

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- **Sunshine
Spotlight:
Pond Therapy**
- **Rain Barrel
Workshop**
- **HOA & FFL**



Fusarium Wilt desiccates only one side of the Queen palm.

The New Leaf Newsletter: Florida-Friendly Landscaping

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Watch Out For That Palm!

Postcard Florida is a land of orange and palm trees. Unfortunately both could be wiped out by disease! Our citrus industry is threatened with citrus greening (a separate topic for discussion), while the Queen Plam (*Syagrus romanzoffiana*) and Mexican Fan Palm/Washington Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) go belly up from Fusarium Wilt. Here's the bad news up front: There is no cure for this disease. It's present throughout Florida. The palm dies quickly, within two to three months. And there's no method of prevention. Geez!

Before you throw this newsletter away in defeat—I can

tell you how to better understand this disease, diagnose if your palm has it, and then what to do if it does. The fungus responsible for the wilt is *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. *palmarum*. It is very host specific—only affecting Queen or Mexican Fan palms. The fungus obstructs the xylem in the palm, which prevents water flow and thereby causes leaf desiccation. What you see is only one side of the palm frond dying, turning yellow, or usually a necrotic brown. One may also observe a brown strip up the main petiole (rachis) of the frond on the same side of the discoloration. It will affect the oldest (the lowest) leaves first. The disease acts quickly enough that the leaves will not droop or fall off before the palm has died.

While we don't know for sure

yet, we strongly suspect the fungus spreads through wind-blown spores (making prevention very difficult) and some of these spores can live for years in the soil. It's possibly the fungus can be transferred palm to palm with our pruning equipment, so we must properly clean them between pruning. Keep in mind that pruning an infected palm, does not benefit the tree; it may only look nicer to you. If you want to prune, only remove the dead fronds so as not to stress the palm further. Better yet, if the palm has Fusarium Wilt remove and destroy it quickly. Incinerate, properly compost or put it in a landfill. If the trunk or stump is uninfected (without discoloration) you can mulch/chip it. You can choose a new plant for this spot, but not another Queen or Mexican Fan Palm. For more information, check out the full UF publication here:

www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pp278

The Newest EDIS Articles

Perceptions of Florida-Friendly Landscaping: Linking Visual Quality & Environmental Health Through Landscape Codes
www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep519

A yard can be Florida-Friendly while still maintaining that HOA "look". This article addresses aesthetic concerns.

Rose Rosette Disease: A new Disease for Roses in Florida
www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pp317
Another incurable and destructive disease relatively new to Florida. Learn how to minimize its spread and damage.

Pesticide Storage: Keep It In The Container
www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pi255
Deadly mistakes can occur if pesticides are not kept in their original containers.

Have all the EDIS documents at your fingertips at www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu.

Sunshine Spotlight: Bonnie Brings Nature's Therapy

Outside of Bonnie's office window is a stormwater pond. Her view is likely similar to many other office workers and homeowners —a manmade pond that's mowed but otherwise unmanaged. But Bonnie saw more than that. She saw potential —especially because she works for the Kids House Children's Advocacy Center in Seminole County. Kids House serves as the single point of contact for child abuse prevention, investigation, and treatment in Seminole County. With some care and restoration, a stormwater pond could become a wildlife garden, a calm place for the Kids House therapists to use with their child clients, a place to visit to decompress and avoid burnout. So Bonnie reached out to Florida-Friendly Landscaping and the Watershed Management Division in Seminole County and we hatched a plan. Since this was a county-owned pond, Public Works mechanically removed the invasive torpedo grass and Cogon grass along the shore banks. With the generous support of the Watershed Management Division, Native Plant Society (Cuplet Fern Chapter), and Biosphere Nursery, beneficial aquatic plants such as cypress trees, duck potato, and pickerelweed were purchased; they'll help remove excess pond nutrients and provide wildlife habitat. On a Saturday morning in June, the Seminole Education, Restoration and Volunteer (SERV) program along with Hands On Orlando volunteers gathered to remove remaining invasive species (60 bags of torpedo grass!) and plant over 800 beneficial plants. This beautified space will become a Certified Wildlife Garden with the National Wildlife Federation.



Why did you want to restore this pond?

