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### The Lake County Mission Statement

The Mission of the UF/IFAS Mater Gardener Volunteers is to assist extension agents by providing horticultural education programs and current research-based information to the public through plant clinics, community outreach, and through Discovery Gardens.

# Garden Scoop

## Classifying Invasive Plants

BY K.S.Kennen, MGv

Mankind has always been adventurous and traveled to new places seeking new experiences. Many of these explorers would bring flora back to their native land to grow and add to their collections. Florida is a state that has exploring botanist that have brought plants to this unique state that have ended up causing problems to our environment. Plants were introduced to Florida for various reasons. For example, water hyacinth was brought to Palatka by someone that had visited the 1884 World's Fair and bought some plants to put in his water pond to beautify the pond. Unfortunately, they made their way into the St. John's waterway and became a part of the earliest concentrated effort to eliminate an invasive. Besides being introduced into the environment for beauty, non native plants were brought for agricultural reasons. Kudzu, an aggressive invasive vine, that grows a foot a day, was introduced in Florida to be used to control erosion and as fodder. Not all invasives were brought to the state on purpose. Some were introduced accidentally into the state. Cogon grass was brought in via contaminated wood crate materials and has spread to over one million acres.

There are two organizations that have the task of classifying non-native plants that have negatively impacted Florida. First there is Florida Invasive Species Council (FISC) that has placed plants in either category 1 or category 2. Then there is Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Science that categorizes invasive plants as noxious weeds.

**For more information contact: UF/IFAS Extension, Lake County Office [lakemg.ifas@ufl.edu](mailto:lakemg.ifas@ufl.edu) ▪**

**(352) 343-4101 ▪ FAX (352) 343-2767**

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## Classifying Invasives, CONTINUED

K.S. Kennen, MGV

A non-native plant is given a category 1 designation by FISC when it has altered an ecological system. For example, the Mexican petunia has completely changed the ecosystem of Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park by overtaking and eliminating the native plants. These plants have the ability to easily reproduce and will spread easily with the absence of a natural predator to stop their spread. Category 2 invasives also have the ability to easily reproduce but have not yet spread enough to disrupt or



change the ecosystem. They do however need to be watched closely and be monitored for any change to a plant community because of their existence. One example of a category 2 invasive is the Begonia cucullata which has been found in the wild in at least twenty Florida counties (including Lake County).

There is also a classification of *noxious weed* given to plants that not only spread easily and rapidly thereby changing plant diversity and modifying biodiversity, but these plants have an economical impact also. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Science or FDACS coincides with the federally monitored list of economically harmful plants found in Florida.

Australian pine is a prime example of a tree first planted to be used as a quick source of timber and a fast growing windbreak. Unfortunately, they have taken over growth of native trees and plants. Their allelopathic properties prevent anything else from growing below or near them.

RESOURCE: <https://www.floridainvasives.org/>

<https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Pests-and-Diseases/Plant-Pests-and-Diseases/Noxious-Weeds>



### Discovery Gardens

Please plan a visit to over twenty different gardens located at 1951 Woodlea Road in Tavares. The hours are Monday through Friday. Just like your yard, Discovery Garden changes with the seasons and will reveal something new with each visit. Come see the changes in the garden.

# Protected Plants

K.S.Kennen, MGV

Not only do we as gardeners need to be aware of plants that are not native and grow so fast that they threaten to replace our native plants, but we need to be aware of plants that are in danger of disappearing. As Florida experiences rapid growth and population explosion, many of the natural habitats are being replaced by homes and businesses resulting in the loss of native plants. A regulated plant list has been developed to increase awareness of endangered species in hopes to slow the loss of these plants.

The Florida Regulated Plant Index (FRPI) maintained by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has three categories that endangered plants are placed into. The first category is “endangered”. This is when a plant is in danger of extinction mainly due to habitat loss from urban development. Also climate change can be a factor as indicated by the increasing temperatures we have experienced. In addition, pollination can play a factor in the endangerment of plants. Finally, there are invasives that can and have displace native plants.

The second categorization by FRPI is “threatened”. When a plant is threatened it is not yet in immediate danger of extinction but because only a small population of the plants exist, and the increase of plant stressors, extinction could easily occur.

The third categorization by FRPI is “commercially exploited”. This term is self explanatory and indicates that there is control of harvesting and removing plants from their natural habitat for profit and thereby creating a decline of the plant due to over harvesting.



Four –petal pawpaw is endangered and found only in Martin and Palm County.



Goldenrod Fern is threatened.



Saw Palmetto berries are exploited for medicinal use.

