

## Invasive Plants

By: K.S.Kennen , MGV

Florida population is increasing with so many people wanting to escape the cold weather and moving here. The state does have warmer seasons but along with our tropical/subtropical climate come invasive plants. For years plants have either purposely or accidentally been introduced to our state. An example of a plant introduced on purpose was kudzu. Originally from East Asia, it was brought to the U.S. in 1876 at Philadelphia Centennial Exposition as animal forage and later to fight erosion. This aggressive vine can overtake acreage and even kill trees. Kudzu has now taken over two million acres in the South. An example of an accidental introduction of an invasive is tropical soda (*solanum bilarum*). It was most likely introduced by cattle imported to Florida from Brazil.



Invasive plants are categorized by [FLEPPC](#) (Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council). Category I plants have changed the plant community and altered ecosystems. Category II plants have increased in numbers but have not yet altered the plant community but need to be watched. The list of plants is updated every two years.

Control of invasive plants is a continual battle and can be done several ways including manual, mechanical, chemical, biological and with herbivores. The one I am most familiar with is manual which means cutting, digging, and pulling up the plants. Be sure to properly dispose of them since many of the invasives will surely grow in your compost pile! Mechanical control would be the use of large machinery such as bulldozers to clear a large area. This would have to be combined with other methods since remaining seeds and roots would allow future growth of invasives. Chemical control can have positive results but must be done wisely so that the chemicals will not harm desirable plants. Biological control is the use of insects or diseases that are hosts specific and control the targeted invasive. Use of herbivores can be represented by allowing goats to feed on and control kudzu. One final avenue of controlling invasive plants is through public education. So many people do not even know when a plant is invasive just that it is pretty and easy to grow. More info: [UF Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants](#)

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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.

# Language of Flowers

By R.Doherty, MGV

Have you ever been at a loss for words? There was a time when you could, "Say it with flowers." No, this is not an FTD commercial, but a way to express yourself without opening your mouth. I think it's time to bring this Victorian era tradition back into light. What a beautiful way to make a statement.

Take my own front yard garden...I have plants galore and was curious where my tastes fell in the Language of Flowers. Here is a sampling of what I'm growing and their Victorian symbolism:

Plant	Meaning	Plant	Meaning
Aloe	Affection	Devil's Trumpet	Caution
Amaryllis	Pride	Heliconia	Adoration
Azalea	Temperance	Hibiscus	Delicate Beauty
Basil	Hatred	Peace lily	Peace, Hope, Healing
Begonia	Beware, dark thoughts	Plumbago	Holy wishes
Blue Salvia	I think of you	Prickly pear	Satire
Bromeliad	Protection	Red Salvia	Forever Mine
Caladium	Friendship	Rosemary	Remembrance
Canna lily	Glorious	Tradescantia	Felicity, Transient friendship
Coreopsis	Always cheerful	Vinca	Happy/fond memories
Cypress	Death, mourning	Zinnia	Thought of Absent Friends

As you can see, I'm mostly a positive and cheerful, loving person. However, there's always a little bit of dark thoughts surrounding us.

If you're interested in planting a themed garden or want to know what you've already planted (like I did), here are some great resources for you:

[Meaning of Flowers](#) | [Almanac](#) | [Language of Flowers](#), by Kate Greenaway | [The Language of Flowers](#), by Vanessa Diffenbaugh | [A Victorian Flower Dictionary](#), by Mandy Kirkby



Illustrated postcard. Printed in England/The Regent Publishing Co Ltd.  
Dumbarton Oaks Archives

# Winter-Winged Visitors!

By J.Davidson, MGv

## Why Do Birds Migrate?

Birds migrate for two reasons: food and weather avoidance. North American breeding birds who nest in the northern part of the continent will migrate south for the winter. As winter approaches, insects and plant life diminish. Migrating birds are simply in search of food. They know places like Florida are rich with insects, plant life, and nesting grounds.

## How Do Birds Know Which Way to Fly During Migration?

In addition to using the sun, birds have a mineral called "magnetite" which is located above their beaks. Ornithologists (a person who studies or is an expert on birds) believe it's this mineral that birds use to determine the earth's magnetic field. With this, they are able to determine true north. Additionally, younger birds will often follow older birds who have experience from past migrations.

## The Groove-billed Ani

This bird comes from southwestern Texas to the Florida Panhandle in the winter. Sometimes it can be seen in Central Florida and has been sighted in Apopka.

