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### Lake County MGCV 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

## Arbor Day

BY K. S. Kennen

The third Friday in January is Arbor Day for Florida even though the first Arbor Day was celebrated on April 10, 1872. Florida celebrates Arbor Day in January because this is a better time to plant trees. The first celebration of planting trees was at the initiative of Nebraska's J. Sterling Morton. At that time, over 1 million trees were planted. Fortunately, other states recognized the importance of trees and by 1920, 45 states had tree planting days or Arbor Days.

It is important to have an Arbor Day since trees make a significant difference in the environment. First, note that trees act as storm water interceptors. Second, trees alter building climate. Third, trees mitigate the effects on our health from air pollution. Finally, trees reduce the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere.

Because of storm water, chemicals and litter from surfaces such as roadways and parking lots are washed into our streams, lakes, rivers, and oceans. These pollutants in our waters can affect drinking water, water life, and the soundness of our ecosystem. Trees function as mini-reservoirs and help control runoff by reducing the amount of runoff. Their leaves, branches, and bark hold the rain and their roots act as a filtration and storage for rainwater, thereby decreasing the amount of storm water runoff.

Trees can also help change and conserve a building's energy. We all know that a shade tree near our home helps reduce our cooling bill. Carefully placed trees can increase home energy efficiency. In summer, trees shading east and west walls generally keep buildings stay cooler. In winter, allowing the sun to strike the southern side of a building can warm interior spaces. Also, transpiration of moisture by foliage reduces temperatures.

Air pollution is a serious health threat and we now know that the urban forest mitigates the health effects of pollution by absorbing pollutants like ozone and sulfur dioxide. Trees intercept dust, ash, and smoke. Trees lower temperatures and reduce production of ozone. Trees release oxygen through the process of photosynthesis. Trees reduce energy usage with their ability to alter a building's energy.

Trees can help reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide. They capture and hold it in their roots, trunks, stems, and leaves while they grow. They even have it in the wood products after they are harvested.

Having an Arbor Day is not only for planting trees but to remind everyone of their importance. In 1907 Theodore Roosevelt said:

"A people without children would face a hopeless future; a country without trees is almost as hopeless; forests which are so used that they can not renew themselves will soon vanish, and with them all their benefits. A true forest is not merely a storehouse full of wood, but, as it were, a factory of wood, and at the same time a reservoir of water."

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

*The Foundation for The Gator Nation*

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# How to Plant Your New Arbor Day Tree

BY Jamie Daugherty, RHA

If you were lucky enough to get a free tree during your local Florida Arbor Day event, you want to be sure to plant it correctly. First select the right location for the plant. Ensure there is enough room for the tree once it is fully mature. This helps to reduce long term maintenance and give the tree the best chance for a long life. When selecting a location remember to check for utilities both above and below ground. Call 811 to have underground utilities marked out. Once you have selected the location follow these steps for tree planting.

- 1) Dig a hole twice as large as the root ball and deep enough to have the root flare level, or a few inches above ground level.
- 2) Find the topmost root. This is root flare. This allows you to confirm the hole depth.
- 3) Trim any damaged or defective branches before you plant. It is easier to reach them now.
- 4) Place the tree carefully in the hole. Adjust the height to ensure the root flare is at, or a few inches above grade.
- 5) Be sure the tree is straight.
- 6) Back fill by putting the displaced dirt back around the root ball, watering as you go.
- 7) Add stakes or root anchors partway through the backfill process. For more information about staking options see the resource cited below.
- 8) Add a ring, or 'donut', of mulch around the root zone. Keep the trunk free of mulch. This ring holds water near the roots for the first year.

