



January 2017

Table of Contents:

Bad Birdie: Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker

Protecting Your Plants During Cold Weather

Hypertufa: Make Your Own "Stone" Pots

Timely Gardening Tips for Marion County

Upcoming Events

Published by UF/IFAS Extension Marion County

Timely Gardening Tips for MARION COUNTY

by Josephine Leyte-Vidal, UF/IFAS Extension Marion County Master Gardener

January is a good month to take stock of your garden plan. Most of your plants are dormant and the deciduous trees are bare of leaves. Standing at a distance, maybe at your neighbor's house, or taking digital photos allows you to see what others see. Sometimes we are too close to see the bones of our design and where changes can make it better.

Assess how you can make your garden better, larger or smaller, more private, more open, or more balanced. One exciting goal is to have something blooming year round. For example, the clematis vine and tea olive are now in bloom. Next month the

Bad Birdie: Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker

by Norma Samuel, Horticulture Agent



Male Sapsucker ctbirding.org

Several calls received in the Master Gardener Plant Clinic over the last few weeks took me back to my first few months as an Agent in South Carolina. A client brought some samples of wax myrtle for me to look at that were obviously dying. He had a perfect representation of the progression of the symptoms he was seeing - branches showing yellowing of the leaves followed by death. I surely could not figure out what the problem was just by looking at the samples. There was no noted pest of significance on wax myrtles in the state and surely it is a plant that even professed black thumbs can grow successfully. All the questions I asked seemed

to have the response to indicate the trees were getting good care. So I had to be the diligent pest detective and take my investigative work to the next level.

Upon visiting the client's home I saw a row of wax myrtles in decline. Upon close inspection I noticed the bark of every tree was damaged. There were shallow, square to rectangular holes in a line circling the trunk. Ah! Ha! I could finally give my diagnosis. The culprit was a yellow-bellied sapsucker. I felt happy that a mystery had been solved. Not so fast, there's another problem - the homeowner did not believe that woodpeckers were feeding on his tree. His wife said "I am out here all the time and I've never seen any birds feeding on those trees".

Yellow-bellied sapsuckers live in the northern United States in the summer and migrate south in the winter. They are approximately 7-9 inches in length with a white marking along the side with red forehead. Adult males have a red throat and adult females a white throat. It has a yellow breast that fades to a whitish lower belly.

They make holes in trees to get the sap that oozes from the cambium layer. They will also feed on the insects that are attracted to the sap. Other birds will also feed from these same sites, so yellow-bellied sapsuckers are a considered

Timely Gardening Tips for MARION COUNTY

by Josephine Leyte-Vidal, UF/IFAS Extension Marion County Master Gardener

(continued from page 1)

camellias will open, and in March, the azaleas, etc.

Since trees and shrubs are dormant in January, they can be planted this month with better success. Bare-root roses can be planted now. If you have not tried Knockout roses you are missing a treat. They love our climate, tend to bloom almost year round and are resistant to black spot.

In the veggie garden, you can begin to prepare plots for spring planting as soon as you harvest the fall plantings. A generous amount of organic material (compost) turned under now will benefit the crops and deter nematode activity. Animal manure can also be added at 25 pounds to each 100 square feet.

In case of a freeze, do not cover your plants with plastic. Use sheets or old blankets. After the freeze do not prune or fertilize cold damaged plants until spring. They will not be pretty, but pruning will only cause new tender growth that can be destroyed in the next freeze. Dehydration is another problem with freezes. Be sure to water tender plants well before evening in order to prevent damage. There are a lot of leaves and pine needles falling out there. Remember to recycle them in your garden for the sake of your soil and your pocket book.

Bad Birdie: Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker

by Norma Samuel, Urban Horticulture Agent

(continued from Page 1)

keystone species. Yellow-bellied sapsucker will return to the same tree repeatedly and the new holes are for the most part in line with old holes. These holes also serve as entry sites for fungus to attack the tree. It is the only member of the woodpecker family that causes this type of injury. Other woody plants known to be attacked include birch and maples.



Female Sapsucker

ctbirding.org

To control yellow-bellied sapsucker, wrap trees being tapped with hardware cloth or burlap or smear the bark with a sticky repellent, check your local garden center for available options. Shooting of sapsuckers is prohibited under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. So don't even think about it.

For more information on controlling the pests you encounter in the landscape call your local Master Gardener Plant Clinic at 352-671-8400.



