

# The SEASIDE Gardener

SEPTEMBER 2022

*How to Prep Your  
September Garden*

*Plant, Eat & Fertilize*

Vol. 1 No. 1 September 2022 by Jenifer Marx

## —WHAT TO PLANT NOW—

**TREES** — This is a good time to plant almost all trees. Think of adding a native tree like the slender and elegant *Jamaican caper* (*Capparis cynophallophora*). (see picture below)

A cousin to the edible caper plant, Jamaican caper serves as a larvae host for Florida white butterfly. It blooms April through June with delicate blossoms that only last for 24 hours, which open in the evening and produce a sweet honey fragrance. It loves full or part sun in [USDA zones 9b-11](#) and can self-seed since it's one of the few plants with both female and male parts. Expect your Jamaican caper to be visited frequently by honey bees, cardinals, blue jays and mockingbirds.

More on the [Jamaica Caper](#)



**SHRUBS** — Native shrubs, like beautyberry, marlberry, firebush, and

dahoon holly, can be placed where you can view the birds that enjoy them. More on shrubs: [WEB](#)

More on [Plant Selection and Landscape Design](#)

**FLOWERS** — Time to remove flowers and add cooler weather flowers.

## —BEDDING PLANTS— Annuals, Perennials & Bulbs

It's safe to plant ageratum, coleus, celosia, zinnia, wax begonia, alyssum, calendula, cleome, cornflower, dianthus, gaillardia, hollyhock, periwinkle, phlox, salvia, snap-dragon and verbena now, but wait until October to plant petunias and pansies.

More on [Annuals](#)  
More on [Perennials](#)

**BULBS** — Plant Aztec lily, butterfly lily, walking iris, spider lily, African lily (*Morea* sp.), amaryllis, crinum, society garlic, calla, narcissus, shell ginger (*Alpinia zerumbet*), gladiolus, spider lily (*Hymenocallis*), and rain lily.

More on [Bulbs](#)

Plant gladioli every two weeks to stagger blooming. Stake each plant.

Add color, texture, and pattern to the garden with the dramatic varieties of elephant's ear (*Alocasia* spp.) now available.

More on *Alocasia* spp. [Elephant's Ear](#)



## —PLANTS YOU CAN EAT—

**HERBS** — Plant herbs that tolerate the warm temperatures of early fall, include Mexican tarragon, mint, rosemary, garlic chives, sage, thyme, sweet marjoram, and basil.

More on [Herbs](#)

**VEGETABLES** — Tomatoes, pole beans, sweet corn, okra, shallots, green onions, southern peas, pumpkin, squash, and watermelon all start well from seed or buy seedlings. Set out nursery grown broccoli, eggplant, peppers, cabbage, Brussels

sprouts, kale, and collards. UF recommends looking for these varieties at garden centers and in catalogs: Sweet peppers (Big Bertha, Early Calwonder, Jupiter, Sweet Banana and Yolo Wonder); hot peppers (Habanero, Hungarian Wax and Jalapeno); and green beans (Bush Baby, Bush Blue Lake, Cherokee Wax, Contender, Harvester, Provider, Roma and Tendercrop).

More on [Vegetable Gardening](#)  
More on [Seed Sources](#)

**VEGETABLE SEEDS** to sow in September for October transplanting include; beets, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, collards, Chinese cabbage, lettuce, English peas, and kohlrabi. Remember—bees love, love, love broccoli and arugula flowers.

**TOMATOES** — Growing tomatoes can be tricky on the barrier island but, by following a few rules, you can enjoy delicious, vine-ripened varieties throughout the winter.

By now, you should have started seeds and, by mid-September, you should have nursery-grown seedling set out. You can continue planting from now until about mid-March when it becomes too hot for fruit to set.

Grow tomatoes in containers or raised beds for nematode avoidance. Monitor daily for pests or disease, water as needed and fertilize monthly with a complete organic and you should have a good crop.

More on [Tomatoes](#)

### *Companion Plantings to Avoid with Tomatoes:*

Brassicas, including cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, Brussels sprouts, and kohlrabi outcompete for the same nutrients and can stunt the growth of tomato plants.

### *Warnings:*

- Fennel will inhibit the growth of tomatoes. In fact, fennel isn't a good companion for most garden vegetables and should be grown separately.
- While many herbs grow well with tomatoes, dill is the exception. Young dill does well, but when it gets mature and ready to seed, dill plants can inhibit tomato plant growth.
- Corn and tomatoes should not be planted together because they attract the same sort of pests and fungal infections.

**POTATOES** — Tomatoes and potatoes, members of the nightshade family, need the same nutrients to grow. That means they will be in competition with each other, which doesn't benefit either and can make them susceptible to the same diseases.

**EGGPLANT** — Competitive with potatoes, eggplants are also susceptible to blight, which makes tomatoes planted nearby more susceptible to blight, too.

More on [Tomato Disorders](#)

The University of Florida has tested a wide variety of tomatoes for pest and disease resistance and fruiting potential, with kudos going to Better Boy, Bragger, Celebrity, Duke, Floradel, Flora-Dade, Floramerica, Manalucie, Solar Set,

Sun Coast and Walter large-fruit varieties. UF/IFAS found the best small fruit varieties to be Cherry, Chelsea, Florida Basket, Micro Tom and Sweet 100.



**FRUIT** — Florida is the winter strawberry capital of the world. Plant strawberries in September and October. Prepare planting areas by adding organic matter.

**WATERMELON** — Early fall and early spring are the best times to plant watermelons. They need plenty of space, well-drained soil, and eight hours of daily sunshine. If you want to grow the popular smaller, fridge-friendly watermelons, look for Ice Box, Sugar Baby or Mickeylee varieties. If you have the space to grow larger watermelons, choose Jubilee, Moons & Stars, Crimson Sweet, or Charleston Grey 133. Plant the seeds 36" apart directly into the soil for best results and space rows 7-8 feet apart. They need frequent watering.

