



October 2023

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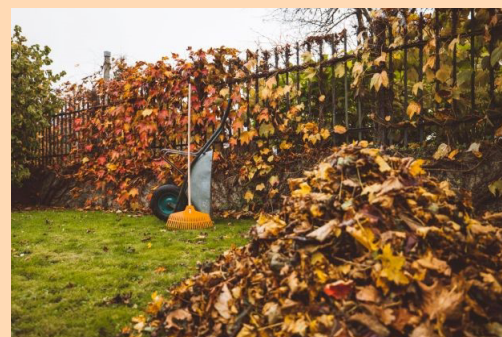
October Garden Reminders:

FLOWERS

Move tropical and subtropical container grown plants indoors when night temperatures drop into the 40 degree range.

-Divide crowded perennials such as adjuca, daylilies, lirioppe and mondo.

-Continue to spray roses for diseases.



TREES & SHRUBS

-Prepare to apply an application of horticultural oil this fall if, scales, mites and other plant sucking insects have been a problem on woody ornamentals.

-Fall is an ideal time for planting many trees and shrubs.

FRUITS & NUTS

-Locate a source of fruit trees and place your order. Most are shipped to local outlets during December or January.

-Begin planting strawberries in mid to late October. Set out strawberry plants in the garden or in containers.

LAWNS

-Avoid the application of fertilizer. Fertilizers applied now encourages tender grass growth that would result in winter damage.

-Overseeding of the permanent lawn with annual ryegrass can be done during October and early November. Use 10 pounds of seed per 1,000 square feet of area.

-Apply a pre-emergent herbicide in early October to control winter weeds.



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From an Idea to a Reality

Ellie Mascara, SRCMGV

As I drove into the parking lot, I noticed the well-kept gardens that grew unobtrusively among the parking spaces. My eyes were then drawn to a greenhouse at the back of the lot. There was a large

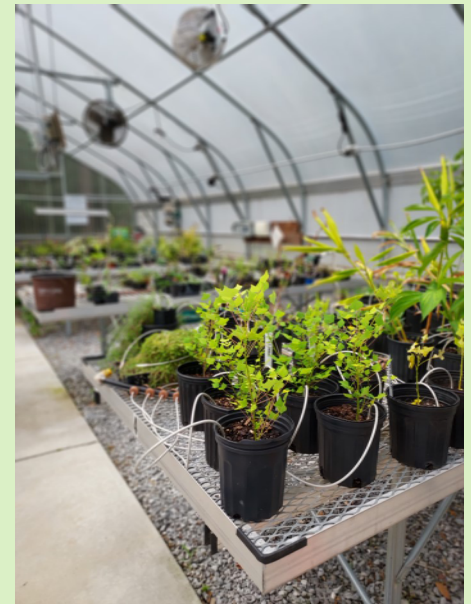


The Benefactors that made the Greenhouse a Reality

sign in front of the structure thanking those businesses and volunteers who made this educational greenhouse a reality. Having the opportunity to work in that setting was something that I always wanted to do. I realized then that I had made a good choice in signing up for the Master Gardener Certification classes. As the classes progressed, I visited the greenhouse and was very impressed with what I saw.

That was several years ago and since then, I have had the opportunity to learn more about how the greenhouse became a reality.

At first, it might seem like a simple project but it took many hours of investigation, discussion and planning for this idea to become a reality. The concept of an educational greenhouse was discussed



Interior of the Greenhouse

for several years but the idea did not become a Master Gardener project until March 7, 2008. With \$4000.00 committed to a Building Fund, the Greenhouse Committee met for the first time.

The purpose of the committee was to determine the benefits that an educational greenhouse could provide for the Master Gardener Program and the feasibility of constructing such a structure at the County Extension Office. In order to accomplish these objectives, the group identified several areas to study. They worked diligently to gather the information. In addition, they consulted with other counties that had built and maintained greenhouses.

The following areas were studied: Code requirements, permits, size of the structure, funding options, design, maintenance, capital expenditures, and effort needed to operate. Upon completion of the study, it was presented to the membership. Since several members had questions regarding the proposal, the committee requested that members write their questions and comments on a card and submit it to the committee. At the next meeting the committee responded to the questions and concerns.

One of the major considerations was funding. The least expensive greenhouse kit was \$21,000 and that did not include construction, benches, and other accessories. Over the next few years several revenue streams were explored. Master Gardener Volunteers worked on various projects to raise money for the greenhouse.

Manpower was another membership concern. How many volunteers would it take to maintain the greenhouse? Who would train them?

Finally, what were the objectives for this project? With input from the membership, it was determined that the objectives were as follows:

- Provide educational benefit to the Master Gardener Program by providing hands-on experience by propagating plants in the greenhouse.
- Provide Master Gardeners the opportunity to further the program mission of sharing desirable plants suitable to Santa Rosa County.
- Provide support for various extension projects.
- Provide venue for education on greenhouse management.
- The primary goal for this project is to educate the community regarding horticulture.



Exterior of the Greenhouse

After all questions were answered, a vote was taken to continue exploring the possibility of constructing a greenhouse on the land behind the Extension Office. The motion carried. Since this land is owned by Santa Rosa County, it was necessary to present the proposal to the County Commissioners. The proposal allowing the Master Gardener Association to build on county property was approved. On September 9, 2009 the final proposal was presented to the membership. It was approved.

In the fall of 2009, the Santa Rosa Master Gardeners Association purchased a Snow Arch greenhouse kit. When completed, it measures 24x36 ft. That was their initial expense. Additional items such as flooring, benches, heating, and cooling would have to be bought as well.

