

The SEASIDE Gardener

OCTOBER 2022

How to Prep Your
October Garden

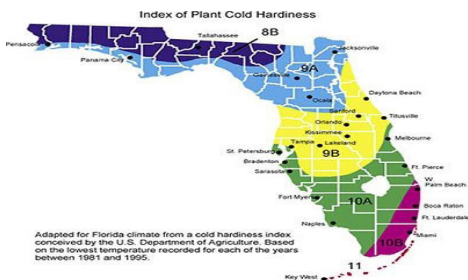
Plant, Eat & Fertilize

Vol. 1 No. 2 October 2022 by Jenifer Marx



—THE REAL FLORIDA—

The real Florida landscape has been *Florida Friendly* for thousands of years. Making native plants your first choice for a landscape conserves water and energy, supports wildlife and some pollinators, and looks like real Florida.



When planning your garden or adding plants to the landscape, always consider the horticulture hardiness zone. Although most of Brevard County



is classified as Zone 9b, our barrier island gardens, nestled between the Indian River Lagoon and the sea, are designated 10a.

[Discover](#) what grows naturally in our part of Florida and then find plants at local garden centers.

—WHAT TO PLANT NOW—

ANNUALS/BEDDING PLANTS —

Even though temperatures are still warm, begin planting for the cooler and drier months ahead. Impatiens, alyssum, dianthus, calendula, chrysanthemum, coleus, coreopsis, liatris, petunia, snapdragon, pansy, nicotiana (flowering tobacco), stock and ornamental kale are good additions to the fall/winter garden.

See [Annals](#)

Florida [butterfly](#) plants include Lantana, Penta, Buddleia, Firebush, Salvia, Porterweed, Sweet Almond Bush, Firespike (Odontonema

cuspidatum), Jatropha, Milkweed host plant, Giant Milkweed host plant, White Balloon Plant Milkweed (Gomphocarpus physocarpus) host plant, Passion Flower host plant, Coontie host plant, Dill host plant, Parsley host plant, Common Rue/Ruda host plant, Dutchman's Pipevine host plant, Cestrum (night blooming jessamine and other varieties) host plant.

Florida [hummingbird](#) plants include Pagoda Flower aka Glory Bower (Clerodendrum paniculatum), Fiddlewood, Firebush, Butterfly Bush (buddleia), Firespike, Rose Mallow, Aloe, Butterfly Milkweed, Swamp Milkweed, Firecracker Plant (Russelia equisetiformis), Blue Sage, Florida Azalea.

BULBS —

Plant agapanthus, rain lily, and Clivia lily now for blooms next spring or summer. Add organic matter to the planting bed for best results.

See [Bulbs](#)

HERBS FOR FALL

- Basil - annual, use leaves
- [Cilantro](#)
- Chives - perennial use leaves
- Coriander - annual, use seeds
- Dill - annual, use seedheads
- Fennel - perennial, use seeds when ripe and leaves
- Garlic - perennial
- Lavender - perennial, use leaves
- Lemon Balm - perennial, use leaves
- Marjoram - perennial, use leaves
- Oregano - perennial, use leaves
- Parsley - biennial, use leaves
- Sage - perennial, use leaves
- Mexican tarragon - perennial, use leaves <https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/mexican-tarragon.html>
- Thyme - perennial, use leaves and flowers

VEGETABLES

Easy crops to grow now include beans, broccoli, carrots, collards, lettuce, green onions, peppers, radishes, spinach, and tomatoes.

See [Vegetable Gardening](#) Select edibles from both the Central Florida and South Florida listed in the infographic below.

—WHAT TO DO NOW—

LEARN THE ABCs OF SOIL HEALTH

Soil is not an inert growing medium—it is a living and life-giving natural resource. It teems with billions of bacteria, fungi, and other microbes that are the foundation of an elegant symbiotic ecosystem.

[ABC's of Soil Health](#)

Soil health is defined as the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans. Healthy soil gives us clean air and water, bountiful crops and forests, productive grazing lands, diverse wildlife, and beautiful landscapes. Soil does all this by performing five essential functions:

- Regulating water – Soil helps control where rain, snowmelt, and irrigation water goes. Water flows over the land or into and through the soil.
- Sustaining plant and animal life – The diversity and productivity of living things depends on soil.
- Filtering and buffering potential pollutants – The minerals and microbes in soil are responsible for filtering, buffering, degrading,

immobilizing, and detoxifying organic and inorganic materials, including industrial and municipal by-products and atmospheric deposits.

