

The Seaside Garden

By Jenifer Marx



WHAT TO PLANT IN THE SPRINGTIME GARDEN

Flowers – Coleus, Celosia, Coreopsis, Crossandra, dusty miller, German violet *Exacum*, Gaillardia, Gazania, hollyhock, Impatiens, Lobelia, Marguerite daisy, marigold, Nicotiana, ornamental pepper, Pentas, periwinkle, Phlox, Portulaca, Rudbeckia, Salvia, Streptocarpus, sweet William, Thunbergia alata, Torenia, Verbena and Zinnia.

Fragrant Plants

Night Blooming Jasmine • Little Gem Magnolia Tree • Sweet Almond Bush • Sambac Jasmine

Allspice	Variegated Confederate Jasmine Vine	'Belinda's Dream' Rose Bush
Banana Shrub	Confederate Jasmine	Rosemary
Purple Butterfly Bush	Lady of the Night	Seven Year Apple
White Butterfly Bush	Lavender	Red Stopper
Carissa Boxwood Emerald Blanket	Lemon Grass	Spanish Stopper
Citronella Grass	'Bracken's Brown Beauty' Magnolia	White Stopper
'Louis Philippe' Climbing Rose	Marlberry	Wild Cinnamon Bark
Fiddlewood	Panama Rose	Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow
Grafted Gardenia	Blue Passion Flower	Dwarf
Butterfly Ginger	Rangoon Creeper	

Perennials and Bulbs - Bulbs to plant in April: Achimenes, African iris, Amazon lily, Aztec lily, tuberous Begonia, blood lily, Caladium, Canna, Crinum, Gladiolus, gloriosa lily, kaffir lily, shell ginger, society garlic, spider lily, tiger flower, walking iris and Watsonia.

Perennial Accent Plants Command Attention - To create an eye-catching focal point for an area of your garden consider architectural perennials such as Crinum, Heliconia and bird of paradise. These tropical plants boast size and presence and serve as striking focal points, anchors, and transitions in the landscape. Crinum lilies are a hallmark of Southern gardens and have been cherished and cultivated by Florida gardeners for years.

Several species of Crinum and dozens of varieties allow you to find the right look for your landscape, with plants ranging in height from 13 inches to 6 feet tall depending on the species.



Queen Emma Crinum Lily (*Crinum augustum*)

Queen Emma Lily (*Crinum augustum*) is named for the Hawaiian queen consort of King Kamehameha IV in the 1850s. This long-lived Crinum, sometimes called spider lily, tolerates a wide variety of conditions but prefers well-drained soil and part sun to full sun. In shadier locations the purplish leaves revert to green. With optimum conditions it grows over 6 ft. tall and 8 ft. wide and blooms almost year-round. The flowers have a light sweet scent. Crinums are propagated by division of side shoots and have few pests or problems.



Lobster Claw Heliconia

Parrot's Beak Heliconia

Heliconia (Heliconia) - A few of the 194 known species of this stunning tropical plant, which is technically an herb, originate from Western Pacific islands and Indonesia's Maluku islands. However, most Heliconias are indigenous to the tropical Americas where they grow as understory plants in the rainforest, along streams or in disturbed areas. Heliconias boast elegant deep green foliage and vividly colored bracts bearing relatively inconspicuous flowers. They grow from underground rhizomes and form clumps, which need to be thinned periodically. Often used as background in borders, around pools and in containers, they do best in rich, moist soil with partial shade to protect the deep green foliage. Heliconias are moderately drought and salt tolerant. They attract hummingbirds. Both foliage and the waxy inflorescence make long-lasting arrangements. The two cultivars most often seen in our area are parrot's beak Heliconia (*Heliconia psittacorum*) and the stunning lobster claw Heliconia (*Heliconia rostrata*).