Today, a little over ten years later, it has withstood hurricanes as well as the hot Florida sun. It has been a great asset to the organization by providing a safe place to propagate and grow plants that eventually are sold at our annual plant sale. Since the most important goal was to provide horticultural classes to the community, I hope that in the future, classes will be held in the greenhouse. As the sign in front of the structure indicates, many people in our community worked or contributed to its construction. It has served Master Gardeners well and now, in return we should consider reaching out to our community by offering horticultural classes in the greenhouse. It would be another way of fulfilling our mission of teaching members of the community various aspects of gardening.

Introduction to the Florida Sand Pear

Kay Ottley, SRCMGV



Pear tree with fruit.
Credit: Chestnut Hill Nursery

Until recent years, apples were not grown in North Florida. So what fruit trees were grown? One of our friends has a field of pecan trees and on the end of the field closest to their home is a different tree that I was not familiar with. So, I asked and was told that it was a Pear tree. He told me he had found it in a small nursery in Pensacola. Of course, I needed one ! I was able to find one and that was just the beginning.

I planted it at the “end zone” of one of the landscape beds in our yard. It requires very little attention and grows quite fast. Occasionally, a branch will have a lot of pears and the branch will break. After harvesting, the branch will need to be cut back to the collar or angle. This helps prevent disease..

The pears that grow in my yard don't look like the (European) pears you buy in the grocery store. Our pear tree, *Pyrus pyrifolia*, is probably a type of Asian pear and is round with a very rough peeling and a crispy inside. I guess that's how they got their common name, sand pear.

Sand pears are usually not eaten fresh. However, the deer on our property pull them off the tree and crunch away. The most difficult thing about the sand pear tree is knowing when to harvest the fruit. Leave it too long and the wildlife will take their share. Harvest too early and they are even more gritty.

I pick them when they have some yellow and can be snapped from the branch. If you want to use them for canning or in a pie, peel and slice your pears like you would an apple. A few years ago, my mom and I made pear mincemeat that was delicious. We cooked the sliced pears in water with a small amount of sugar. Then followed the mincemeat recipe substituting the pears in the place of apples.

We are so lucky to have a pear tree on our property. It is a very hardy tree and blooms beautifully in the Spring. In September or early October, the pears will be ready for harvesting. Enjoy!



Photo Credit: Kay Ottley

[Enjoy the Florida Sand Pear - UF/IFAS Extension Columbia County \(ufl.edu\)](https://www.ufl.edu/extension/columbia-county/florida-sand-pear/)

BEES* HORNETS* WASPS* YELLOW JACKETS*

By: Dolores Stevens, SRCMG

My next door neighbor lost his life recently. He was fatally stung while trimming his Chinese Fringe shrub near his foundation. The following day, his friend sprayed the shrub and surrounding area. He reported seeing "large red wasps." Other neighbors report yellow jacket attacks while working on their shrubs.

In summer, bees, hornets, wasps, and yellow jackets are active in shrubs. Especially flowering shrubs. Carefully inspect for a nest before attempting to trim. If you see bees working? LEAVE! Don't fight on their terms; or the bee will win. Their bodies leave a scent that alerts and calls other wasps or yellow jackets to join the attack.

IF YOU ARE STUNG

- ✦ Apply ice to the sting. It may bring some comfort.
- ✦ If you are alone, call a friend and let them know. Ask them to phone you at intervals to make certain you aren't having a reaction.
- ✦ If you begin experiencing any allergic symptoms to the sting, CALL 911 immediately. Every second counts.
- ✦ If you were stung last year and didn't have a reaction, it doesn't mean you won't experience a reaction this time.

REMOVING A NEST

1. If the nest is out of the way and not causing any problems? Best to wait until Fall and cooler weather to remove the nest.
2. To remove a troublesome nest: Wait until night when the bees are less active.
3. Wear protective clothing and eye protection. Use a flashlight for light.
4. Use a can of wasp and hornet killer with at least a 20 ft. spray and saturate the nest. Don't remove the nest until you are certain all bees are gone.

Yellow jackets and some hornets build their nest in the ground. In that event, an approved insecticide will need to be applied through the entrance to their nest.

CAUTION!

There is a possibility you may be stung while attempting nest removal.. Do you have a known allergy to insect stings? If so, it's best to call an exterminator.

Visit the EDIS Website for more information: Publication EENY-081 ; also

[ENY-215/IG099: Stinging or Venomous Insects and Related Pests \(ufl.edu\)](http://ENY-215/IG099: Stinging or Venomous Insects and Related Pests (ufl.edu))



Honeybees have relatively plump and fuzzy bodies. Their hind legs are flattened, and you'll often see yellow pollen attached. Bees gather nectar and pollen to bring back to their nest.



Yellow jackets are social insects found worldwide that resemble bees in their black and yellow striped markings. They are primarily carnivorous (eat small insects). Yellow jackets most often will build their nests in the ground.



All Hornets are wasps. But not all wasps are hornets. The European hornet is the one most people are likely to encounter. It grows to around 1 inch long, which is about twice the size of a yellow jacket wasp, or our other common wasp, the paper wasp. Hornets are more aggressive when threatened.

Where can I find more information?

The UF/IFAS Extension Solutions for Your Life website and Gardening Solutions website offer online material, including pre-recorded webinars and videos, that can be accessed at your convenience.

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/lawn-and-garden/>

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/>

In addition, we have our Master Gardener webinar page and our Gardening in the Panhandle web archives full of educational content.

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/volunteers/education/webinars.html>

<http://nwdistrict.ifas.ufl.edu/hort/>

For a listing of local offices visit

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/find-your-local-office/>

Follow us on Facebook for updates

<https://www.facebook.com/SRCExtension/> Santa Rosa County Extension FB page:

<https://www.facebook.com/GardeningInThePanhandle/>

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