- Cycling nutrients – Carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus, and many other nutrients are stored, transformed, and cycled in the soil.
- Providing physical stability and support – Soil structure provides a medium for plant roots. Soils also provide support for human structures and protection for archeological treasures.

TEST YOUR SOIL:

Florida has plenty of sunshine and rainfall, but its soils are often lacking in nutrients and other attributes necessary for good plant growth. The UF/IFAS Testing Laboratory can test your soil and provide a detailed analysis. Soil testing enables you to find out the makeup of your soil and helps you determine how much lime and fertilizer you need to apply. Request Test B. Call Sally Scalera at Brevard County Extension Office (321-633-1702) for interpretation of the results.

[Download](#) test form

TEST YOUR WATER:

Our beachside soils are highly alkaline and our water can be very salty. Bring a small amount of the water you give your plants and \$2 in cash to the Extension Office, 3695 Lake drive, to have your water tested for salinity.

A 10-page list of [salt tolerant trees](#), palms, shrubs, vines and groundcovers for Florida

[Salt tolerant annuals](#)

Growing Beachside:

[Taking Planting With A Grain of Salt](#) – Rockledge Gardens

EDIBLES TO PLANT IN		
October		
North	Central	South
 <p>Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Strawberry, Sugar cane, Swiss Chard</p>	<p>Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Strawberry, Sugar cane, Swiss Chard, Tropical Spinaches</p>	<p>Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Strawberry, Sugar cane, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches</p>
 <p>Celery, Mustard, Spinach</p>	<p>Celery, Mustard, Pineapple, Spinach</p>	<p>Amaranth, Calabaza, Celery, Long Squashes, Luffa, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Seminole Pumpkin, Spinach</p>
 <p>Carrots, Onions (bunching), Radish, Turnips</p>	<p>Carrots, Onions (bulbing, bunching), Radish, Turnips</p>	<p>Beans (bush, lima, pole), Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Okra, Onions (bulbing, bunching), Peas (southern), Radish, Squashes, Turnips</p>



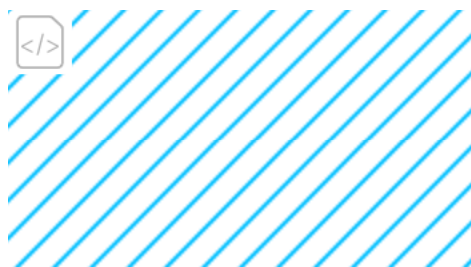



PRUNE PERENNIALS:

Pruning helps perennials rebloom and stay healthy. For shrubby perennials like lantana, bougainvillea and pentas, prune only the tips of each stalk down to the next set of leaves. This encourages branching, bushiness and more blooms.

For perennials that form long stalks like scarlet milkweed, ruellia, vincas, and salvias, remove the lankiest stalks all the way to the last node. More stalks will fill in where you've pruned. Herbaceous perennials without branches, such as agapanthus, gingers and clivia, don't need pruning at this time.

Prune fruit trees [Video](#)



Lawns: Control winter weeds in lawns before they appear. Preemergence herbicides must be applied at the right time to be effective. Apply when nighttime temperatures are 55°F–60°F for 4–5 days. See Lawn Weeds: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/entity/topic/lawn_weeds

[Fertilize](#) lawns if needed.

Fertilize [ornamental trees](#) and shrubs that are not performing as desired. Palm Nutrition and Fertilization

[Strawberries:](#) Prepare beds and plant strawberry plants this month or create a colorful container planting. Water daily until established.

[Palms:](#) Palms have unique nutritional needs. Select a fertilizer that contains controlled release nitrogen, potassium and magnesium.

Plant perennial shrubs - [10 Steps to Shrub Planting](#)

Gardenias: Last fertilization for gardenias. Pruning after October 1st will decrease the number of blooms the following year. Buds are initiated and developed by a combination of short days and long nights, low temperatures and wood of the proper age.

Transplanting Tips: Dip seedling stems and cuttings in cinnamon before planting to prevent fungal infection. Cinnamon makes a good substitute for store-bought rooting hormone powders. Orchid growers use the spice every time they repot. Sprinkle on divided roots, cuts in stems, etc.