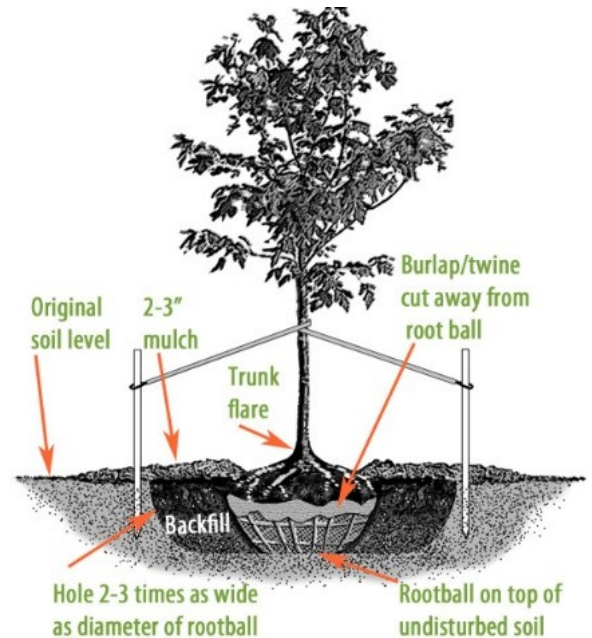


Photo Credit: Jamie Daugherty

\*Remember to never loosen the root ball.\*

Resources: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/EP314>

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/planting/planting-and-establishing-trees.html>

# Understory Trees

BY Karen S. Kennen

Some of the growth under the forest canopy consists of shrubs and stunted trees and is called underbrush or undergrowth. There are several trees that can grow in not only partial but complete shade and they are called understory trees.

One Florida friendly tree that has been growing in the US. since 1797 when it was introduced from Asia is the camellia. This shrub or small tree requires minimal care and can grow up to 15 feet tall. It blooms in the fall and winter when there are few other bloomers. The Sasanqua-type camellias (*Camellia sasanqua*, *C. hiemalis*, *C. vernalis*) bloom the earliest (October–December), followed by *Camellia japonica* types (December–March).



Another understory tree is the native fringe tree, so named because of its fringe-like white bloom. This beautiful tree with lightly fragrant blooms can grow from 12 to 20 feet tall with a spread of 10 to 15 feet. It is important to prune the plant if you want a single trunk tree. The female tree has dark blue berries that attract birds. It is tolerant of all soil types and has a smaller version, *Chionanthus pygmaeus* (pygmy fringe tree) which is also native to central Florida and is considered an endangered plant. It produces sweet smelling, white flowers and grows to only eight feet tall.



Consider also Simpson Stopper, another native, understory tree. This tree can grow in full sun or partial shade and can get up to 20 feet tall unless you plant the dwarf version, *Myrcianthes fragrans compacta*, which grows only 5 feet tall. This slow grower, easy maintenance plant is acceptable for the coast since it is salt tolerant. The fragrant, white blooms that appear in early summer attract many insects and produce bright orange, half inch fruit that is prized by the birds and raccoons. If you have broken branches, it could have been raccoons pulling the branches down to eat the fruit.



Another native, understory tree to possibly add to your landscape is the sparkleberry. This deciduous, 18-to-25 foot tree with bell shaped, white flowers, works well in both small and large landscapes. It prefers dry soil with a pH at or below 7. Other than regular pruning, the sparkleberry needs little maintenance and like most natives is free from serious pest and disease problems.



# Which Oak to Plant?

BY Tamre Parsons, MGV

The Southern live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) is, by some people, mistakenly thought to be the only oak in the South. Live oaks are easily identified since their branches lean like elbows toward the ground and even touch the ground. The trunk can grow to more than six feet in diameter and the tree can grow to a height of 60 to 80 feet with a spread of 60 to 120 feet. If you want one of these majestic oaks, you will need plenty of space.

There are 2 groups of oaks, red (sometimes referred to as black oaks) and white. Be sure that you are getting the oak tree that you want by researching the specific species. UF EDIS has publications for 30 types of oak trees. There are over 600 varieties of oaks worldwide with about 90 native oaks in the US and 19 oaks native to Florida. Many countries worldwide enjoy the shade of an oak tree. Since they are great shade producers, oaks are among the most popular species for landscaping. They are great additions for your wildlife habitat too. Oaks provide shelter and food for many species, making them a positive addition to any yard. Surprisingly, they come in assorted forms, sizes, and leaf shapes.

