 4-H Club Meetings & Events

- June 3- Cloverbuddies, 4pm, 4-H Classroom
- June 23-25- iLEAD, Gainesville
- June 25- Livestock Club, 6pm, Auditorium
- July 1- Cloverbuddies, 4pm, 4-H Classroom
- July 20- Fair Tag-in, 7am-9am, Fairgrounds
- July 23- Livestock Club, 6pm, Auditorium

### No Camps for 2024

Unfortunately, due to construction happening at the Extension Office, we will not be hosting any camps this summer.

We need volunteers! Please reach out if you or someone you know would be interested in volunteering. The following areas currently have a need for volunteers:

- Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Mathematics (STEAM)
- Healthy Living
- Sports
- Livestock Animals
- Horses

### REMIND APP

text @bakerco4h to 81010 to be added to the 4-H Remind text group.



Did you know that 4-H has an online course platform? It's called [CLOVER](#). There are activities and courses 4-Hers can take! When signing up, enter the code 831101 to join Baker County!



Check out our Livestock [Google Site!](#)

# EXTENSION TIDBITS

## FLORIDA BLUEBERRY AND CREAM CHEESE STUFFED CRESCENTS

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup Florida Blueberries
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened to room temperature
- 2 tablespoons natural Florida sugar crystal
- 1 Florida egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon Florida orange zest
- 1 teaspoon lemon or lime zest
- 1 tube crescent dough
- 1 teaspoon natural vanilla



### PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a small mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, all the zest, 1 tablespoon of the sugar crystals and the vanilla. Mix the cream cheese mixture until completely combined. Open the tube of dough and unroll. Cut the dough along the perforated lines to make individual triangles. Starting at the wide end of the triangle, evenly add 1 ounce of the cream cheese mixture keeping the cheese close to the bottom. Add 1/8 of the blueberries to the top of the cream cheese mixture. Carefully roll the dough up starting at the wide end. Continue this process until all 8 crescents are stuffed and rolled. Place the stuffed crescents on a baking sheet. Lightly brush the outside of each crescent with the beaten egg, and evenly sprinkle the tops of each with the remaining tablespoon of sugar crystals. Place the stuffed crescents in the preheated oven and bake for about 15 minutes until golden brown. Remove from oven and serve warm.

<https://www.followfreshfromflorida.com/recipes/florida-blueberry-and-cream-cheese-stuffed-crescents>

## EDIBLES TO PLANT IN *June*



|   | North  | Central  | South   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <br>Easily Survives Transplanting | Boniato, Gingers, Roselle, Tropical Spinaches  | Boniato, Gingers, Roselle, Sugarcane, Tropical Spinaches   | Sugarcane, Tropical Spinaches   |
| <br>Transplant Carefully          | Amaranth, Calabaza, Long Squash, Luffa, Papaya, Passionfruit, Pigeon Pea, Seminole Pumpkin, Sweet Potatoes | Amaranth, Calabaza, Long Squash, Luffa, Papaya, Passionfruit, Pigeon Pea, Pineapple, Seminole Pumpkin, Sweet Potatoes, Yucca | Amaranth, Papaya, Passionfruit, Pigeon Pea, Pineapple, Sweet Potatoes |
| <br>Use Seeds                     | Chayote, Okra, Peas (southern)   | Chayote, Okra, Peas (southern)   | Chayote   |