Water seedlings before setting them outside. Fall crops need frequent watering, so plan ahead to use an efficient soaker hose or drip irrigation line to keep the soil lightly moist at all times.

Until ready to plant, keep seedlings out of direct sunlight.

Transplant and cover seedlings with 1" mulch to keep the soil cool and moist. Cover the plants with empty flowerpots or small boxes for two to three days. This gives the plants time to grow new roots before facing the hot summer sun.

Watch for signs of stress such as wilting. If heat hangs on, place old window screens or cloth shade covers on the south or west side of plants.

Or, create a quick sun screen using clothespins attached to a piece of lightweight cloth or a row cover to support hoops or slender garden stakes.

Create a wildlife habitat. Contemplate this before you remove dead trees. Many people are not aware of the value of dead, dying, and hollow trees, as well as logs on the ground, for

wildlife. Dead trees provide homes to over 400 species of birds, mammals, and amphibians. Fish, plants, and fungi also benefit from dead or dying trees. Consider leaving standing dead and dying trees in your yard unless they pose a human safety or property hazard, and use downed woody materials in gardens and landscaping.

Pile hurricane Ian landscape debris consisting of small branches, twigs and leaves in an unobtrusive part of your yard to attract birds, beneficial insects and small mammals.

Cut spent or non-producing plants in your flower beds off at the soil line so that the root system remains in the ground for the soil microbes to consume and the soil remains undisturbed. This also prevents weed seeds rising to the surface and germinating. If the soil is bare cover it with mulch or more organic matter.

Image "Entangled Life" book cover
Read Merlin Sheldrake's fascinating book "Entangled Life: How Fungi Make our worlds, change our minds & shape our futures."

BIRD MIGRATION NEWS

Right now, 16,575,000 birds are in flight over Florida—headed south at an average speed of 20 mph and altitude of 2,700 feet. Last night, more than 768,000 birds flew over Brevard County.

When, where, and how far will birds migrate? How many birds passed last night? These tools help you explore the answers to these and many other questions about bird migration. Bird migration forecasts show predicted nocturnal migration three hours after

local sunset and are updated every six hours. These forecasts come from models trained on the last 23 years of bird movements in the atmosphere as detected by the US NEXRAD weather surveillance radar network. (Forecasts for Florida and other areas.) Colorado State University and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology currently produce these bird migration forecasts.

Brevard County Bird Migration [Dashboard](#)



Cape May Warbler



Among the migrants is the Cape May warbler, a handsome little creature weighing less than an ounce, which flees the cold winters of southern Canada, the Great Lakes region and New England for warmer climes in the West Indies.

Many migratory warblers seem to lead double lives, and the Cape May is a good example. It summers in northern spruce woods, but winters in the Caribbean, where it is often seen in palm trees. In summer it eats insects, but during migration and winter it varies its diet with nectar from flowers and with juice that it obtains by piercing fruit.

[Invite Native Bees Into Your Garden](#)



Green Thoughts

“We know more about the movement of celestial bodies than about the soil underfoot.”
—Leonardo da Vinci

“The life cycle of nature is an expanding spiral. At the base of this spiral is the soil.”
—Dr. Arden Anderson

OCTOBER IS BAT APPRECIATION MONTH.



Culturally, bats are identified and associated with a list of symbolic and beneficial activities. Bats are environmentally advantageous to crops because they pollinate our favorite fruits and eat agricultural pests thus reducing the need to use pesticides. Bat dung is also used as a fertilizer. Bat Appreciation Month seeks to commend bats' contribution to society as well as address their growing extinction.



TOMATOES WERE ONCE BLAMED FOR WITCHCRAFT AND WEREWOLVES

For 600 years people feared tomatoes.

“ WE CALL TOMATOES KILLERS. WE CALL THEM ROTTEN. WE CALL THEM UGLY. WE CALL THEM SAD. TO FIND THE REASON WHY, YOU HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE 1500S, WHEN THE HUMBLE FRUIT FIRST REACHED EUROPEAN SHORES. THROUGH NO FAULT OF ITS OWN, THE TOMATO STEPPED INTO THE MIDDLE OF A CONTINENT-WIDE WITCHCRAFT PANIC, AND A SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY IN TUMULT. ”

[LINK](#)

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