



# Garden Scoop

## Dog Days

by: K.S.Kennen , MGV

Volume 14 August 2020

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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.

Dog days of summer are the hottest days and go from mid-July to mid-August. To me, it feels as if they go way into September. Even though it is hot and humid, there are still things to be done in y our gardens during the month of August. First, if you have palms, check the fronds for any yellowing which could indicate the lack of magnesium or potassium. If so, follow directions on the package of palm fertilizer for application.



Second, if you want to add some color to your landscape, there are two annuals that will do well in the August heat; periwinkle (vinca) or coleus. Vinca comes in white, red, pink, or lavender flowers and is available in carpeting or upright cultivars.



Coleus have many color combinations and will do well in the heat but does best in dappled shade.

Surprisingly there are two herbs that can survive the warmth of August; rosemary and Mexican tarragon. Rosemary's pine scented needle-like leaves add texture to your garden. Mexican tarragon's sweet scent of licorice adds to your garden's scent.



One other chore you might want to do in the hot months is to [solarize your soil](#) if you have had a lot of weeds or soil pests such as nematodes. The process is simple and allows the soil to reach high temperatures to kill seeds and pests. Mounding the soil and placing a piece of clear plastic over the area for six to eight weeks should be enough to kill pests. But be aware that beneficial organisms will also be killed.

Photos: K.S.Kennen , MGV

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

# Easy Grow Veggies

By K.S. Kennen, MGv

Growing vegetables in Florida not only provides gardeners with fresh produce, but exercise in the fresh air and sunshine. Some basics to be aware of are site location and soil. Be sure to have the garden where plants will receive at least six hours of sun and have well-drained, organically amended soil. Some vegetables [to plant now](#) that are easy to grow are bush peppers, beans, broccoli, and eggplant. All of the vegetables mentioned here were grown successfully in the gardens of the master gardener volunteers ([Discovery Gardens](#)).



'Big Bertha' bell pepper grows seven inches long and four inches wide and can be harvested in 70 days. The plants should be staked or placed in tomato cages because they can grow from three to five feet tall and be easily broken in high winds. Two other types are 'Sweet Banana' with a mild tangy taste and 'Fooled You' that looks like a jalapeno but is not hot rather pungent and flavorful.



Bush beans grow in a bush shape and do not need staking. Be sure to use seeds since transplants do not do well. Keep soil moist until beans sprout then water whenever soil surface is dry. The beans should be ready for harvest within 50 to 60 days. Two types grown in our gardens were "Blue Lake" and 'Contender'.



Broccoli is an easy to grow cool season crop with excellent nutritional value providing riboflavin, calcium, iron, vitamin A and vitamin C. Plant seeds in a sunny location and keep soil moist. When plants sprout, water once or twice a week. When main head is picked, there should be smaller offshoots to provide a second crop. 'Waltham 29' was planted in our garden and harvested after 80 days. 'Early Green' was another variety grown.

'Ichiban', and 'Cloud Nine'. This crop can be grown from seed or transplants. Some plants may grow up to six feet tall and need to be staked. Eggplant can be purple, black, white, lavender, or even yellow. Harvest the crop when glossy and a slight imprint is left when the eggplant is pressed lightly. Wear gloves when harvesting since some varieties have small thorns on their stem.

More info: [Vegetable gardening](#) | Veg. [gardening guide](#)  
Info/Photos were taken from [Gardening Solutions](#)





# Treemendous!

By J.Daugherty, RH Agent

Is something wrong with your loquat? Shortly after moving into the area, I went out to look at my loquat tree and saw that something was seriously wrong with it. The flowers and leaves were turning black and the blackness appeared to be spreading. My tree was infected with fire blight. This is a bacterial infection caused by *Erwinia amylovora* and is spread by rain and insects. Hard pruning is needed to remove diseased areas. It is recommended to cut 12-18 inches below any areas of infection. Be sure to keep an eye on your tree for any future signs of the disease so that you can remove the blighted growth.



Diseased fruit and Leaves



Healthy buds and leaves

# Black-eyed Susan

By C.Leavers, MGV

Black-eyed Susan is a native wildflower that blooms from spring to autumn throughout the eastern United States. The plant itself is not particularly attractive since the stems and leaves are covered with coarse hairs. However, the bright, sunny flower can bring a smile to your face. You'll know it is spring when you see these cheerful blooms. The plant grows from one to three feet tall and prefers a sunny location. It is beautiful in mass plantings or as border plants and can be used for cut flower displays. Flowering is more profuse when the faded blossoms are removed regularly.



