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Lake County MGV 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, community outreach and Discovery Gardens.

Garden Scoop

Identifying Florida Lawn Weeds

BY K.S. Kennen

The definition of a weed is any plant that is unwanted in your yard or garden. There are three types of weeds: broadleaves; grasses; lastly sedges/rushes. Within each of those types there are three classes: annual (yearly); biennial (two years); and perennial (continual). Recognizing the type of weed you have growing in your lawn will be helpful in decisions made about controlling them since each type could take a different kind of control method.

Broadleaf weeds are those that have, as the name indicates, a wide leaf and grow from a stem. Since they look nothing like the grass you are growing for your lawn, they are easy to locate. Two common broadleaf weeds are beggar's tick (*bidens alba*) and Florida pusley. Both are annuals and have seeds that perpetuate new plants each year.

Grass weeds have only one leaf when they emerge as a seedling. The plant usually has long, thin blades with round, hollow or solid stems. One type that you may have found in your lawn at one time is southern crabgrass, which is an annual with two inch long leaves and a clumping or loose runner growing pattern. The seed heads can form from different points along the stems and one plant can produce up to 700 seeds.

The sedges and rushes have stems; the first with a triangular one and the second with a round stem. Unlike grass, they do not have any nodes on their stems. The most prolific sedges are yellow and purple nutsedge. To help remember the difference, botany students recite this rhyme:

"Sedges have edges, and rushes are round,
But grasses have nodes from their tips to the ground."

Identifying the types of weeds in your lawn is only the first step in attempting to control the weeds. This identification is important since certain conditions exist for specific weeds and you may be able to change those conditions. For example, if you identify the weed as dollar weed you probably need to water your lawn less since this weed likes a very damp ground. Research at the University of Florida demonstrated a reduction in dollarweed just by reducing irrigation frequency. Also, identification of the weeds will allow you to use a selective herbicide control which affects select plants (weeds) without affecting others (grass). Another possibility are contact herbicides that are applied directly to the plant and work on contact with the above ground growth but not the underground growth. Nutsedge would still be growing because the "nut" underground would not be killed.

Publication ENH884 is an appropriate place to start with your weed education on website <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ep141>.

For more information contact: UF/IFAS Extension, Lake County Office lakemg.ifas@ufl.edu ▪
(352) 343-4101 ▪ FAX (352) 343-2767

More About Weeds

BY Reggie Doherty

Why worry about weeds in February? Aren't the ones in my lawn and landscape going to die soon? Yes, the winter weeds we're seeing now will die off, BUT the dormant summer weeds will begin to emerge as soon as the warm and rainy season begins. So, with that in mind, we need to think, "preemergence herbicide application for summer annual weeds." It's a phrase heard often, but WHEN do we apply and WHAT do we apply? This article will help explain.

When February day temperatures reach 65° to 70°F for four to five consecutive days, that's when you look for lawn preemergence products that contain the active ingredients: oryzalin, benefin, pendimethalin, benefin + oryzalin, DCPA or bensulide. Be sure to READ THE LABEL of any product you purchase to ensure you use the not only proper method of application but the proper chemical. For instance, oryzalin blocks the growth of plant cells, hence, the weeds won't grow. According to its' label, you must activate this herbicide with ½" of rain or irrigation within 21 days of application or weeds will grow sporadically. Since this herbicide lasts 21 days in soil, reapplication may be necessary. Hopefully you see the importance of reading the label from this little tidbit. It also makes us realize that grass seed shouldn't be spread until after the preemergence herbicide's activation period (e.g. 21 days for oryzalin). So, using a preemergent will help CONTROL summer weeds from sprouting and their seeds from spreading, but will NOT prevent them from coming up next summer. So, if you want to control growth, use a preemergent. Once weeds are established, controlling them is difficult. You can hand-pull them or use a post emergent herbicide if the [weeds are young](#), but keep in mind the rainy season will wash away anything you spray.

Some Common summer weeds: crabgrass, Florida pusley, chamber bitter, sand spur, spotted spurge, sedge, kyllinga, oxalis, and dove weed

Further Reading: [Pre-emergence application](#) | [Weed ID](#) | [Weeds by Flower color](#) | [UF/IFAS Weed ID videos](#) | [UF/IFAS Weed ID book](#) | [Doveweed](#) | [What is a Weed?](#) |

Garden of the Month

December – Cottage Garden

The cottage garden was said to have originated in Britain when the cottage owners had very small plots and needed to raise food for their families . The family would plant a mixture of flowering plants for beauty and vegetables along with herbs for their use and consumption. Two definite elements of a cottage garden were close plantings and informality of design.