RESOURCE: <https://www.fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Protect-Our-Environment/Botany/Florida-s-Endangered-Plants>

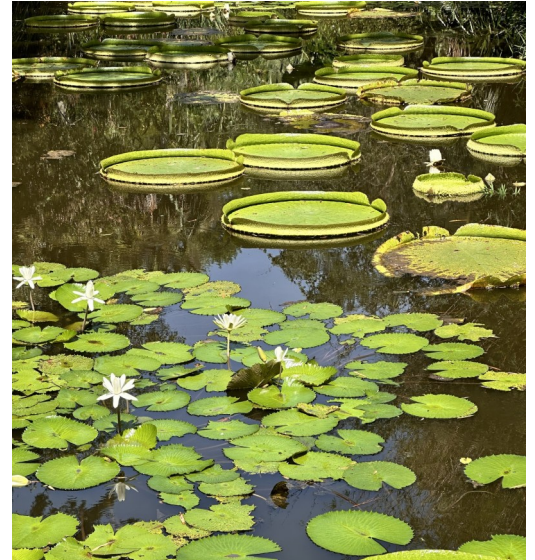
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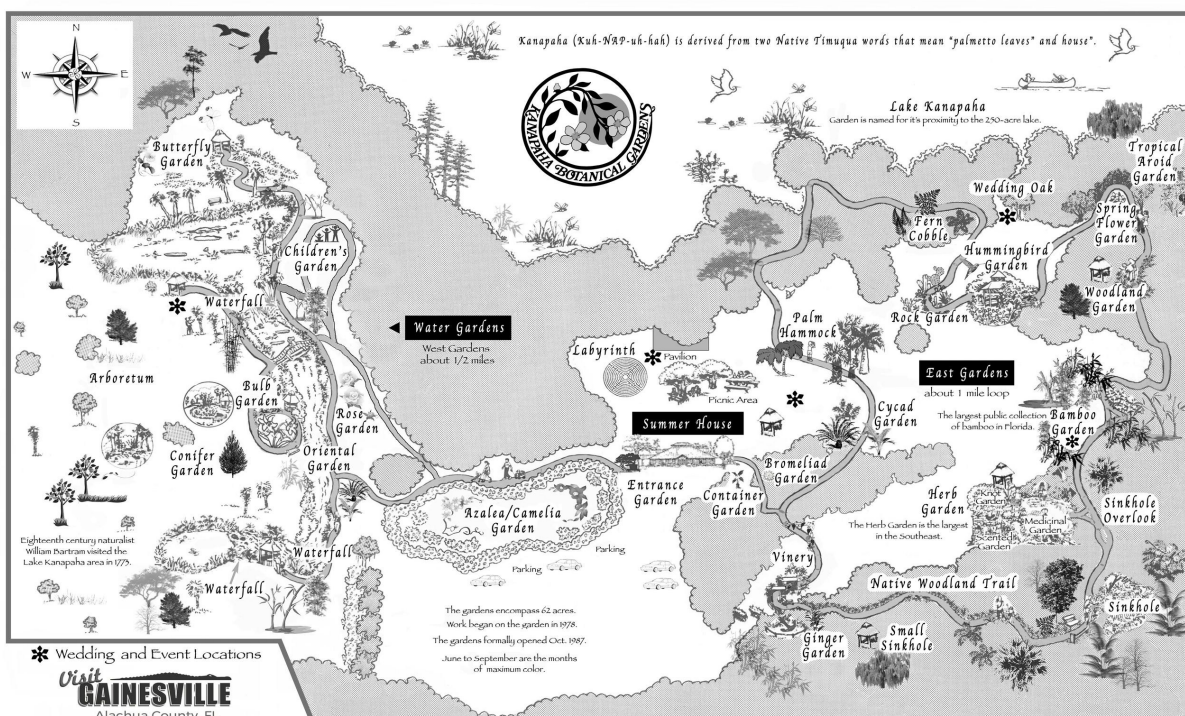
# Kanapaha Botanical Gardens

Karen Kennen, MGv

Master Gardener Volunteers toured the botanical gardens this past September 10. The group was pleased to walk this 62 acre site that has 24 major collections. One notable site has the Giant Victoria Water Lilies that bloom in the late summer but are gone in October.



The name, kanapaha, comes from the Timucua whose land this once was. Kana means “palmetto leaves” and paha means “house” which are the houses that the Timucua lived in. The Gainesville Garden Club leased 29 acres of land in 1978 to develop the botanical garden. In 1982, 29 acres were added and the gardens were open to the public in 1986. There are 20 gardens with over 1500 species. The butterfly and hummingbird gardens are a favorite with the various host and nectar plant that attract the butterflies. The carnivorous garden shows another side of plants that eat insects for nourishment. One plant in this garden is the pitcher plant, a Florida native. Below is a copy of a map of the garden which shows how extensive the garden is and it is definitely worth a visit. <https://kanapaha.org/map>



## LIBRARY CLASSES

November's presentation is about propagation which is a way to increase the number of plants you have that you can add to your landscape or share with friends. Probably the most known way to propagate plants is from cuttings. But do you know how long a stem cutting should be? Do you know where to make the stem cutting? Can you propagate from a plant's leaf? Is it better to propagate from an existing plant or start a plant from seeds? These and other questions will be answered when you attend the presentation of propagation.

November 17, 2025, 2-3 pm

*Invasive Plants*

Umatilla Public Library

November 18, 2025, 4-5 pm

*Invasive Plants*

Leesburg Public Library

November 18, 2025, 12-1 pm

*Invasive Plants*

Eustis Public Library

November 19, 2025, 2-3pm

*Invasive Plants*

Tavares Public Library

November 18, 2025, 2-3 pm

*Invasive Plants*

Howie Public Library

November 19, 2025, 6-7 pm

*Invasive Plants*

Groveland Public Library

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