Black-eyed Susan photo from MGV, K.S.Kennen

Black-eyed Susan is easy to grow and is propagated by seed. The seeds readily germinate and will quickly mature to flowering size. The seeds can be taken from the mature flower head by hand or can be allowed to self-seed. The area around the plant should not have mulch if you want new plants in the same bed the following spring. Because it self-seeds and germinates so readily, it may come up in other beds in your garden like a weed, but what a great weed to have!

The black-eyed Susan has an interesting poem/story that is said to be related to how the flower got its name. A young woman named Susan had been crying and searching for her love, "Sweet William" before he left for a long sea voyage. Her eyes had dark circles from her prolonged crying and William consoled her as they said their [farewells](#).

"All in the downs the fleet was moored,  
Banners waving in the wind.  
When Black-eyed Susan came aboard,  
And eyed the burly men.  
'Tell me ye sailors, tell me true,  
If my Sweet William sails with you.'

Legend has it that "black-eyed Susan" (*Rudbeckia hirta*) and "sweet William" (*Dianthus barbatus*) bloom at the same time to celebrate their eternal love for each other.



Sweet William photo from UF/IFAS

For more information: EDIS [FPS512](#) | [Gardening Solutions](#)

# Make Your Own Garden Box

By

Giles Paget-Wilkes, MGv

Ever wanted to make your own vegetable or garden boxes? It's not as hard as you think. One of our new Master Gardener Volunteers, Giles, sent me DIY instructions, so now we're sharing them with you!

I designed my beds 10' x 3' for accessibility. I have 10 of them for our household of two. You can always plant two crops in one bed, 5' each. Here are the instructions:



- ◇ Corner Post: 4"x4"x8' treated posts. Cut them in 4 for the 2'; dig holes with post hole diggers (if possible), place post into holes and ram the dirt around them for tight fit.
- ◇ Side Supports: 2" x 4" X 8' cut into 4 pieces then make the ends "pointed". Use only two of these per bed , halfway down the sides for support.
- ◇ Sides: 10" X 1" X 10' , lumber of your choice (I went to the Cypress mill on Hwy 46 for longevity). I recommend using a sealer on the outside , most of mine have lasted 12 years plus.
- ◇ Ends: 10"x1"x3' cut in two for ends.
- ◇ Attach the sides around the outside of all the corners and supports with 'outdoor' screws. Sides should be flush with posts and supports. I left a narrow pathway between them all so I can walk, and you might want to cover that against weeds!
- ◇ All the woodwork will last much longer if you install [Drip Irrigation](#) and use a hose for overhead spraying when setting in the transplants.

## TIPS:

- \* If you have trees nearby with long root systems, consider groundcover underneath each bed at about 14" depth to stop tree root intrusion (water will drain through)!
- \* You can place chicken or corral wire at the bottom of each box to help keep underground feeders from eating your crops' roots.
- \* Giles also [made all his own soil](#) , but that is up to you!

## Basic fence:

- Intermediate posts are 3"x 6' treated. 18" in the ground.
- Corner posts are 5" x 6' treated, 18" in the ground - maybe a little concrete!
- Galvanized fence wire 2"x 4" and 48" wide. Bury it a few inches too to stop critters digging.
- Stretch tight and Attach with staples.
- The black thing on post is an insulator for the solar fence!
- Don't forget the gate!



Further resources: [Composting](#) | [Make your own Soil](#) | [Vegetable gardening](#) | [Raised Bed using other materials](#) | [Veg. Gardening in raised beds](#) |

Photos: Giles, MGv





By Sandra Bryan, MGV

Dear Master Gardener,

My crape myrtle's leaves are turning yellow and have spots. Is this from chemical drift or bacteria?

Dear Homeowner,

It's the rainy season, which brings with it a problem we see more of in the Plant Clinic — fungus. More precisely *Cercospora* Leaf Spot. This often appears as spots on a leaf and the leaf turning a yellow color. It may also result in a premature leaf drop. It can occur on most any plant — even St. Augustinegrass. Leaf spots caused by *Cercospora lythracearum* can appear on crape myrtles as yellow, individual, circular spots ( $\frac{1}{8}$  -  $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter) that are tan to light brown with reddish purple borders appearing on the upper leaf surface with white-grey sporulation of the fungus on the lower leaf surface. As the disease progresses, individual spots merge. Heavily infected leaves first become yellow and eventually turn brown and necrotic. Left untreated, the disease can result in almost complete defoliation of the plant in late summer and fall in susceptible cultivars.