Bird of Paradise (*Strelitzia*)

Bird of Paradise (*Strelitzia*) - is a perennial herb closely related to the banana and native to South Africa. *Strelitzia* has a long-stemmed flower with large blue and orange blooms that resemble an exotic bird. The leathery leaves are held upright on stiff leafstalks and are about 6 inches wide and 18 inches long. The plant forms a 3- to 5-foot-tall clump that can be used as a focal point in the landscape or in mass plantings. The evergreen leaves do not drop from the plant, which makes it an excellent addition around pools or wherever shedding leaves are an aesthetic and/or maintenance problem. The showy bloom is actually a combination of blue petals and orange sepals that emerge from a beak-like bract (modified leaf). Blooms appear intermittently most of the year. Healthy, mature plants can produce as many as three dozen flower spikes a year, which will last up to two weeks when cut.

Slow growing bird-of-paradise grows in most soils, but thrives in fertile, organic soils with good drainage. For optimum flower production, place plants in sunny or partially shaded locations. Plants grown in partial shade will be taller and have somewhat larger flowers. In full sun, plants are smaller and flowers are on shorter stems. The bird-of-paradise tolerates light salt spray but should not be used in exposed locations near the ocean. Bird-of-paradise tends to produce more flowers along the outside of the plant. Thus, spacing the plants at least 6 feet apart will allow adequate space for flowering. The foliage can get messy if not trimmed.

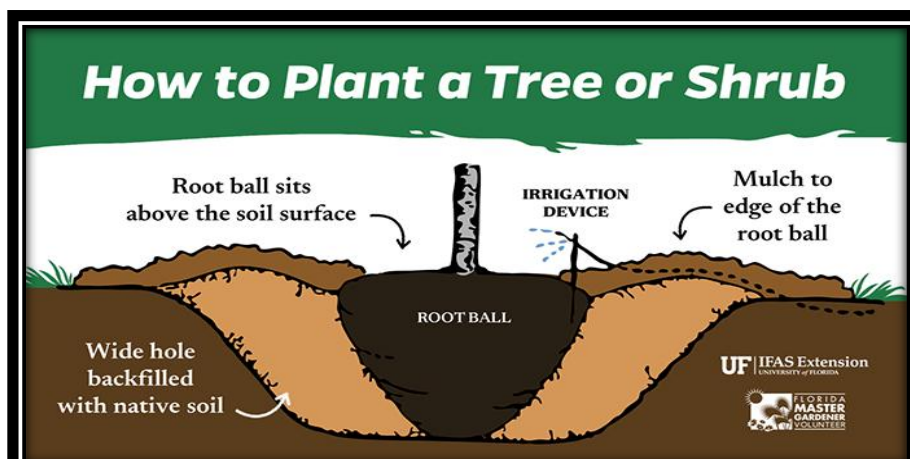


Photo: IFAS

Vegetables - In April, plant beans, cantaloupe, collards, okra, sweet potatoes, southern peas, New Zealand Summer Spinach, and peanuts for summer harvest. Through June plant sweet potatoes, southern peas, peanuts, okra, and Swiss chard.

Trees – This is a good time to plant most trees. However, delay planting balled and burlap palms until the summer rains begin. Keep the bud tied until it forces new growth. This keeps the young leaves from drying out until the new roots get established.

Shrubs - Spring is an ideal time to add perennial shrubs to your garden. Shrubs provide evergreen color, texture and attractive blooms as well as furnishing wildlife habitat. How you plant and initially care for a shrub make all the difference to its long-term health.



Note: Contrary to popular belief, adding compost to the planting hole is not a good idea. In Florida's sandy soils and heavy rains, compost breaks down too quickly. The resulting air pockets can leave you with a dried out or sunken shrub. Backfilling the hole with the native soil is a safer option. Fertilizer is not usually needed at planting and adding soluble fertilizer to a newly installed plant could burn roots. This will injure the plant and could kill it. If you're concerned about the soil quality, amend the entire bed before you plant. You can also top-dress with a thin layer of compost before you mulch.