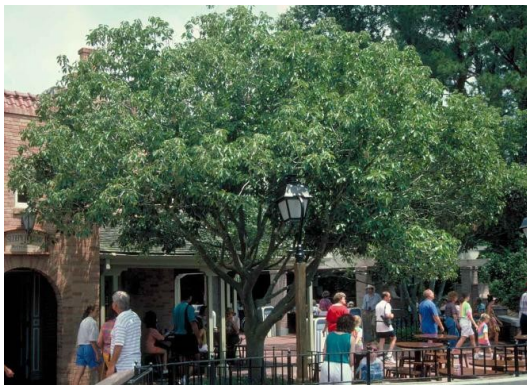
As I was looking through the information sheets, I found many species that reach 50 to 100 feet, but there were only four smaller oak trees possibly suitable for Central Florida landscape with limited space for an oak tree. The blue Japanese, Bluff, Japanese evergreen, and the Post oaks stood out as great examples for a smaller garden habitat in our zone. These oaks may not be readily available, but they may be worth looking for.



Japanese Evergreen Oak - small size of 25 to 40 feet high and 25 to 35 feet wide. (zone 9A - II)



Bluff Oak – 40 to 60 feet high and 25 to 50 feet wide (zone 8 to 9B)



Blue Japanese Oak – 20 to 30 feet high and 15 to 20 feet wide (zone 8A to 9B)



Post Oak – 40 to 50 feet high and 35 to 50 feet wide (zone 6A through 9A)

With so many choices and sizes to choose from, maybe there is a strong oak tree that is right for your landscape.

All pictures are from <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>

# Plant Clinic Clatter

By R. Doherty, MGv



**DEAR MASTER GARDENER:** What trees can I plant that flower in January?

## DEAR HOMEOWNER:

Year-round, beautiful flowers is something Floridians enjoy. The best time to plant trees in central Florida is fall/winter. For trees planted in spring or summer, water two to three times per week. After the first few months, provide weekly irrigation until plants are fully established. Irrigation should be 2 to 3 gallons per inch of trunk diameter.

UF Links: EDIS [ENH247](#), [ENH200](#), [Camellias](#)

The top trees for January blooms are:

- *Camellia japonica* (Nov 2022 [Garden Scoop](#) & Feb 2020)  
A hardy tree
- Red Maple, *Acer rubrum*

NAME	FLOWER COLOR	HT/WIDTH	TYPE	NOTE
<i>Camellia japonica</i>	Red, pink, white	10-20 ft./ 10-20 ft.	Tree	Prefers acidic soil, PESTS: scales, aphids, chewing insects, & fungus
Red Maple <i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red or pinkish Red 2-winged samara	35-80 ft./ 25-35 ft.	Deciduous Tree	Shallow-rooted native

*Camellia japonica*  
R. Doherty



*Acer rubrum*  
UF/IFAS

Photo: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

## KEEP IN MIND:

Sunshine811 will locate utilities and will mark them for free.

Most trees want full sun; maintenance is for the life of the tree

Make sure to keep mature tree size in mind or any HOA/town rules/laws

Research which trees will match your site conditions. Match tree's hardiness zone to avoid tree stress which could result in no flowers, pests, diseases, etc.

## What's Cooking? Lemon and Herbs

by Karen S. Kennen, MGV

Lemons are used to add a special flavor in cooking. Lemon is rich in Vitamin C, Vitamin B6, and potassium. The best tree for the home garden is a Meyer lemon tree. This is a perfect tree since it grows well in sandy soil and has proven to be resistant to a variety of viruses which had been a problem in other lemon trees. A quick reference for growing a Meyer lemon tree is <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/HS402>.

The following recipe is based on the well-known, chef Julia Child's recipe for Lemon Chicken.

### INGREDIENTS:

2 lemons  
4 sprigs of thyme  
2 sprigs of rosemary  
6 cloves of garlic  
Salt  
Ground pepper  
1 onion sliced  
1 Tablespoon of oil

4-5 lb. whole chicken

### DIRECTIONS:

In mixing bowl

- add lemons (cut in half) and their juice
- Thyme sprigs( bruised)
- Rosemary sprigs (bruised)
- Crushed garlic cloves
- Pepper and salt to taste

Whisk all ingredients together.

Add whole chicken to bowl.

Fill cavity with contents of bowl (except juice).

Place chicken in roasting pan.

Rub skin with oil.

