

Commercial Clippings

March 2016

How to Properly Prune Crapemyrtles

By Larry Figart, UF/Duval County Urban Forestry Extension Agent

It is that time of year when your clients start thinking about pruning their crapemyrtles. Unfortunately, for many folks that involves topping the tree. Topping requires less skill and time than other pruning methods, but it also results in delayed flowering, weak growth and unattractive sprouting. Not only is topping crapemyrtles ugly, it increases maintenance requirements on an otherwise low-maintenance tree.

In the past, it was true that you pruned crapemyrtles to reduce powdery mildew infestations. With today's resistant cultivars, crapemyrtles require very little pruning. In fact, a crapemyrtle planted in full sun with plenty of space to grow needs little to no pruning at all.

If you find yourself in the position to prune crapemyrtles, here are a few simple steps to follow. First, prune sucker sprouts and basal sprouts. If left to grow, these sprouts may form woody stems that eventually compete with existing main stems.

Second, prune any rubbing or crossing branches, as well as, dead branches. This may include branches that are crossing through the canopy from one side to another. As always make the pruning cuts at the branch collar.

Third, (this one is optional) tip prune the branches to remove spent flower buds. This is also called pencil pruning because the branches removed are no thicker than a pencil. This type of pruning is the most labor intensive, but it also results in a more aesthetically attractive tree.

Recent research from the University of Florida has demonstrated that the number of crapemyrtle blooms decrease in direct correlation to the size of the branch removed. In other words, the larger the branch removed, the fewer the blooms. However, blooms on pruned trees were larger than blooms on un-pruned trees. To receive the benefit of larger flowers from pruning, prune just pencil sized branches without jeopardizing overall tree health caused by topping the tree. For more information refer to:

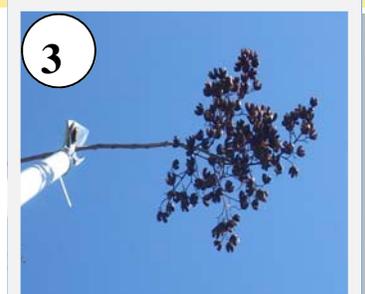
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/EP/EP39900.pdf>



Prune Basal Sprouts.



Remove rubbing or crossing branches



Remove spent flowers

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<http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu>



SPRING WORKSHOPS

2016

March 2 April 6 Wednesday (Duval)	Pesticide Testing - Restricted-Use, Limited, and Public Health Exams 9:15 am and 11:30 am Please pre-register at https://aesecomm.freshfromflorida.com for restricted-use (commercial, public, or private) and limited exams. For public health exams please call 904-255-7450 or email Erin Harlow at erine@coj.net.
Call to Schedule (Duval)	Pesticide Testing - Certified Pest Operator Exams 4 hour exam Must be pre-register at https://aesecomm.freshfromflorida.com . Must be pre-approved by Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). Bring your voucher number, approval documents and picture ID.
March 10 Thursday (Duval)	Worker Protection Standards: Train-the-Trainer 9:00 am - 11:30 am \$10.00 This class is required for farms, forests, nurseries or greenhouses who use products labeled as "Agricultural Use". Register at http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/WPS_Class.shtml
March 17, 24, 31, April 7, 14 Thursdays @ UNF Horticultural Facilities	Professional Horticulture Training for the Florida Nursery, Growers, and Landscape Association's Certification Exam 12:30 pm - 3:30 pm \$125 includes FCHP manual; \$75 if you already have the manual Municipality/Govt/University call for pricing Our most in-depth training for those interested in gaining more horticulture knowledge or who would like to take their FNGLA Certified Horticulture Professional Exam. FL pesticide and FNGLA CEUs will be applied for.
March 18 Friday (Duval)	Right-of-Way & Natural Areas Exam Review & Testing 8:30 am - 2 :30 pm \$40 pre-registration prior to 3/11/16; \$60 after 3/11 or at the door Right-of-way and natural areas CEUs will be available. This is a review class and examinees are expected to study prior to attending the class. Register at http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/Pest_Test_Rev.shtml

