



UNIVERSITY OF  
FLORIDA

EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

# Growing Concerns

News & Information for the Horticulture Professional

Apr - May - Jun 2005

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Dave Palmer

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## Another Successful Tree & Landscape Short Course!

On Friday Feb 25<sup>th</sup>, 400+ professionals attended the umpteenth annual **Tree & Landscape Short Course**. I say umpteenth because no one remembers exactly when the event started. It's been ongoing 20+ years at least. At the recent event **Katherine Gilbert** spoke about the laws surrounding mangrove trimming. In case you didn't know, it's illegal to trim mangroves unless you're certified to do so - and there are big fines as well. Our own retired Forester, **Bob Der** spoke about why trees - at least those whose maintenance has been neglected, have trouble during a hurricane. **By the way we have a new Forester on board - Mr. Rob Northrop.** Then **Dr Ed Barnard** spoke about the problems soil saturation caused trees & other plants. **Dr Rick Schoellhorn** then showed the group a number of new annuals & perennials that suit our climate, and finally **Dr Phil Harmon** gave us an update on the Sudden Oak Death problem.

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**Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.**

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# Extension Service Plant & Soil Diagnostics

This article will help make you aware of all the diagnostic services available to both you and your customers. Residential customers in Hillsborough county can call 813-744-5519 x 7 to reach trained Master Gardeners to help them with horticulture problems. **Further information and forms are available at:**

<http://hillsborough.extension.ufl.edu/HomeHort/DIAGNOSTICS.HTM>

## Local (Hillsborough County) Diagnostics

The Hillsborough County Cooperative Extension Service (HCCES) offers a soil pH testing service. This test provides the pH (acidity or alkalinity) and a recommendation for adjusting the pH if necessary. It does not provide any information about nutrients, diseases, insects or nematodes. pH tests are conducted every Friday morning, so samples should be submitted no later than Thursday. Soil samples can be mailed or brought to the HCCES, contact us for more info. There is a \$2.00 fee for each sample. Please make checks payable to "Master Gardener Program."

How to take a soil sample: Using a trowel or shovel, take 10 "slices" of soil (4-6" deep) from the area you want to test. Combine the slices into one sample which should equal at least 1 cup of soil. Spread the soil on a piece of newspaper and allow it to dry completely before bringing or mailing the sample to the Extension Service. Be sure to note what plants are growing in the soil to be tested e.g., vegetables, citrus, St. Augustine, azaleas, etc. The results of the soil test will be mailed to you the following Monday.

## Other Diagnostic Services Available by Mail Soil

**Nutrient Testing** - The University of Florida, Gainesville, has a soil testing laboratory which can test soil for pH, nutrients (excluding Nitrogen), etc. The required form can be found at the link listed above.

**Disease Testing** - The Plant Disease Clinic at the University of Florida will diagnose disease problems and make recommendations. \$20 fee per sample. For more information see the link above.



**Insect Identification** - The Insect Identification Lab at the University of Florida will identify insects for a fee of \$8 per sample. For more information see the link above.

**Nematode Testing** - Nematodes are microscopic plant parasites which attack the root systems of plants. They are difficult to diagnose on many plants and a laboratory test is recommended if nematodes are suspected. The fee is \$12. For more information see the link above.

**Plant Identification** - Your local Cooperative Extension Service can identify many plants for you over the phone. However, the University of Florida's Herbarium will identify plants which are mailed to the Herbarium in Gainesville. See the link above. For forms and further information.

**“My grandmother was a tough woman. She buried three husbands and two of them were just napping.” Rita Rudner**

## Turf Wars

Many high schools and colleges have begun replacing the natural turf in their overused sports fields with synthetic turf. But when homeowners or municipalities consider similar changes, questions arise. In Aspen, Colorado, city officials have determined that synthetic turf would not work for one of their city parks. Typically, many municipal events require erecting tents, and that means pounding stakes through the synthetic turf. The officials in Aspen decided against synthetic turf for that reason. In Marco Island, Florida, a debate has been raging whether to allow homeowners to install synthetic turf on their property. Recently, city officials have decided to amend the landscape development code to prohibit artificial turf and synthetic turf materials. The problem, it seems, is with the infill, the small rubber pellets used to make the artificial blades of grass stand up and appear more natural. City officials were concerned these rubber pellets would be dislodged by heavy rains and runoff into the city's sewer system or canals and potentially threaten birds and fish. (Source: *Landscape Management Magazine* e-mail for Mar 24, 2005)