Edibles to plant in January

<p>SURVIVES TRANSPLANTING</p>	<p>Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive/Escarole, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce</p>
<p>TRANSPLANT WITH CARE</p>	<p>Mustard, Potatoes</p>
<p>USE SEEDS</p>	<p>Carrots, Celery, Onion, Peas, Radish, Turnip</p>

Protecting Your Plants During Cold Weather

By Norma Samuel, Horticulture Agent



Source: ifas.ufl.edu

Although the weather this season has been mostly mild, the first official day of winter is Dec. 21, and chances are, temperatures will drop soon. When you're turning up the heat and piling on extra blankets to keep yourself toasty, don't forget your plants! Read on for tips from UF/IFAS Marion County Extension Service on how to protect your plants from the cold winter weather.

Plan ahead when you plant. Plants that do best in central Florida can withstand average minimum temperatures of 10-20 degrees Fahrenheit. Check the recommended "hardiness zone" when

selecting plants; central Florida's hardiness zone is 8-9a. Locate tropical plants in the warmer areas of your yard. This could be along a fence that will protect them from cold winds or areas with good drainage to prevent frost from forming.

Don't mow too low. It's tempting to mow your lawn until it's nearly bald to minimize how many times you have to mow. But by not cutting your grass too short, you'll promote the growth of deeper roots that will increase the lawn's cold tolerance.

Before the freeze. The day before a freeze is expected, water landscape plants well. This will allow the soil to absorb more solar radiation and the heat will be reradiated at night, thus keeping the plants warm. Adding a layer of mulch also helps keep that heat around the root zone of the plants.

You can use sheets, quilts, black plastic bags and frost cloths for covering plants as long as the cover extends to the ground and doesn't touch the leaves. Leaves in contact with the cover can suffer cold damage, because the heat transfers from the leaves to the cold cover. If using black plastic, be sure to remove it immediately the morning after the freeze; the cover absorbs heat from the sun, resulting in high temperatures that can damage the plant. You can also move plants indoors or inside the garage for warmth.

After the freeze. Avoid cutting frost damaged plants back until spring. Pruning them now will result in new growth that will only get damaged again with the onset of another frost.

Types of frost damage. The damage resulting from cold weather may not manifest itself in some plants until months later. Symptoms may include water-soaked and wilted leaves, marginal leaf burn in evergreens such as hollies, splitting of the stem or bark, frost cracks running the length of the tree and desiccation (drying out) if the ground freezes within the root zone of the plant.



Source: greenlivingideas.com

UPCOMING LECTURES/EVENTS:

Educational seminars and events are presented by UF/IFAS Extension Agents and/or Master Gardeners. Unless otherwise indicated, to pre-register, please call 352-671-8400 or e-mail terry.holt@marioncountyfl.org.

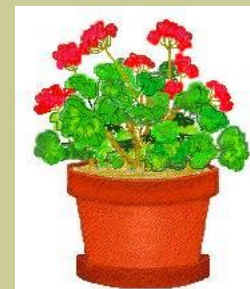
January

Dunnellon Satellite Plant Clinic

January 6, 2017
10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Dunnellon Public Library
20351 Robinson Rd, Dunnellon

Dunnellon Library

Preparing Your Vegetable Garden for Spring
January 17, 2017
2:00—3:00 p.m.
Dunnellon Public Library
20351 Robinson Rd, Dunnellon



UPCOMING LECTURES/EVENTS:

February

Bellevue Satellite Plant Clinic

February 3, 2017
10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Bellevue Public Library
13145 SE Hwy 484, Bellevue

Dunnellon Satellite Plant Clinic

February 7, 2017
10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Dunnellon Public Library
20351 Robinson Rd, Dunnellon

Master the Possibilities Series

Wildlife-Friendly Landscaping
February 10, 2017
10:00—11:00 a.m.
On Top of the World
8415 SW 80th St, Ocala

Dunnellon Library

Annuals and Perennials
February 21, 2017
2:00—3:00 p.m.
Dunnellon Public Library
20351 Robinson Rd, Dunnellon

Hypertufa: Make Your Own “Stone” Pots

by Linda Blair, Master Gardener



Source: outdoorthemes.com

Everyone loves the look of stone pots. But their cost can be prohibitive and their weight makes them difficult to work with. Hypertufa was developed in the 1930s to replicate the stone troughs that were popular among English gardeners in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The lightweight stand-ins were not only easier to come by, but also easier to transport. Thanks to their porous nature, the pots were ideal for plants needing

good drainage. Hypertufa containers are still practical in the garden and simple to create.