All classes require pre-registration

Unless stated will be held at the
Duval County Extension Office, 1010 N McDuff Ave, Jacksonville, FL 32254
To register visit us at <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu> and click Commercial Horticulture/Calendar
or call 904-255-7450

**March 29
Tuesday
(Lake City)**

Limited Commercial Landscape Maintenance Workshop

8:15 am - 3:00 pm - Full Day; 8:15 am – 12:00 pm - Half Day
\$30.00 for either full or half day

**April 5
Tuesday
(Duval)**

6 CEUs Total: 3 CORE & 3 LCLM, 3 LL&O or 3 L&O

Lunch included, textbooks not included

The exam is no longer provided after the class. Please check with your local extension office for testing options.

To register, download the brochure, or for more information about the exam or books, please visit: <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/LCLM2012.shtml>.

This class is designed for people who do not have their license yet. If you are re-certifying your LCLM or LL&O you should consider attending a different class that offers those CEUs. There are many to choose from throughout the year.

**April 12
Tuesday
(Duval)**

Pest Control Operator CEU Day

8:00 am - Lawn and Ornamental; 2 L&O, 2 LLO, 2 O&T, 2 Pvt

10:00 am - CORE; 2 CORE

12:30 pm - General Household Pest; 2 GHP, 2 LS

2:30 pm - Wood Destroying Organism/Termite; 2 WDO

\$10.00 per session

Lunch is optional for an additional fee of \$15.00. CEUs provided in each category

CEUs have been applied for.

Register at http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/PCO_CEU_Day.shtml

**May 20
Friday
(Clay)**

Aquatic Herbicide CEU Field Day

8:30 am - 2:30 pm

\$40 pre-registration prior to 5/14/16; \$60 after 5/14 or at the door

Aquatic CEUs have been applied for.

Workshop will include hands-on and advanced aquatic herbicide techniques.

Class will include information that may be found on the exam, but it is not a preparation class, but rather a review class. A review will be done at the end of the day prior to the optional exam.

Register at http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/Pest_Test_Rev.shtml

Improving the Planting Site

Larry Figart

We have all heard the statement “don’t put a \$100 tree in a \$5.00 hole”. Well what exactly does that mean? I recently went to a large development where they had planted hundreds of large trees. The trees were root pruned, hardened off, balled and burlapped. They were Florida #1 trees. I am not sure how much they cost but I am sure they were very expensive. Soon the owners started to notice that their trees were dying back. In other words they were shrinking rather than growing. There was so much attention put on purchasing large high quality trees and very little attention given to the site where they were expected to grow. Remember the goal is to have the tree become established as quickly as possible. The steps in creating a quality planting site are as follows:

Evaluate the drainage where the trees are to be planted. Is it poorly drained or well drained. If it is poorly drained then the trees may need to be planted on a berm. Sometimes auguring through the “hardpan” will improve the site drainage allowing water to percolate better.

Look for construction debris. On many sites there is construction debris in the planting site. This debris often includes gravel, concrete and limerock. Remove as much of the concrete and gravel as you can. If there is limerock or shell in the soil, test the pH to make sure it is not too high. In many cases the limerock in the soil alters the pH so much that extensive soil replacement is warranted. This may seem like overkill but it is next to impossible to alter the pH enough to make a difference. Replacement of the soil ends up being more cost effective.

Add organic matter. You are probably wondering if I have lost my mind right now. For years we have said “do not to add anything but the native soil to the planting hole”. Well, I am not suggesting adding organic

matter to the hole. I am saying that organic matter should be added to the planting site. The organic matter should be well composted. This can be done in several ways. The best way is to incorporate it into the site before the tree is planted. Till, or mix in organic matter to as much of an area around the tree as you can. This will improve drainage, reduce compaction, and improve the soil biology. Vertical mulching is the addition of organic matter by placing



Newly planted tree declining
Photo: Larry Figart, UF/IFAS

composted organic matter in 6 inch wide holes dug to a depth of 6-9 inches. These holes should be spaced 2-3 feet apart in the planting bed. Vertical mulching can be done after the tree has been installed. Radial trenching is the addition of organic matter to a planting site by creating trenches 5-6 inches wide and 8-12 inches deep in a pattern like the spokes of a wheel around the tree. The trenches should then be filled with composted organic matter. The benefit to radial trenching is that it creates pathways for roots to grow out from the tree.