Fruits - Plant bananas and other tropical fruits such as guava, papaya and pineapple to take advantage of the frost-free growing season. Containerized fruit plants can be planted throughout the year. Find tropical fruit trees of all kinds at the Brevard Tropical Fruit Club's sale. Get there early for the best selection. In addition to fruit trees, you can purchase specialized fertilizer and Azomite. Bring a wagon if you plan on purchasing more than one tree. Pay with cash, checks or credit card. Credit card purchases will be charged a fee.

Brevard Tropical Fruit Club Tree Sale
Saturday, April 23 open at 8 am
Behind the Melbourne Auditorium



DOWNLOAD THE FLORIDA-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING™ PLANT GUIDE

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Filter to show only plants for your zone.

Print or download details for your selected plants

https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/media/fflifasufledu/docs/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_2015.pdf



Photo: IFAS

WHAT TO DO IN THE SPRINGTIME GARDEN

The windy months of April and May at the end of our dry season are stressful for plants. With warmer weather tender new growth emerges vulnerable to drying wind and attracting hungry insects. Bug populations can explode almost overnight, so it pays to examine your plants frequently and (literally) nip infestations in the bud. Since chemical spraying kills the good guys as well as the bad be alert to early infestations and nip them in the bud with natural remedies.

Solarize the Soil - Good activity for April's increased heat; clean up your vegetable garden and solarize the soil to kill pests and disease. See: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_soil_solarization

Fertilize - If you didn't fertilize garden beds and shrubs in March, do so now with an organic time-release product. Limit fertilizing to those plants that appear to need some help. To build the soil-plant web incorporate Milorganite, a seaweed or fish-based foliar spray, or compost tea. Apply magnesium sulfate (Epsom salts) to poinsettias, gardenias, fruits and palms showing yellowing deficiency symptoms on oldest leaves. Fertilize newly planted trees after new growth begins, about a month after planting. First year citrus should be fertilized every 6 to 8 weeks.

Prune water sprouts, suckers, deadwood, and crossing limbs from trees and shrubs to maintain a clean appearance. There are four major reasons for pruning a plant: to affect flower or fruit production, to direct the growth and shape of the plant, to change the look of the plant, and to promote plant health.

https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/entity/topic/tree_pruning

Common Springtime Landscape and Garden Pests and Diseases

Monitor landscape plants weekly for aphids on tender new growth. Combat powdery mildew with weekly sprays of a solution made up of 2 Tbs. of neem oil in a gallon of water. See Landscape Insect and [Mite Pests](#) and Landscape [Pest Management and](#) See: Pests and Diseases - <https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/pests-and-diseases/>

Soft bodied insects can often be controlled with sprays of 1 Tbs. of pure soap, such as Dr. Bronner's liquid Castile soap and 1 Tbs. neutral oil to a quart of water. Do not store this solution; only make what you need.

Aphids will infest almost any type of plant. The largest numbers occur in early spring on new growth and seem to be more prevalent in the shade. A forceful stream of water or weekly applications of insecticidal soap may be all that's needed to control. Inspect some for pinpoint holes in the body indicative of attack by a parasitic wasp. Avoid insecticides in this case so the parasitic wasp population can grow and control the aphids. Other controls include Dr. Earth's Final Stop, Neem oil, and Ortho Rose Pride Insecticide.

Lace Bugs - These are prevalent on azalea, hawthorn, pyracantha, and sycamore. Use insecticidal soap, Neem oil, or Dr. Earth's Final Stop if you don't want to use harsher chemicals.

Leaf Miners - Azaleas, bougainvillea, ixora, holly, chrysanthemum, lantana, boxwood, saw palmetto, sabal palm, phoenix palm and coconut palm will often show signs. Damage can be noticeable but is usually not serious. If necessary, Spinosad can be used.