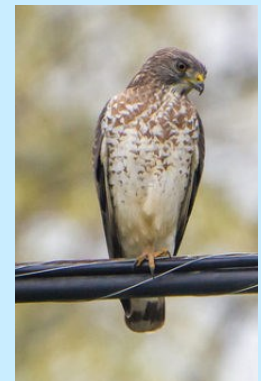


## Grey Cheeked Thrush

This thrush is shy and hard to see and hides in dense brush and woods. It will pass through the state in September and October on the way to its winter home in northern South America.

## Broad-winged Hawk

Large flocks called kettles will pass through Central Florida on the way to Southern Florida where their winter home is located.



More Info: [Gardening Solutions](#) | [Birdwatching](#) | [Migration forecasts](#)

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# Snails

By Reggie Doherty, MGV

Did you know that not all snails are bad for your garden? That makes two of us! There are actually some snails that will EAT the bad snails. Take the rosy wolfsnail, (*Euglandina rosea*), a Florida native. Yes, it will eat your plants, but it also will eat the BAD brown, garden snail (*Cornu aspersum*);



Brown snail—Bad & dines on plants. Found mostly south & southwest of Tampa

hence, it's a biological control! One way to know if it's a beneficial snail is the shape of its shell. As MGV, Nancy LaPointe, pointed out (pun intended), "Good snails have oval shells." This statement is mostly true, except for our gray lancetooth snail (see below). So when you're scouting for bad snails, remember to check the shape so you don't kill a good

snail. Of course, any introduced species can become invasive.



Rosy wolf snail—Good & dines on slugs and other snails

Photo: N.LaPointe, MGV

## Cold Preparation (part 2)

By Ashlee Roberts, MGV

In the [October 2020](#) issue of *Garden Scoop*, Ashlee began to let us know how to care for our plants in winter. Here is part two of that article.

There are several things a gardener can do to prepare for freezing temperatures here in Central Florida. **First**, water your landscape before a freeze. The article 'Cold Protection of Landscape Plants' states that "a well-watered soil will absorb more solar radiation than dry soil, re-radiate heat during the night, and slightly elevate minimum night temperatures in plant canopies". The article also notes that root systems can be damaged this way if the soil is saturated for extended amounts of time. **Second**, mulch not only helps potted plants but it also helps to reduce heat loss from plants living in the ground. Perennials need their roots protected during a freeze and placing mulch around them helps to keep them nice and warm. **Next**, covers are great to use on frosty nights. To ensure they work properly they need to be extended to the ground and secured on windy nights. Coverings can be "frost cloth" bought at big (or little) box stores or something as simple as bed sheets. Remember to remove coverings during the day. Also, the addition of lights in the landscape or under coverings tend to help produce heat. Now-a-days a lot of our lights don't radiate as much heat but a set of old-fashion Christmas lights can do the trick!

**Fourth**, plants living in pots should be moved inside. However, if that is not possible then moving them closer together and packing them with mulch (in and around the pot) can help to reduce heat loss from the container's side wall. Remember, with potted plants we have to be concerned about the root system considering they are not being protected underground. **And lastly**, make sure to turn off your irrigation system before a freeze.



# Plant Clinic Chatter



By Sandra Bryan, MGV

Dear Master Gardener,

My pine trees look like they are dying. The needles are browning. Do you know why?

Dear Homeowner,

We often receive calls about pine trees dying this time of year – after hurricane season. Here is a summary from an article in the *Daily Commercial* in [2018](#), by agent Brooke Moffis:

It's hard to tell what is damaging the trees until you see the tree, but hurricane damage, [pitch canker](#) and [diplodia](#) are all culprits. Knowing that disease and insect problems typically occur over time and in splotchy areas, environmental conditions are possible cause for needle browning.

It is common for pines to die out in late summer when a hurricane occurred the previous summer. Hurricanes cause a lot of stress to trees since they are tall. Damage to the root system occurs when winds push the top of the tree. Roots snap as the tree moves back and forth in the soil. Only a fraction of a tree's root system left intact, it is thought that with less water and nutrients supplied by fewer roots, the tree will use up reserves and die.

Before making any assumptions or appointments to remove the tree(s), contact a local arborist.

[\[Click here\]](#)

Further resources: [Pine pests](#) | [Needle blight](#) | [Guide to vascular plants](#) | [Vascular system](#) | [Pine diseases](#)



Dear Master Gardener,

My Louis Philippe rose is doing well - I could probably finally transfer him into the larger pot with fresh soil - just hasn't happened yet.

What is happening is something is chewing on the leaves! I do have a lot of snails around and since I took their parsley away - perhaps they are on the Louis? I haven't found any yet - usually I see some around in the early morning.

So I thought I would consult you and see if you have any other ideas that might be happening and what I can do to help Louis maintain his health and beauty.