Co-leads Loraine Liswell and Sandy Betlach received a recognition award for the beauty and upkeep of the cottage garden and have plans to add more plants to the garden to enrich its design.



Plant Clinic Clatter



DEAR MASTER GARDENER:

I was walking on my lawn the other day and saw what looks like tiny webs between grass blades. Is this from a ground spider or something else?



DEAR HOMEOWNER:

After looking at the photos you sent us, it appears to be tropical sod webworms (*Herpetogramma phaeopteralis*). The webworms are actually the larval stage for the brown tropical sod webworm moth, which lays its eggs on the grass blades. So, the caterpillar is what causes damage to your lawn, not the moth. To confirm this, go outside with a flashlight to the webbed areas and look for 3/4-1" long caterpillars feeding on your grass. Eventually you will see thinning of the lawn (fewer blades) and brown patchy areas. It may seem like the damage occurred overnight, but the caterpillars have likely been feeding for several days.

Cultural control consists of maintaining healthy grass with proper irrigation, fertilization, and mowing. Thatch removal, tillage, or power raking may help reduce population since eggs are laid on grass blades. There are several chemical controls available for the larvae stage with above-ground applications.

For further resources refer to EDIS [EENY-541](#) | Tropical [Sod webworms](#) | [Featured Creatures](#)



Figure 5. Tropical sod webworm larval instars, pre-pupae and pupa (L to R).
Credit: James Kerrigan, University of Florida



Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Clinic

Bring your plant, insects, and soil problems to our Plant Clinic for advice Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The plant clinic is staffed by volunteers. Please call ahead at 352-343-4101 to be sure that someone is in the clinic to assist you with your question. You may also send photos of your local problems to Jamielyn Daugherty at jdaugherty@ufl.edu or to the plant clinic at lakemg@ifas.ufl.edu.

What's Cooking? Brussel Sprouts

BY Lori Johnson

Family & Consumer Science Agent

Did you know: Brussel sprouts are a good source of fiber, Vitamin B-6, copper, and manganese. They are also high in Vitamin C and K. All of these provide a variety of health benefits that helps our bodies stay strong and healthy. B-6 and Vitamin C help keep our immune system healthy, while Vitamin K helps with blood clotting and strong bones. Copper helps in bone formation, keeping our nervous system functioning and provides energy. Manganese helps in bone health and wound healing.

Smoky Pecan Brussel Sprouts

Recipe made using an electric pressure cooker such as an Instant Pot

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of water
- 1 teaspoon liquid smoke
- 4 tablespoons maple syrup
- 3-4 cups brussel sprouts
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Directions:

1. Rinse brussel sprouts.
2. Add the water, brussel sprouts, and liquid smoke to the Instant Pot and mix well.
3. Put the lid on and pressure cook on high for 2 minutes.
4. After the cooking time is complete, quick release the pressure, unlock and remove the lid.
5. Select sauté and add in the pecans and maple syrup, reduce the liquid as you finish cooking the sprouts, remove from heat once tender.



Important Information:

- Freshness of brussel sprouts can be determined by smell. If they are old, they will smell like old cabbage. Both the smell and taste become stronger as they age.
- To keep in the refrigerator until cooking, store loosely in a plastic wrap, covered bowl that has a few holes poked in the wrap. They should last up to five days.

Treemendous: Chinese Tallow

Jamie Daugherty, RHA

Chinese Tallow (*Triadica sebifera*) was introduced to Florida as an agricultural crop in the 1900s. Seed oil was collected to make soap. Prior to this the plant had already been introduced to the US as an ornamental tree as early as the 1700s. The plant has spread and is now in several states from S. Carolina to Texas. It is also in over half of Florida counties and is classified as a category one invasive.

What does it mean to be a category one invasive?

The Florida Invasive Species Council (FISC) defines a category one invasive as a plant that displaces native species, altering the native plant community. This changes the structure of the entire ecosystem it invades. This plant has also been listed on the Florida Noxious Weed List. This means that it cannot be introduced, possessed, moved, or released without a permit.

How can you identify this plant?

This plant has very distinct leaves. The pictures below can help with identification. The leaves are one to two and a half inches wide at the broadly, rounded base and taper to a fine point. This tree can be up to 30 feet tall with eight inch flower spikes and fruit that ripens from August to November.



"Triadica sebifera2" by KENPEI - KENPEI's photo. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons - http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triadica_sebifera2.jpg#mediaviewer/File:Triadica_sebifera2.jpg



"Triadica sebifera9" by KENPEI - KENPEI's photo. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons - http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triadica_sebifera9.jpg#mediaviewer/File:Triadica_sebifera9.jpg

How does it spread?

