



Welcome to our monthly gardening series, hope you are enjoying the tips we are providing you each month. Whether it be vegetable gardening, planting flowers or ornamentals, please join us as we share our tips with you on how to get the most out of your gardening pleasure. In these articles I will be mentioning some great publications that can be obtained at the Suwannee County Extension Office or you can simply click on the link and download onto your home computer or printer.

### April

In April we should be done with frost and freeze warnings, so now is the time for everyone to get busy in their gardens.

### Trees and Shrubs

Trees and shrubs can be planted now, but be sure to water those transplants plants well. Newly planted trees and shrubs do not have their roots extending outside the root ball yet, so be sure to direct your watering right at the root ball. A time saving idea is to install a small micro-irrigation system. These systems are easy to set-up, will attach directly to your water spigot and are available at most local garden centers. To save more of your time and energy try purchasing a timer to set up and attach and let this system do the work for you.

Prune your azaleas, spirea and other spring flowering shrubs **after** they bloom and before July 4<sup>th</sup>. If you are looking for new shrubs to install, drop by the Extension office to pick up a copy of Selected Shrubs for North Florida or download at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg344> and for those shady spots try North Florida Landscape Plants for Shaded Sites, download <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg252>



### Annuals

If you were too busy last month to plant those warm season annuals, go ahead and do so now. The garden centers and nursery's are just full of great plants to choose from. Marigolds, pentas, begonias, impatiens, lobelia, cosmos, tithonia, portulaca, salvia, torenia and zinnias.

Caladium bulbs can be planted now. Stop by the Extension Office to pick up two great publications. One is on Caladiums for Florida, the link you can download is <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep003> or another great publication is Bulbs for Florida, that link to download is <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg029>

### Perennials

My amaryllis are coming up great and should be ready to bloom by the end of the month.

Flowering perennials you can add to your garden beds and landscape are phlox, rudbeckia, perennial salvia, scabiosa, stokesia, verbena, buddleia, shrimp plant, day lily and blackberry lily. Most of these plants are for full sun, if you have any shaded areas, try adding some coleus to your garden. There are a number of new colorful varieties to choose from to brighten up those shady spots. A great publication to stop by the Extension Office to pick up is Bedding Plants: Selection, Establishment and Maintenance or download the following link <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg319>

### **Vegetables and Herbs**

Warm season vegetables to plant this month are your beans (lima, pole and snap). You can also plant cantaloupe, sweet corn, cucumbers, egg plant, squash, okra, peppers, pumpkin, tomatoes and watermelons.

Stop by the Extension Office to pick up the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide or download the following link <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>

Most vegetables can be fertilized monthly with a 10-10-10. On your peas and beans use a lower nitrogen fertilizer such as a 5-10-15.

### **Lawns**

North Florida lawns, especially centipede lawns, often have dead spots in early spring. Please be patient, most areas will fill in by mid to late May.

If you haven't fertilized in late March, now is the time to do so. A good fertilizer for lawns is 15-0-15 with 7.5% slow release nitrogen. Read the label and follow directions.



Late April is a good time to apply atrazine for the prevention of chamberbitter in your lawns as long as you don't have Bahiagrass. This is the weed that resembles a mimosa seedling and has little seedpods on the underside of the leaves.

Established lawns won't need frequent watering yet. Stop by the Extension Office to pick up a great publication on lawn care, Fertilization and Irrigation Needs for Florida Lawns and Landscapes, or download the following link <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep110>

Until next month, remember to take those little steps to garden smarter, not harder.

Suwannee County Master Gardener