Dear Homeowner,

What you have is evidence of the Florida native leafcutter bee. It looks like a small bumblebee and cuts rounded pieces of leaves from roses and azaleas. The circle of leaves are used as linings and plugs for their egg cells. They do not harm your plant.

We featured the Tropical shade garden in our [August 2018](#) newsletter. Well, recently they had to remove all their [Ligustrum japonicum](#) (Chinese privet) because of phytophthora fungus which caused root rot.

[Phytophthora](#) species are important soilborne, fungus-like pathogens that attack the root systems, trunk, and fruit of citrus trees at any age. ([EDIS SL431](#))

- ◆ The first symptom is discoloration/yellowing and wilting of leaves – oldest first – and leaf drop
- ◆ Then Stem rot
- ◆ Eventual death of plant, spreading of fungus if left untreated.

How to prevent or treat:

- Have adequate **drainage** in planting area
- Apply a [Fungicide](#) to the soil—metalaxyl (Subdue) works best o ornamentals when applied as a soil drench

More info: EDIS [HS1015](#)

With the start of the holiday season, our thoughts start to drift to holiday activities. Family gatherings and traditions are great to anticipate. One aspect that has become popular in many families is putting up trees for the holidays. While there are a variety of spruce, fir, cedar, and pine trees used for this tradition, there is only one native Florida pine that is used in this tradition: sand pine (*Pinus clausa*).

Sand Pines are found in the sand pine scrubs of Florida. The sand pine scrub is one of several scrub types in Florida. Like most Florida scrubs, the sand pine scrub is designed to survive frequent fires. There is a slight difference from scrubs dominated by slash pine; this difference has to do with the intensity of the fire. Most ecosystems in Florida are adapted for frequent fires. The majority of our native pines are adapted for understory fires that get to be no more than six feet high since many of the native pines are tall with branches and needles well over six feet from the ground. This protects the top of the tree from the low-level fires.

Alternatively, Sand pines are shaped more like typical Christmas trees, with low branches covered in highly flammable, waxy needles. When fire enters a sand pine scrub, most of the sand pine trees will burn completely. This is called a crown fire. These fires are more than 6 feet high and burn up through the crown of the trees. This is something that occurs every 30-40 years or so. The removal of the larger trees allows for seeds to germinate after the fire has passed.

Sand pines are excellent for use as a specimen tree in your yard. They can be decorated as a living Christmas tree, just avoid fire and excess heat near them. They are adapted for the scrub ecosystem which consists of well-drained soils and full sun. Once established, they have a high tolerance of drought and salt.

When considering your trees for this holiday season remember the basic Christmas tree safety that is true for all tree species:

- ⇒ select a fresh tree
- ⇒ keep tree away from fire and heat (vents and space heaters)
- ⇒ use only indoor lights
- ⇒ never use candles
- ⇒ keep tree from drying out (water it)

Once the season is over you can chip the tree for mulch. It is a great way to recycle the nutrients and save money on mulch!

More information about Florida native pines can be found at the following links: [Common Pines of FL](#) | [Sand Pine](#) | [Christmas varieties](#)



Sand Pine growing in a sand pine scrub. Photo by J. Daugherty, RHA.



Sand Pine cones and needles. Photo by J. Daugherty, RHA

# Leave the Leaves!

Here are some reasons why from the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) encourage us to leave the fallen leaves:

**Provide habitat for wildlife:** frogs, turtles, and salamanders rely on fallen leaves to provide cover and hibernation places; many moth and butterfly caterpillars overwinter in fallen leaves before emerging in spring

**Provide food for wildlife:** creatures like earthworms and millipedes reside in and decompose leaf litter, and also are themselves a source of food for bigger wildlife like birds and toads

**Increase fertility of your soil:** as the leaves decompose, nutrients are added to your soil, and also allows for greater water retention

Avoid noise and air pollution by not having to use fossil fuel powered blower

Save hours of time that will be used raking leaves for weeks depending on number of trees in your yard.

Reduce waste since food and yard trimmings make up 28 percent of waste in landfills



## Calendar of Events

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

- **November 21: 9am-1pm. Limited access plant sale. Details will be e-mailed to those on our e-mail list.**



## Discovery Gardens Happenings

Eileen Pumphrey and her husband have refurbished the pump house. More refurbishments are coming. Big thanks to all involved.

You may see some trees and shrubs getting heavy trimming and some removals. There are plans for replacements. No need to be concerned, just some exciting changes to some areas in the gardens.

The Rain Garden has a new dedication sign to one of our MGVS.

Come visit the garden as it changes.