Kids House wants to use the pond as an asset to our property – a place to bring our trauma therapy services outside with the abused children we serve. We know how important the water filtration and conservation aspects of the stormwater pond are; so why not expand its use as a wildlife habitat! Water attracts wildlife and we already see native water birds on its shoreline sometimes. It's been proven that nature is therapeutic and promotes healing. By restoring the pond, we contribute to water conservation efforts by the county and create a beautiful, peaceful sanctuary for area wildlife, and the children we serve. It's about helping children find their sense of wonder again, after being subjected to painful experiences that made them fearful and shut down. Also, our staff sees some very emotionally difficult cases sometimes. They can use it as a calm place to go, to decompress.

Why do you believe in FFL?

We live in a beautiful place! I read on landscape.org recently that Florida hosts the greatest diversity of plant families of all U.S. states, and as many as 295 plants, 88 vertebrates and 261 invertebrates are found nowhere else in the world. In order to preserve this amazing diversity, each one of us must do our part to ensure our native landscape stays just that – native.

What's the most important thing a homeowner can do?

Look at what is right outside your window. What do you see? Do your plants just look pretty and use lots of water? Have they been treated with pesticides that kill pollinators along with pests? Or can they support bees – which are in worldwide decline – and provide food and shelter for other wildlife that stops by to visit? Plants in your home landscape are great – they can help reduce the heat load on your house and bring down your energy bills; filter rain water before it goes back into the aquifer; and make your yard a restful and lovely place to be. By planting responsibly, we can individually work to keep Florida the beautiful place that it is. It truly is like no other place in the world – let's support it and celebrate it!



Upcoming Events

A Pollination Celebration

Saturday, June 20th

Extension Auditorium, 250 County Home Rd, Sanford.

Bee Pollination 9:30 am—12:00 pm

Find out about the importance of bees and pollinators for our food. Build a solitary bee box and learn how to attract important pollinators to your home. Cost: \$10.00

<https://eventbrite.com/event/16342423629>

Butterfly Gardening 1:00—3:00 pm

What plants can you choose and maintain to create a butterfly paradise? This class will teach you the best practices for butterfly gardening. Leave with planted milkweed. FREE.

<https://eventbrite.com/event/16332805862>

The Good, the Bad, and the Bugly

Wednesday, July 8. 6:30—8:30 pm

Extension Auditorium, 250 County Home Rd, Sanford.

Take an integrated approach to pest management in your yard. Help out the good bugs and prevent the bad bugs. FREE.

<https://eventbrite.com/event/16332852000>

Compost and Mulching

Wednesday, July 22, 6:30 – 8:30 pm.

Extension Auditorium, 250 County Home Rd, Sanford.

Learn how to take yard and kitchen scraps and turn them into rich additions to your landscape in this compost and mulching class. FREE.

<https://eventbrite.com/event/16332987405>

Let's Build a Rain Barrel

Friday, July 31 at 2:00 –4:00 pm or 6:30—8:30 pm

Extension Auditorium, 250 County Home Rd, Sanford

Rain barrels are great ways to capture a portion of a rain storm and save it for another day. In this workshop, we will construct a rain barrel for you to take home. Cost: \$20.00

<https://eventbrite.com/event/17338660400/>

<https://eventbrite.com/event/17338669427/>

The Nine Principles of Florida-Friendly Landscaping

Saturday, Aug 8, 9:30—11:30 am

Extension Auditorium, 250 County Home Rd, Sanford

Learn the full spectrum for developing a Florida-Friendly yard. Plants, water, fertilizers, wildlife, and pests –we'll cover it all in this two hour class! FREE.

<https://eventbrite.com/event/17338769727/>

All events are FREE unless otherwise noted.

*Registration is required at least two days before the event.

Call 407-665-5560 or email
fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov



A new, exciting multi-week series to come in the fall! Are you ready to take some action? Call 407-665-5575 if interested.

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SEMINOLE COUNTY
FLORIDA'S NATURAL CHOICE

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Florida-Friendly Landscapes protect Florida's unique natural resources by conserving water, reducing waste and pollution, creating wildlife habitat, and preventing erosion. Any landscape can be Florida-Friendly if it is designed and cared for according to the nine Florida-Friendly Landscaping principles. The program is a partnership between the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Service and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and in cooperation with the Florida's Water Management Districts, the support of industry and local governments.

Take our **SURVEY!** We would love to hear about how you manage your landscape and ways that we can help you!
https://ufl.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9BOoq42iiDAM6Rn



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