**"If you think your boss is stupid, remember; you wouldn't have a job if he was smarter."**

## Pets Gone Wild

In a recent UF/IFAS news release, Dr. Bill Kern, a vertebrate pest management expert at UF's Ft Lauderdale Research Center, says iguanas are a good example of how exotic animals can become a nuisance in the state. Pet iguanas that have escaped or been released are now well established throughout South Florida and can be found as far north as the Tampa Bay area. Mike Maunder, director of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Coral Gables says iguanas have become a major problem due to their feeding on important plant collections. Iguanas, which usually try to avoid people, will defend themselves by biting, scratching with very sharp claws, and by delivering a painful slap of their tail. In addition will also dig burrows that can undermine foundations and sidewalks. According to Dr. Kern, it is illegal to release any exotic animal in Florida, including iguanas. Because they are not protected by Florida law, they can be captured and removed by property owners without state or federal permits. Iguanas have few natural enemies in Florida, compared to their native Central and South America. (Source: *UF/IFAS News release of 1-31-05*)

## Merged Green Industry Association Announces Name

Associated Landscape Contractors of America and Professional Lawn Care Assoc. of America, which merged recently, have announced its new name: Professional Landcare Network, or PLANET. The association represents more than 4,000 member companies, which employ more than 100,000 people. (Source: *The Weekly Dirt*, for 11 Jan., 2005)

**To err is human, but to really foul things up you need a computer. P. Ehrlich**

## ANLA Announces New Business Guide

Herndon, VA — The Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) announced publication of a new reference book: *Guide to Growing a Successful Landscape Maintenance Business* (AB-0021). The new reference guide covers business plans, financial management and banking, human resource issues, facilities and equipment, pricing, marketing, productivity, safety and insurance, and much more. The book costs \$100 for ALCA members; \$160 for nonmembers. For more information or to purchase online visit the ALCA Online Go to [www.alca.org](http://www.alca.org) click on Bookstore then on Business. Bookstore. (Source: *LM Week in Review* -- December 7, 2004)

## New Neonicotinoid Receives Registration

Celero, a neonicotinoid insecticide from Arvesta Corp., received federal registration for use on ornamental crops. It can be used to control aphids, whiteflies and mealy bugs on plantscape, landscape and nursery crops. Also known as clothianidan, its mode of action is through contact and ingestion to stop pests immediately. It also works systemically, providing seasonlong, residual control. Available as a 16% water-soluble granule, it has a restricted-entry interval of 12 hours. (Source: *GMPRO greEn-MAIL*, for Feb. 1, 2005 )

## FCHP Certification Exams

The Florida Certified Horticulture Professional certification exam is now available online through the Green Industries Institute at [www.greenindustries.org](http://www.greenindustries.org). You can also call the FNGLA office to discuss testing options. Call Marilyn or Merry at 1-800-375-3642 or e-mail to [mmott@fnga.org](mailto:mmott@fnga.org). Training & CEU opportunities are offered at various locations throughout the state. See the website at [www.fngla.org](http://www.fngla.org) or call 1-800-375-3642.

**If advertisers spent the same amount of money on improving their products as they do on advertising then they wouldn't have to advertise them.**

## The Benefits of a Landscape

FNGLA, the Florida Nursery, Growers, and Landscape Association, compiled research recently that indicates:

- Landscaping can add as much as 14% to the resale value of a building and speed its sale by as much as 6 weeks.
- By spending 5% of the value of the home on installation of a quality, low-maintenance landscape, the resale value of the home could be boosted by 15% earning back 150% or more on your landscape investment.
- Properly selected and placed plants can lower heating & cooling costs by as much as 20%. (Source: *Ornamental Outlook*)