Dig a hole 1-2 inches shallower than the root ball and much wider than you need. The hole should be shaped like a saucer (getting shallower as you go away from the tree) and 2-3 times the size of the root-ball. This will allow for the root ball to quickly expand 150 to 400% before it will come in contact with the "site" soil. Another way to accomplish the same thing with

less effort is to dig

the hole twice the root ball width the typical vertical sides.

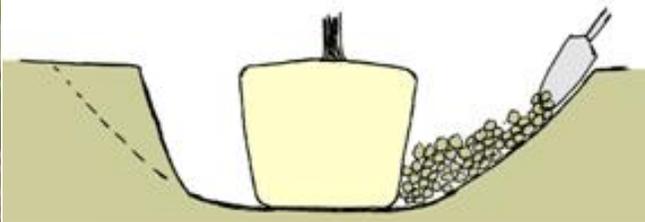
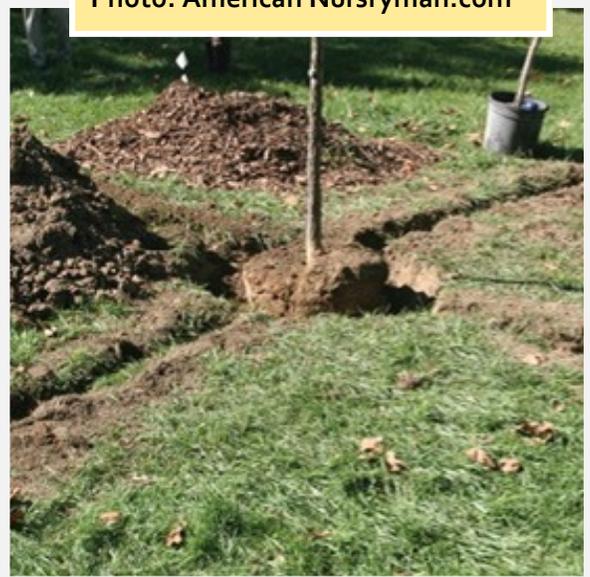
Then with a shovel cut the sides of the planting hole to form the saucer-shape planting hole three times the root ball

diameter. On extremely compacted soil it is

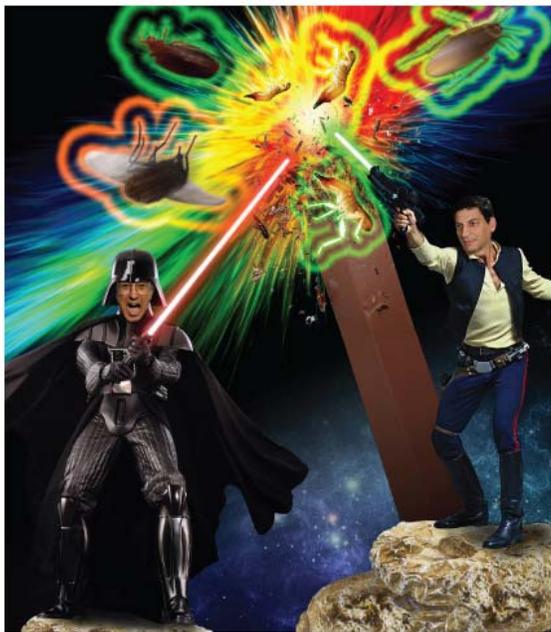
recommended to roto-till up to 5 times the root ball diameter after the tree is installed.

Radial Trenching.