Mealybugs - Common host plants are azalea, croton, coleus, cactus, rose, annuals and many foliage plants. Their life cycle requires approximately 30 days of 80-degree temperature. This is another soft bodied insect that can sometimes be controlled with insecticidal soap or Neem oil. Dr. Earth's Final Stop or Ortho Rose Pride are other alternatives.

Scales/Armored and Soft - These are the most serious pests of many ornamental plants. A natural enemy is the parasitic wasp. Scales are often very persistent since their armor protects them from controls and stages of their offspring are protected underneath too. Neem oil or pyrethrins may control.

Spider Mites - Frequently found on azalea, camellia, chrysanthemum, ligustrum, citrus, orchid, pyracantha, rose, viburnum, annuals and houseplants. They proliferate in hot, dry weather. But they have many natural

enemies such as lady beetles, assassin bugs, praying mantids, predatory mites, and parasitic wasps. It is sometimes possible to purchase some of these. Use more natural controls and insecticidal soap to protect their natural enemies. If harsher controls are used, treat only the affected plants.

Thrips - At their peak in spring, these eat mainly young foliage and flowers. A predator mite may be available to purchase. Use directed water sprays, insecticidal soaps, spinosad, Ortho Rose Pride, Neem Oil or a similar product.

White Flies - Common on many ornamental plants such as allamanda, citrus, crapemyrtle, fern, Gerbera daisy, gardenia, hibiscus, ligustrum, viburnum, annuals, tomato, squash, cucumber, eggplant, okra, and beans. Another candidate for insecticidal soap, Neem oil or pyrethrin's. Horticultural oil, used repeatedly over several days, is often effective.



Photo: IFAS

Beneficial Insects - Identify and conserve beneficial insects. Some insects should be encouraged in your yard! There are millions of insect species in our world, with more than 100,000 found in the United States alone. However, less than one percent of these actually feed on plants in a harmful way. There are many more beneficial insect species than harmful ones. Many of these "good bugs" feed on the pest insects, in fact, and keep them in check naturally. Beneficial insects also pollinate crops; aid in making medicines and pharmaceuticals; produce silk, textiles, honey, and wax; and break down organic matter. See: <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/sarasota/gardening-and-landscaping/horticulture-commercial/integrated-pest-management/beneficial-insects/>



Orchids – Did you know that one tenth of all flowering plants are orchids? They comprise the largest group of flowering plant species in the world and are found in every habitat, except Antarctica and deserts. They are found above the Arctic Circle, in southern Patagonia and even on Macquarie Island, close to Antarctica and from sea level to above the tree line in temperate and tropical zones. The great majority are to be found in the tropics, mostly Asia, South America and Central America.

Dr. Martin Motes, author of *Florida Orchid Growing*, publishes a newsletter with month-by-month advice about how to care for your orchids. On his website you can sign up for his emails and check out growing advice in his very interesting series of YouTube videos. You can also purchase orchids or buy his book *Florida Orchid Growing – Month by Month*. <https://www.motesorchids.com>

Dr. Motes' video *Florida Orchid Growing: Part 1 Introduction to Orchid Growing* is an excellent place to refresh your knowledge of orchids and their care. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgyw4QiUR2Y>

American Orchid Society

<http://www.aos.org/orchids/seasonal-orchid-care/may-june-checklist.aspx>

Perennials and Bulbs - Divide clumps of bulbs, rhizomes, ornamental grasses, or herbaceous perennials to expand or rejuvenate garden beds or to pass along to friends. See [Bulbs for Florida](#) and <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/entity/topic/perennials>



Shell Ginger (*Alpinia zerumbet*) grows from rhizomes.