To make the pot, you'll need to fashion a mold from a pair of vessels—the mixture is poured between them. I experimented with various objects, such as milk cartons, metal bowls, wicker baskets, and wooden boxes. Because the medium captures subtle textures, baskets and leaves can be rendered in “stone”, while clean-lined molds offer a sleek, modern look.

After making many containers, I found the process quite rewarding. It is not an exact science, which is part of the fun: every pot has the potential to surprise.

Basic Hypertufa Instructions:

- Choose a mold:** Make a mold from two nested vessels, so you can pour the mixtures in the space between them. Both should have sides that are straight or taper out; the gap between them should be at least $\frac{3}{4}$ inch for smaller vessels and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches for larger ones.
- Mix materials:** Wearing gloves and a dust mask, mix equal parts white or gray cement, perlite, and peat moss in a large bin; stir in masonry stain if desired. Add water gradually until the mixture reaches the consistency of cottage cheese.
- Fill mold:** Coat vessels with mold-release spray. Pour mixture into the outer mold to a 1-inch depth for smaller vessels or a 2-inch depth for larger ones. Set interior mold inside, centering it (you can fill it with sand to steady it if needed). Continue adding mixture between vessels. Tap exterior with a rubber mallet to minimize bubbles. Cover with plastic; let set for 36 hours.
- Finish hypertufa:** After removing mold, drill drainage holes into the bottom of the pot using a masonry bit. Smooth the top edge of the pot with a large file. Wrap it with plastic, and let cure for several weeks.



Source: outdoorthemes.com

Florida Gardening 101

What you'll learn:

Monday, Jan. 30

Organic Gardening: Tips for building nutrient-rich soil and maintaining your garden with minimal input

Gardening Basics: Basic information to lay a solid foundation for a Florida-Friendly landscape

Tuesday, Jan. 31

Caring for Your Florida Lawn: Tips to achieve a beautiful lawn

Beautiful, But Invasive: Plants to avoid

Wednesday, Feb. 1

Plant Propagation: Learn to propagate new plants from seeds, cuttings and other techniques

Annuals and Perennials: A selection of plants that thrive in Central Florida

Thursday, Feb. 2

Pruning Trees and Shrubs: Learn how and when to correctly prune

Palms: Recommended palm varieties for Central Florida

Friday, Feb. 3

Vegetable Varieties for Marion County: Practical information on growing vegetables

Insects and Diseases of Vegetables: Tips to identify and get the upper hand on common insects and diseases of vegetables



For those new to gardening or just new to gardening in central Florida, this class will teach the basics to help you be successful at growing just about every kind of plant.

January 30 – February 3, 2017

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.

UF/IFAS Marion County

Extension Auditorium

2232 NE Jacksonville Rd, Ocala

The registration fee of \$35 per person or \$50 per couple is non-refundable and covers materials and light snacks. To register (by Jan. 18th) visit [Eventbrite](#) or call 671-8400.



RED MAPLE—JANUARY SPOTLIGHT NATIVE PLANT

Red maple puts on one of the most brilliant displays of any tree, with its red, orange or yellow fall color (sometimes on the same tree) lasting for several weeks. The seeds are also quite popular with squirrels and birds.

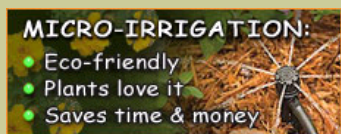
LIGHT: Full sun or partial sun.

MOISTURE: Grows best in wet places; not very drought tolerant. Prefers slightly acidic soil.

HEIGHT: 60-75 feet high and 25-35 feet wide.

The red maple is a fast grower. Unless irrigated or on a wet site, red maple is best used north of hardiness zone 9. Trees are often much shorter in the southern part of its range unless growing next to a stream.

Items below are available for purchase at the UF/IFAS Extension Marion County. We also have many other items available in our Shop Extension store. The store is open Mon-Fri from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Please come to see these environmentally-friendly products, as well as many other agricultural-related items.



UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Foundation for the Gator Nation
An Equal Opportunity Institution

The area's largest all-in-one plant sale and garden expo!

Marion County Master Gardeners' Spring festival

Always the second weekend in March!

March 11 | **March 12**
8 a.m.-5 p.m. | 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

2232 NE Jacksonville Road, Ocala
(Next to the Livestock Pavilion)



Complete an exit survey for a **FREE** tomato or pepper plant!

Interact with us:
#MCMGSF2017

Scan with
smartphone



UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Info: 352-671-8400
www.marioncountyfl.org/springfestival

Marion
County
FLORIDA
EXTENSION SERVICE