Photo: American Nurseryman.com



Planting hole widened into saucer-shape during the backfill process. From: <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/mg/nnotes/633.html>



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2016 Seminars

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May 3rd - Termites

May 4th - Lawn and Ornamentals

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<http://entnemdept.ifas.ufl.edu/sepmc/>

Design on Your Dime



When it comes to offering planting design services, your firm may be way ahead of the game or you may just be thinking about this as an additional service. This can be a rewarding field to expand your existing business, as demand grows for professional designs. With a world of possibilities, settling on just the right design for your client can be a challenge. So what makes a successful design – without breaking the bank? Here's three tips that can save your business time and money when approaching a design job:

Right Plant Right Now: Most of you have probably heard “right

plant right place” by now, but it can be hard to balance the need for a completed look with the true scale of mature plants. Numerous mature landscapes of oversized, over-pruned, or over-competing plants are out there setting bad examples. These conditions detract from design aesthetics as both overgrown and heavily maintained plants can become bedraggled and unhealthy looking from stresses. If instant fill is required, instead of overplanting use plant combinations of a primary and secondary plant. That way, the secondary species can be removed as the landscape matures, leaving room for the primary to fill in without crowding.

The Entire Year: Often landscapes shine in spring and fall, only to fall flat in summer and winter. A favorite tool of mine is a ‘color calendar’ for each job to make sure there’s always visual interest in your plant material selections. Using graph paper, write out the plant names on the left and months of the year at the top. Then use the columns to color appropriate colors by month for each plant. Once you’re done, look for months with no visual interest and add or change plants to fill the gaps. For example, if you have nothing interesting in February, swapping a redbud for a crape myrtle can fill the gap. A simple graph is great to check your species selections; if drawn with a little care this can be a great visual for clients as well.

The Future: Designing for reduced maintenance can be a real plus – and documenting the steps to care with a maintenance plan can be insurance for your design efforts. Creating a maintenance plan not only lets clients know what to expect, it ensures that you’ve done your homework on the species selections. You also are providing the roadmap to help ensure that your creations will continue to look good. Start by specifying plants that can grow to their true form instead of being maintained by regular pruning, or that need annual or semi-annual work instead of monthly. Then create a maintenance plan that’s specific to the care of those plants. Using diagrams from IFAS can be very helpful when instructing on proper pruning, planting, and other →

aspects of care – check <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/index.shtml> for guides as well as planting details and specifications you can download and include in your plans.

This is by no means a complete list of considerations for successful design, but the tips above will help you consider how your designs can look good from installation to maturity and beyond. If your company is starting or thinking about offering design services, read more on “Landscape Design: Ten Important Things to Consider” at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep375> for a comprehensive look at the design process.

Image credit: A. Morie

References:

“Landscape Plants: Planting Details and Specifications.” UF/IFAS: <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/details-specs.shtml>

“The Community Landscape: An Environmental Approach” https://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/community_association_kit.htm

“Low-maintenance Landscaping” UF/IFAS: http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot_topics/lawn_and_garden/low_maintenance_landscaping.shtml

“Health and Maintenance of Shade Trees.” UF/IFAS: <http://hort.ufl.edu/woody/maintenance.shtml>

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Furniture Carpet Beetle, *Anthrenus falvipes*



Biology - The adults are round with black and yellow mottling on their backs. These scales may rub off over time, so the insect may look darker or blacker. Adults feed on pollen of flowers and has a life span of 30-60 days. The larvae are small and oval shaped with brown hairs. They are hairy with tufts extending from the ends of their bodies. They feed on furniture, padding, cotton, silks, hairs, and carpets or rugs. They can do extensive damage if left undetected.

Control - Vacuuming should be the first step in control. Make sure the bag is sealed after vacuuming. Diatomaceous earth or silica can be used for crack and crevice or baseboards. Spot treatments of rugs can be done with residual spray. UF’s Dept of Entomology recommends emulsifiable concentrates. Moth balls should be avoided as they really aren’t very effective for this pest.



Notes - Some people who continually come into contact with carpet beetles may develop allergic reactions. This could include itching, sensation of biting, scratchy throats, and rashes. The reaction is caused by the hairs from the larvae.

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For individuals requiring special accommodations, please contact our office (904/255-7450) within a minimum of 5 working days of the program. For persons with hearing or speech impairments, when contacting our office, please use the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8771 (TDD). Your comments and input are necessary for this to be a useful tool for all of us.

Extension Programs are open to all regardless of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, religion, national origin, political opinions or affiliations.

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