The fruit is eaten by birds and spread throughout the state. The roots will also re-sprout if the stump is not treated at removal.

What can you do if it is growing in your yard?

If this plant is in your yard, it is best to remove and replace it. While many areas require a permit for tree removal, they should be easily obtained since removal of invasives is desired. At the time of removal, the stump must be sprayed with 'triclopyr-ester applied in an oil diluent' according to the FISC. For smaller plants and vegetation sprouting from stumps, foliar herbicide applications can be used. Read the label of the herbicide to ensure proper use because it is illegal to use any herbicide outside of the label's instructions.

What can you plant instead?

There are a number of native and Florida Friendly trees that you can choose from. This plant directory is a great help in making your selection: <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/>

Want to know if something in your landscape is invasive?

Check out this plant directory: <https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-directory/>

Snake In the Garden

By Bev Pearson

While on my morning walk one day, I came across this tree that caught my attention. I thought maybe it was a root that had wrapped around the trunk. It wasn't moving it all. As I got closer, I realized it was a snake! What kind, I did not know, but I took as close a picture of it as I could with the zoom on my phone. I emailed the picture to the Agriculture Center Plant Clinic and received a reply back that it was a rat snake. I couldn't believe how long it was and what good camouflage it had on the tree trunk.

I did a little research on rat snakes in Florida and this is what I learned: There are only two species of rat snake native to Florida and they are variable in color and pattern. Throughout most of Peninsular Florida, adults tend to be yellow or orange with four narrow dark stripes running the length of the body. They tend to be elusive and spend most of their time in trees, under brush and mulch piles, or in old buildings. Rat snakes are the best climbers of Florida's snakes because of powerful constricting muscles and edged belly scales that help them climb vertically. Young rat snakes feed mostly on lizards and frogs, but adults graduate to rodents and birds. They grab prey with their mouths, coil around them and squeeze the life out of their meal and swallow their prey whole. (Much of this verbiage is directly from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's publication.) In late spring, females lay up to 30 eggs that hatch in mid- to late summer. They will defend themselves aggressively when cornered. When threatened, they also may vibrate their tails rapidly. I don't know about you, but I don't plan to personally find out; I'll back up and go in another direction.



Discovery Gardens

Please plan a visit to over twenty different gardens located at 1951 Woodlea Road in Tavares. The hours are Monday through Friday and the third Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Just like your yard, Discovery Garden changes with the seasons and will reveal something new with each visit. During the winter months check out what is in bloom.

Classes and Events

February 4th CLOSING YOUR SEASONAL HOME

Time: 9-11

Location: UF/IFAS Lake County Extension Office at 1951 Woodlea Road Tavares

No Charge.

The Closing Your Seasonal Home program will provide you the knowledge and important steps to take in the weeks leading up to leaving your Florida home for the season. We will discuss preparations of your home both inside and out, addressing security and keeping it healthy.

Advance registration for event required.

For February 4th Click here to register: <http://lakediscoverygardensprograms.eventbrite.com/>

February 09, 2022 COOKING IN AN INSTANT

Time: 1-3 pm or 6-8pm

Location: UF/IFAS Lake County Extension Office at 1951 Woodlea Road Tavares

Cost: \$15

Join us for a fun culinary class creating recipes using an air fryer and electric pressure cooker with an Instant Pot.

Space is limited, advance registration required

Click here to register: <http://lakediscoverygardensprograms.eventbrite.com/>

February 4, 2022 Rose Pruning Workshop and Demonstration

Time: 9am-12 or 1pm

Location: UF/IFAS Lake County Extension Office at 1951 Woodlea Road Tavares

Cost \$7

Rose pruning workshop and demonstration. Seats are limited. Register Here:

<http://lakediscoverygardensprograms.eventbrite.com/>.

February 13, 2022 Potting Orchids

Time: 2pm-3pm Location: Mount Dora Public Library.

Learn how to repot your orchid though an educational class.

No cost or registration.

February 17, 2022 Potting Orchids

Time: 1pm – 2pm

Location: UF/IFAS Lake County Extension Office at 1951 Woodlea Road Tavares

Cost: \$7 per person.

Bring an orchid to repot. More information and registration here:

<http://lakediscoverygardensprograms.eventbrite.com/>.

MARCH 30, 2022 Water Wednesday Workshop: Ways to Create Your Own FL-Friendly Landscape.

Time: 9am-12pm.

You are invited to join us for the first annual Water Wednesday Workshop at the UF/IFAS Extension Lake County Discovery Garden!

Cost: \$15

More information and registration here: <http://lakediscoverygardensprograms.eventbrite.com/>.

SAVE THE DATE

MARCH 26, 2022 Spring Master Gardener Plant Sale