## 4 New Turfgrasses Introduced by UF

4 new "environmentally friendly" turfgrasses were recently introduced. The 4 new grasses are "Aloha Seashore Paspalum," "Ultimate Zoysia," "Pristine Zoysia," and "Hammock Centipede." At this point I recommend waiting on any recommendations to customers until more is known about these turf varieties. (Source - *Landscape Management*, e-mail of Feb 23, 2005 and *Grounds Maint* e-mail of March 1, 2005)

## Citrus Canker in the News

A recent survey by the State of Florida and USDA found Citrus Canker in Sun City, Cape Coral, Pine Island, several locations in St Lucie county and Punta Gorda. The recent (and amazing) hurricane season is a suspected factor in these infestations. See details at

<http://www.pestalert.org/notifications.cfm?region=United%20States#137>

In December 2004 citrus canker was diagnosed and confirmed in Sun City Center in Hillsborough County. Further survey results indicate that 16 properties with 31 trees have tested positive for citrus canker. (Source: *IFAS e-mail communications*)

# Formosan Termites Expanding Their Range

Formosan termites found in Jacksonville for the first time. Statewide, Formosans have previously been found in Hallandale, Orlando, Pensacola, Tampa, Palm Beach, Tallahassee and Cape Coral. While active Formosan termite infestations are found in only 11 states, the species causes nearly half the \$1 billion in property damage each year. (*Source: CPCO Advantage - August 2004*)

**On the differences between men & women... All men see in only 16 colors. Peach, for example, is a fruit, not a color. Pumpkin is also a fruit. We have no idea what mauve is.**

## HCC / UF Summer 2005 Course Offerings

Summer A: May 9-June 17   Summer B: June 27 - Aug 5   Summer C: May 9 - Aug 5

### UNDERGRADUATE

<u>Course Number</u>	<u>Section Number</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>	<u>Faculty</u>	<u>Method of Delivery</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>
AEB 3144	4669	Ag Finance	3	Dr. P.J. Vanblockland	Videoconference M/W 5:30-8:30pm	Summer B
ORH 3253C	1196	Intro Nursery Mgmt	4	Dr. Sudeep Vyapari	Onsite M/W 5-9pm	Summer A
ORH 4941	8506	Practical Work Experience	2-4	Dr. Sudeep Vyapari	N/A	Summer C
ORH 4905	8466	Ind. Study	3	Dr. Sudeep Vyapari	Onsite	Summer C
PLS 4601C	0326	Weed Science	3	Dr. Greg MacDonald	Web & onsite lab facilitation at Plant City or Gainesville	Summer A
WIS 4545	1123	Ecology & Mgmt of Wildlife Invasions	3	Dr. Steve Johnson, Dr. Kenneth Krysko	Onsite & Videoconference with Gainesville class  T: 5:30-8:30pm  Th: 5:30-9:00pm	Summer A

### UF - IFAS - CALS - Distance Education - Extension

1200 North Park Road - Plant City, FL 33563-1540 Phone: (813) 707-7330 Fax: (813) 707-7399

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The world is full of willing people; some willing to work, the rest willing to let them.

Robert Frost

## St Augustine Scale?

In one Central Florida location a scale has been found on St Augustine. As it turns out the scale was spotted about 4 years ago in South Florida. The scale has been identified by the Division of Plant Industries as *Duplachionaspis divergens* (no common name yet). It appears not to be a major or invasive pest but reports indicate that it does weaken the turf somewhat and leave it less resistant to other problems such as disease.

(Source: Personal communications)



The tiny white spots are St Augustine Scale

## New or Interesting Publications

**Pests in & Around the Florida Home** - now available on CD - The lawn & landscape sections are oriented to Florida and the southeast US, the urban and household sections are relevant to everywhere. For more info see the website at [http://pests.ifas.ufl.edu/software/det\\_pests.htm](http://pests.ifas.ufl.edu/software/det_pests.htm) Or you can call the IFAS Bookstore at 1-800-226-1764.

**The Florida Lawn Handbook** now available in a **brand new edition** - For more info, go to the IFAS Bookstore website at <http://www.ifasbooks.ufl.edu/> then type "lawn handbook" in the search box near the top of the page. Or you can call the IFAS Bookstore at 1-800-226-1764.