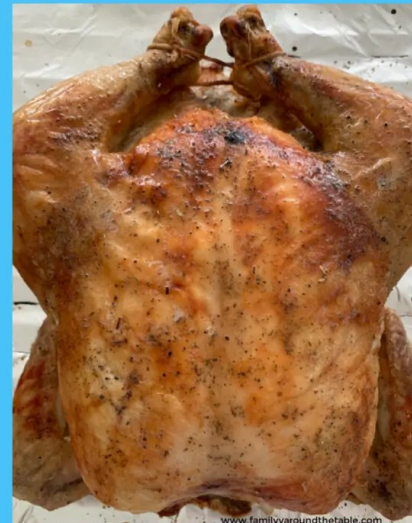
Drizzle juices from mixing bowl over chicken.

Season skin with salt and pepper.

Put in preheated 400-degree oven.

Cook for 1 hour and 45 minutes or until internal temperature is 165 degrees. (Check temperature after 60 minutes and every 15 minutes)

## Julia Child's Roast Chicken with Lemon and Herbs



[www.familyaroundthetable.com](http://www.familyaroundthetable.com)



Photo: Chris Hunkeler (CC-BY-SA)

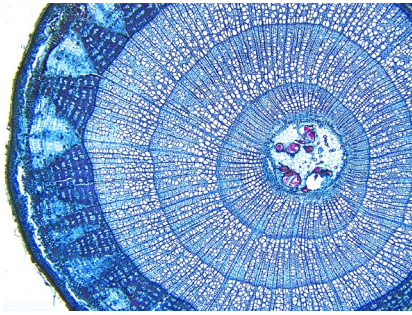
# Treemendous: Florida Native Tree Is Not a Tree At All!

BY: J. Daughtery, RHA

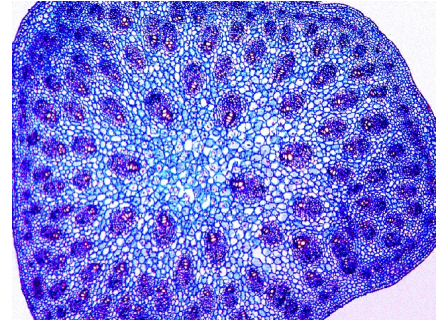
The Cabbage Palm (*Sabal palmetto*) is a Florida native palm. This is the only native arborescent palm in the state of Florida. All other arborescent palms were introduced to the state at various times throughout our history. Notice that I did not call these plants trees. Arborescent plants are tree *like* in that they are plants that get very tall. Bananas, tree ferns, and giant bird of paradises are also examples of arborescent plants.

So, what makes a tree a tree? There are several different traits that make oaks, pines, magnolias and other similar plants, trees. Let's start with the smaller features and move to the larger, more noticeable features.

1. Secondary growth, where lignin is more abundant than cellulose, helps to make the cells stronger and more able to hold weight. This is also the first step in forming wood.
2. A vascular system forms rings in the trunk. These rings are vastly different and more organized than the scattered vascular bundles in palms. Notice the difference between the images below.



Internal vascular system of a woody tree



Internal vascular system of a palm

3. A tree has a main trunk with branches. They can also be multi-trunked. The main difference between a tree and a woody scrub is the number of trunks and adult size.

None of this make palms or trees better than the other, but these differences are important when thinking about care and maintenance of the plants. Palms can fit in smaller locations as they mostly grow up, not out. Woody trees grow both out and up. With palms the apical meristem, or heart, is located at the top of the tree. This is what causes the palm to grow and why the growth is upward.

Palms can handle trunk damage that would kill a tree. Palms only require pruning once the leaves are fully brown. In fact, palms can do a lot of odd things that are of no health concern. These include growing roots from the trunk (normally when hit with irrigation) and having scale like growth on new leaves that is a natural part of leaf growth and looking like they are dying if they experience a nutrient deficiency.

Speaking of nutrients, palms are one of the few plants that you have to fertilize regularly, before they show symptoms of a deficiency. Use a fertilizer with 8-2-12+4 for the most complete formula. They are able to reabsorb nutrients as long as the leaves still have visible green. Never 'hurricane prune' because palms need the leaves to protect their apical meristem during a storm. If the meristem dies, the palms die. Only fully brown leaves need to be removed and only if you want to. The leaves (skirts) can provide shelter and habitat for wildlife.

Palms do not provide as many environmental or ecosystem services as large, woody trees because of their smaller size. As with adding any plant to your landscape, start with your goal and use the right plant in the right place to reach that goal. The Master Gardener Volunteers and I are happy to help answer any questions you have.