Lawns - Apply fertilizer after new growth has started which is usually early April in north-central and central Florida. Choose a fertilizer (not a "weed and feed") with little or no phosphorus unless a soil test indicates the need for it. A fertilizer with controlled-release nitrogen yields longer-lasting results. To nourish turf remineralize the soil by spreading granular Azomite, which contains some 70 minerals and trace elements. See [Lawn Fertilizer](#)

Lawn Insects - Rule out cultural problems, such as lack of water, that resemble insect damage before applying a pesticide. See [Turf Grass Pest Insects](#)

Shrubs - Choose from a wide variety of shrubs to add to the landscape now. See [Shrubs](#) and The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu>

Recycling Organic Materials to Improve Your Florida-Friendly Landscape

Here on the barrier island our infertile, sandy, alkaline soil needs all the organic material it can get. Removing grass clippings, fallen leaves, weeds and twigs further impoverishes the soil. Nutrient cycling is an integral part of a sustainable landscape. Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principle number seven, "Recycle Yard Waste," encourages strategies that keep nutrient-containing organic wastes on site and that minimize the export and import of organic materials, such as mulch, compost, and fertilizer. Nutrient recycling is an effective way to create organic matter, build soil structure, protect plants from pests and protect water quality. (for more information, visit https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/handbook/Recycle_Yard_Waste_vSept09.pdf).

Mulching - Add a 3" to 4" layer of mulch to minimize weeds and conserve moisture during dry weather. Keep mulch a few inches away from the base of trees and shrubs. Shredded paper makes effective mulch. To improve its appearance top dress with a traditional mulch. See [Landscape Mulches](#)

Composting - These days we all shred documents at home. You can add shredded paper to your compost pile or bin. It is an excellent source of carbon (cellulose); the brown or inorganic component of compost, and absorbs excess moisture from kitchen waste.

Compostable Paper Includes:

- Bills
- Envelopes
- Junk mail (no glossy or metallic paper)
- Memo paper and scrap paper
- Newspapers or any type of newsprint
- Notebook paper
- Personal letters
- Printed paper from a printer or copy machine
- Receipts
- Shredded cardboard

Do Not Compost:

- Construction paper of any color
- Foil and paper that has metallic foil printing
- Fluorescent colors of paper and card stock
- Glossy paper
- Magazines or paper that comes from magazines
- Metallic colored paper, or paper that has been printed with metallic ink
- Wax paper (or paper that just has a waxy finish)

Paper is a valuable material for composting because it's a great source of carbon. Shredded paper also helps soil to retain water and increases its volume. Vermicomposters love paper because worms enthusiastically eat it and even take shelter in it, searching it out above other materials.

In the compost pile, shredded paper can have a tendency to clump and mat together. This inhibits the movement of oxygen through the compost and can be detrimental to the microbes we depend on to break down the elements that make up our compost. To prevent this, mix shredded paper with a looser substance, like grass clippings or dried leaves, before adding it to compost heap.

As an alternative, you can take advantage of shredded paper's tendency to clump and mat by using it as a mulch. Spread shredded paper on top of your plant beds or around trees, giving plant stems and tree trunks a bit of space between them and the paper. Then moisten the paper with a sprinkler or water from the garden hose, and sprinkle some pine straw across the top. The shredded paper mulch will end up resembling a sheet of papier-mâché, and it will help the soil underneath it to retain moisture as well as preventing weeds from sprouting up through the mulch layer.



Florida Native Plant of the Month

Coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) is a robust, twining, vine that beautifies any fence, arbor or trellis with lovely red-orange tubular flowers. It can also be used as a ground cover. Clusters of blooms emerge on new growth in spring and summer. The flowers, with their protruding yellow stamens and anthers, attract honey bees, native bees, the ruby-throated hummingbird and butterflies. It is a larval host for the spring azure (*Celastrina ladon*) butterfly and the snowberry clearwing moth (*Hemaris diffinis*)

The leaves, evergreen in our area, have silvery undersides. Improved cultivars are available in some nurseries. In some cultivars of *L. sempervirens* the new growth is a soft pink. '*Sulphurea*' produces bright yellow flowers. '*Superba*' has broadly oval leaves. '*Magnifica*' is late flowering and produces large, bright red blooms. Coral honeysuckle, also known as trumpet honeysuckle, is a Florida-Friendly alternative to Japanese honeysuckle, which is invasive and typically has white or yellow flowers

Little berries, bright red when mature, form in the late summer and fall drawing birds including purple finch, goldfinch, hermit thrush, cardinal and the American robin.