More on [Watermelon](#)

### **—GOOD DIRT & WATER—**

**First things first:** test your soil and educate yourself about soil health and fertility. Florida has plenty of sunshine and rainfall, but its soils are often lacking in nutrients and other attributes necessary for good

plant growth. To improve your soil's productivity, you should know each of the following soil attributes:

- pH
- Lime requirement
- Major nutrient levels (P,K, Ca, Mg)
- Micronutrient levels (Cu, Mn, Zn)
- Irrigation water quality

If you don't have this information, a soil test may help. The UF/IFAS Extension Soil Testing Laboratory (ESTL) conducts tests on soil samples year-round. ESTL offers soil tests for home and commercial growers. NOTE: Request Test B.

More on [Soil Samples](#).

**SOIL HEALTH AND FERTILITY** — Florida soils are naturally sandy with poor nutrients. The Best Management Practices (BMPs) for building soil for edible plants and maintaining soil health are covered in this [publication](#) by Florida-Friendly™ edible landscapes.

**LAWN PROBLEMS** — Continue to monitor the lawn for signs of insect damage. army worms, chinch bugs, mole crickets, and sod webworms are still active this month.

More on [Insect Management](#)

**IRRIGATION** — Check that irrigation systems are providing good coverage and operating properly before summer rains taper off.

More on Calibrating your [Sprinkler System](#)

### —FERTILIZING & PRUNING—

**ORNAMENTAL PLANTS** — After fertilizer ban ends on September 30, fertilize only plants that show signs of deficiencies. Inspect plants for insect infestation and disease including mildew. It's so much easier to nip problems in the bud (literally) than deal with a full-blown problem. Use organic, slow-release fertilizers for best results.

**POINSETTIAS** — Give them a final pruning in September, pinching the tip of each shoot to encourage branching. Move potted poinsettias to a sunny location.

**CHRISTMAS CACTUS** — Give your cactus its last feeding this month. Move into partial sunshine and reduce watering until buds appear.

**DEADHEADING PLANTS** — Remove spent blooms, cut back, and fertilize flowering annuals and perennials to extend the bloom season into the fall months.

**PERENNIALS AND BULBS** — Divide and replant perennials and bulbs that have grown too large or need rejuvenation. Add organic matter to new planting areas and monitor water needs during establishment.

More on [Plant Propagation](#)

**CITRUS** — Fertilize citrus with a balanced fertilizer in October. If the weather has been rainy, do not use soluble nitrogen as rains will leach it from the soil too quickly.

More on [Citrus Culture](#)

**ROSES** — Spray and prune roses, removing old flowers, hips and dead, damaged or spindly growth. Fertilize container-grown roses to encourage fall blooming.

**CHRYSANTHEMUMS** — Pinch and spray for aphids, mites, mildew and blackspot. Feed with 10-30-20 or similar high phosphate fertilizer until color shows in the buds.

**ORCHIDS** — Feed hanging baskets and orchids every two weeks.

More on [repotting orchids](#)



### —Bird Migration News—

#### *Cornell's Ornithology Lab Fall Migration in Summer?*

The calendar and the temperature still say it's summer, but some birds are already starting their migrations. After nesting season is over, migratory birds can wander widely as they fuel up for their journeys, and many are on the move even before August rolls around.

BirdCast's localized migration monitoring tool, [Migration Dashboard](#), is now up and running for the season. The Brevard County

dashboard shows how many flights flew overnight, their altitude, and more details. Track them in real time. Indialantic was designated a bird sanctuary in the 1970s. A fountain was installed in Orlando Park to help them rest and drink. It's a very popular spot for serious birders!

Need a migration-science refresh? Check out our primer on the [how, where, and why of bird migration](#), or read about some of the species [that are the among the earliest movers](#).

### —National Honey Month & Mushroom Month—



What is the connection between fungi and bees?

Fungi have been long known to produce chemicals that fight against bacteria, other fungi, and viruses.

Coupled with this, bees have been observed foraging on mushroom mycelium. This suggests honey bees have already been foraging from mushrooms to collect antimicrobial medicine to boost their collective immunity.

More on [Fungi & Honey Bees](#)

### —Photography—

Enjoy seeing how ultraviolet light reveals the radiant hidden beauty of flowers. During COVID, artist Debora Lombardi began



Credit: Debora Lombardi

using ultraviolet induced visible fluorescence photography (UVIVF) to explore *a chromatic world not detected by human eyes, but that some animals (such as bees) can perceive*.

See more [Photography](#).

### —Learn More—

[Valuable Florida Friendly Landscaping™](#)

#### Master Gardener Clinics

Extension Brevard County  
3695 Lake Drive, Cocoa, FL  
(321) 633-1702 | 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon-Fri

Melbourne Beach Library  
324 Ocean Ave. | (321) 956-5642  
2-4 p.m. Tuesdays starting in mid-Oct.

Satellite Beach Library  
751 Jamaica Blvd. (321) 779-4004  
10 a.m. - Noon Mondays  
starting Sept. 12



Garden Club by the Sea is approaching 60 years of volunteerism dedicated to the beautification, education and conservation initiatives in Indialantic.

Membership is open to residents residing beachside between Eau Gallie Boulevard and the southern border of Melbourne Beach.

WEB: [GardenClubbytheSea.com](http://GardenClubbytheSea.com)

SOCIAL MEDIA:

[@gardenclubbythesea](#)

In collaboration with the town of Indialantic, we manage the native plants located at Lily Park and, last year, installed a Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker. Plan to attend this year's Veteran's Day celebration at the marker. More details to come.

The **SEASIDE**  
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