## November Garden of the Month – Mediterranean Garden

The Mediterranean Garden is led by master gardener volunteer Fran Morgan and represents design and plants that would be found in the Mediterranean area. The fountain and courtyard of this garden truly represent what is found in many of these gardens in the Mediterranean. The plants used are mostly drought tolerant as represented by the rosemary in the garden.



## December Garden of the Month – Tropical Shade Garden

The Tropical Shade Garden is tended by master gardener volunteer, Barbara Arco. It is filled with a variety of bromeliads with their long-lasting, bright colored blooms. The large oaks provide the necessary, deep shade for tropical, shade-loving plants to survive.



### Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Clinic

Bring your plant, insect, 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](mailto:jdaugherty@ufl.edu) or to the plant clinic at [lakemg@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:lakemg@ifas.ufl.edu).

An Equal Opportunity Institution. UF/IFAS Extension, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Andra Johnson, Dean. Single copies of UF/IFAS Extension publications (excluding 4-H and youth publications) are available free to Florida residents from county UF/IFAS Extension offices.

# New Discovery Gardens Tours

## Tour Information

We are pleased to announce new Educational Tours in the Discovery Garden:

- Docent Tours in the Discovery Garden are led by a trained Master Gardener Volunteer and last about 1.5-2 hours for a full garden tour.
- Educational Signage tours are self-paced. Allow 1-2 hours for this tour.
- Audio tours are self-paced. Allow 1-2 hours for this tour.

With these new tours, we are conducting a research study that tour participants are encouraged to take part in.

## Research Information

The Research study aims to look at the educational effectiveness of the tour. Participation in the pre- and post-tour surveys is voluntary. There is no compensation for your participation. Personal information collected is kept confidential. Participants will receive a six-month and one-year post survey. Participants are randomly assigned a tour on the day they attend.

## Dates/Times

January tour dates are:

- Wednesday Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>

Come between 9am-1pm on any of these days to participate.

## Contact the lead researcher with questions

Jamie Daugherty, Residential Horticulture Agent

[jdaugherty@ufl.edu](mailto:jdaugherty@ufl.edu)

352-343-4101 x 2722

## Location

1951 Woodlea Road

Tavares, FL



## **ARBOR DAY EVENT JANUARY 21, 2023**

Tavares Arbor Day – Master Gardener Volunteer Mobile Clinic

Wooten Park

9 a. to 1 pm

Free and no registration

## **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. Come see the changes in the garden.

# Classes and Events

## LAKE COUNTY CLASSES

### JANUARY 6, 2023 – 12 to 1 pm

First Fridays In the Garden: Spring Vegetable Gardening  
Zoom Class

Summary: Join UF/IFAS Residential Horticulture Agents Kydie McCormik and Jamie Daugherty as they cover growing an edible garden in this online class.

Register here: <https://bit.ly/1frigarden>

### JANUARY 21, 2023 – 2:00 TO 3:00

Saturday In the Gardens: Flowering Trees and Shrubs

1951 Woodlea Rd, Tavares, FL

Cost: \$5 Register on Eventbrite

## CLASSES OFFERED TO PUBLIC AT LAKE COUNTY LIBRARIES

### JANUARY 17, 2023 -- 12:00 to 1:00 PM

Vegetable Gardening

Free and no registration

Eustis Memorial Library

Spring and fall are the times to plan and plant a vegetable garden. Learn what to plant and how to prepare your site for growing produce.

### JANUARY 19, 2023 - 2:00 to 3:00 PM

Backyard Habitat

Free and no registration

Marianne Beck Library

Learn how to attract and make your backyard friendly for wildlife.

### JANUARY 19, 2023 - 5:00 to 6:00 PM

Herb Gardens

Free and no registration

Leesburg Library

Herbs can not only add texture to your garden design but can be useful in cooking. Learn what what herbs to grow and when to plant them.

### JANUARY 22, 2023 - 2:00 to 3:00 PM

Vegetable Gardening

Free and no registration

Tavares Library

Spring and fall are the times to plan and plant a vegetable garden. Learn what to plant and how to prepare your site for growing produce.

Check individual library website calendars to verify presentations.