This easy to grow plant tolerates most soil types and conditions. It does best in slightly acidic soil and tolerates some shade but requires full sun to bloom well. Coral honeysuckle is generally a low-maintenance plant once it's established. It can be trained by pruning, is drought tolerant and does not attract any particular pests. Look for it at native plant nurseries, some conventional nurseries or propagate yourself by semi-hardwood cuttings, air-layering or seeds. To harvest seeds, collect fruits when they are bright red; then remove, clean and dry the seeds.

Explore one of our longest blooming native plants, Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) with noted author and entomologist, Dr. Doug Tallamy and Kim Eierman, Founder of EcoBeneficial
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeDMrgQ6OJ0&t=9s>

The EcoBeneficial website has a rich menu of fascinating videos, podcasts, articles and blog posts.
<https://www.ecobeneficial.com>

PRIMAVERA BY SANDRO BOTTICELLI



Spring Begins With Botticelli

A Spring Thought by Jonathan Jones in *The Guardian*, 19 March, 2012 – Botticelli's *Primavera*, commissioned by the Florentine Medici family in 1481, was one of the first large-scale European paintings to tell a story that was not Christian, replacing the agony of Easter with a pagan rite. The very idea of art as a pleasure, and not a sermon, began in this meadow. The painting teems with life: the myriad shades of the flowers in the dark grass have been analysed by botanists, who identified 200 accurately depicted plants. Blue-skinned Zephyrus, spirit of the wind, chases Chloris, who transforms into Flora in her flowering dress, while the three Graces dance, Mercury waves a wand and Cupid gets ready to fire an arrow.

The goddess of love stands at the centre, crowned by radiating foliage against the blue sky. This is the season of Venus, when flowers bud and birds sing. In the world Botticelli inhabited, everyone lived close to nature whether they wanted to or not and the season of natural renewal was seen as a time for lovers and courtship. In Florence, young men cut down flowering boughs and pinned them to the doors of women they loved. (Botticelli's friend Poliziano even wrote a Renaissance pop song about spring lovers: "Welcome spring/ Which wants a guy to fall in love/ And you, girls/ Come to the fresh cool shade/ Of the green growing trees.") The miracle of Botticelli's painting is that it translates all this life-renewing joy into colours and figures. The cool shade of the green trees sets off pale limbs, blond hair, gauzes and bright robes gliding over the carpet of flowers. The season is at once warmed by the sun and cooled by breezes. It is an image of life unstoppable."

HAPPY GARDENING!



MARCH GARDEN OF THE MONTH AWARD

By Sue Neville

Our March award goes to Terry and Jack Hargreaves at 222 Michigan Avenue

Jack and Terry moved into their home on Halloween, 1980. They soon planted oak trees, which have grown to beautiful, mature trees. They added a few bromeliads, which have multiplied over the years. The Hargreaves are generous with sharing their bromeliads and have received plants from neighbors and native plants from their neighbor to the east. With no need for sprinklers, herbicides, insecticides or fertilizer, they have created a xeriscape and environmentally friendly property.



APRIL GARDEN OF THE MONTH AWARD

By Nancy Marshall

This month's award goes to Stephanie Dandridge at 1315 Riverside Dr. Indialantic

At the front entrance to the home, there is a pond with a waterfall. Seasonal flowers are planted around the waterfall to add color. Another interesting feature is an ivy lattice wall on the side yard. Color is added throughout the yard with bougainvillea bushes.



A big ***thank you*** to...



...Walt Fredrickson. You are so awesome!!