Provide good air circulation and avoid overcrowding plants. If disease is severe enough to warrant using chemicals for control, thiophanate-methyl (TM) or [ ] (as used for powdery mildew) will control *Cercospora* leaf spot when applied in late spring/early summer. Apply all chemicals according to directions on the label. Not much to be done other than to rake up all the leaves and bin them. Do not use them as mulch. If you must prune the plant for shape, be sure to disinfect the pruners as you go.

More Info: EDIS [SS-PLP-57](#) | [Cercospora](#) |

Tips about & treating fungus:

- ♦ Water 2am-7am (dewpoint time) so no fungus or damage is done to leaves, plants, etc.
- ♦ Fungus needs approximately 12 hours of wet to spread spores.
- ♦ Treat with copper sulfate.
- ♦ Reduce overhead watering.
- ♦ Fungus spots have a halo and concentric rings inside spot.
- ♦ 85% of pathogens are fungal-related

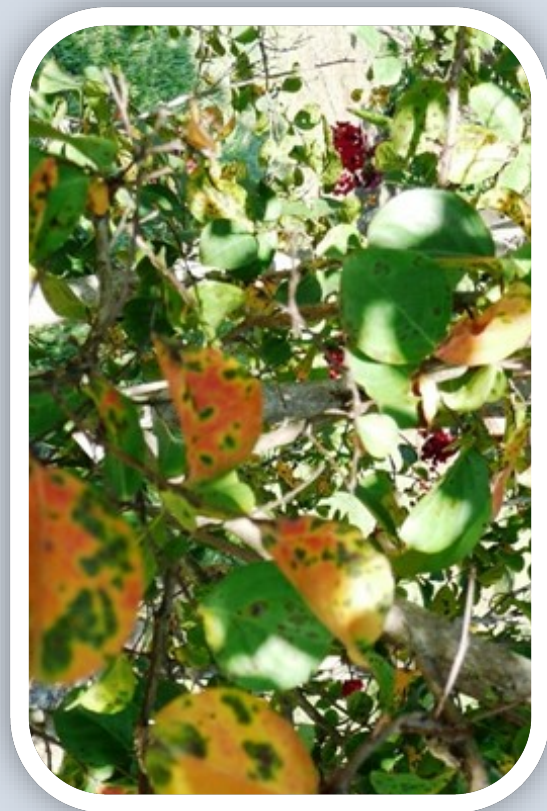


Photo from [HGIC/Clemson](#)

# Florida Lizards

By MGv, J.Davidson

As I sit in my garden, the most activity I see is from the lizards. They can be entertaining and intriguing as they dart about. The study of lizards along with other reptiles is called herpetology. One of the most common non-native lizards in Florida is the *Anole sagrei* or brown anole. It is small, grey or grey-brown with spiny scales. The adults are about five to eight inches in length. A prominent characteristic of the anole is a thick brown stripe that runs down each side of the body. Another striking feature is the dew lap of throat fan. It is used during mating. Like all lizards, anoles are equipped with moveable eyelids and external earholes. Adults molt about every month, casting off skin in bits and pieces.



## Calendar of Events

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all events are virtual or postponed. To see our online opportunities, please visit <https://lakegardeningprograms.eventbrite.com>.

- ♦ **8/7: What's Bugging You?** The UF/IFAS Extension, Lake County Office's weekly [Growing Together from a Distance](#) FREE webinar at 2pm, so be sure to register on Eventbrite!

Be sure to catch our monthly *From the Extension* articles in the *Daily Commercial Lifestyle Home & Garden* section

Anole forage on the ground and will perch on the base of tree trunks and other debris to detect prey. Their diet consists of insects, spiders and other small arthropods and even other lizards. Courtship and mating occurs from February through June. Females deposit two to eight eggs in the sand beginning in March. Hatching will be about 75 days later or less depending on the ground temperatures. Predators include cats, children, snakes, and birds. If one winds up in your house, capture and release outside since they will not live long in your house and a lot of dead ones could stink up your house in no time at all. Happy lizard watching!!



(Photos from J.Davidson)

## Final Thoughts

Gardens are not made  
by singing,  
"Oh, how beautiful,"  
and sitting in  
the shade.

*Rudyard Kipling*



MGV, Reggie D. awarded "Wildlife Habitat" [certification](#) by the National Wildlife Federation