ENY203: Ants <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/IG080>

ENY205: Fleas <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/IG087>

ENY210: Subterranean Termites <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/IG097>

ENY211: Non-Subterranean Termites <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/IG098>

ENH5: St. Augustinegrass for Florida Lawns <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/LH010>

ENH84: Weed Control Guide For Florida Lawns <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP141>

ENH159: Baseball Field Layout and Construction <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP092>

## Websites of Interest

UF/IFAS Pest Alert Web site has moved to <http://pestalert.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Pruning Shade Trees in the Landscape Website <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/pruning/index.htm>

# Events Calendar

## APR

- Apr 7 - Chemical Spill Response Training - Bartow, CEUs, Call Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957
- Apr 9 - PCO / Tech / Limited Comm Maint & Limited L& O Class - New Port Richey, call 1-800-467-8401 for more info or see the website at [www.epcec.com](http://www.epcec.com) CEUs
- Apr 12 - Industry Update on Aquatic Products - Palmetto, CEUs, Call Polly Ellinor at 813-376-3966
- Apr 15 - Hazard Tree Workshop - Tampa, ISA CEUs, See the website at [www.floridaisa.org](http://www.floridaisa.org) or call Norm Easy at 941-342-0153
- Apr 15 - Limited Certification Training - Palmetto, CEUs, Call Peggy Dessaint at 941-722-4524
- Apr 15 - Turfgrass Spring Symposium - Naples, CEUs, Call Matt Taylor at 239-261-4987
- Apr 16 - PCO / Tech / Limited Comm Maint & Limited L& O Class - Orlando, call 1-800-467-8401 for more info or see the website at [www.epcec.com](http://www.epcec.com) CEUs
- Apr 16 - Continuing Ed for PCOs - Brooksville, CEUs call Jerry Cole at 352-796-7872
- Apr 19-21 - Fla Vegetation Mgmt Assn Annual Meeting - Daytona Beach CEUs  
Call Dan Marsh at 386-947-6104 Note: Core, ROW, Natural Areas & Aquatic Exam Prep CEUs offered with the exams following the prep class.
- Apr 26 - Lesco CEUs - Sarasota, PCO CEUs, Call Heather Whalen at 941-923-6159
- Apr 29 - Chemical Spill Response Training - Naples, CEUs, Call Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957

## MAY

- May 9 - Chemical Spill Response Training - Bradenton, CEUs, Call Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957
- May 10 - Chemical Spill Response Training - Sebring, CEUs, Call Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957
- May 12 - Chemical Spill Response Training - Plant City, CEUs, Call Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957
- May 14 - PCO / Tech / Limited Comm Maint & Limited L& O Class - Lakeland, call 1-800-467-8401 for more info or see the website at [www.epcec.com](http://www.epcec.com) CEUs
- May 16-24 - Aquatic Weed Control Short Course - Ft Lauderdale, CEUs see the website at <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/aw/> or call 352-392-5930
- May 25 - 2005 Pest Management Update Workshop - at the new Gulf Coast Research Center in Balm (Hillsborough County) CEUs - 5 each Demo & Research, O&T, Private, Comm L&O, Ltd Comm, Ltd L&O For more info call Ed Skvarch or Sharon Lear at 772-462-1660
- May 20 - Limited Commercial Maint Exam Prep Class - Bartow CEUs, Call Dave Shibles at 863-519-8677x109 for more info.

## Jun

- Jun 6 - Pesticide Applicator Training - 9-11am 2 Core CEUs Manatee Co Ext Call 941-722-4524
- Jun 11 - Jun 14 - Trees Florida 2005 - Palm Harbor, CEUs, & ISA CEUs see the website at [www.treesflorida.com](http://www.treesflorida.com) or call Sandy Temple at 407-872-1738
- Jun 15 - Chemical Spill Response Training - Bartow, CEUs, Call Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957
- Jun 29 - Chemical Spill Response Training - Naples, CEUs, Call Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957

**"Do it as if it counts, or else you're just wasting time."**

**Betsy Komjathy, Partner, Rogen International Ltd**