

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- **Sunshine  
Spotlight:  
Community  
Gardens**
- **Rain Barrel  
Workshop**



# The New Leaf Newsletter: Florida-Friendly Landscaping

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## Counting Every Drop

When we talk about a Florida-Friendly Landscape –one with plants selected based on site conditions and followed with a researched water, fertilizer, and pest management scheme—it hopefully makes

sense that the FFL yard reduces waste and pollutants and saves you time and money. We are putting this theory to the test. Now when we say FFL practices save you water, we can

FFL Activity	Water Savings	Approx. Cost
Install rain sensor	2, 541	\$200
Calibrate sprinkler	7,942-15,884	\$240

prove it! One of the latest UF IFAS Extension publications has summarized in a table the different irrigation techniques

and the amount of water that each practice saves (with the assumptions, research, calculations and costs involved). The costs include a contractor's service call, not only the equipment's price). You decide which water-saving activity works best for you, we predict your impact.

So let's make sense of this table. The savings are measured as gallons saved per 1,000 square feet each year. The average landscaped area per household is 5,000 sq ft. The larger lot you have, the more you could save. We estimated savings from a baseline, average Florida home: a homeowner irrigates his turf grass twice a week at a rate of 1.0 inch per hour for 29.4 minutes. In that case, we apply 31,767 gal/1,000 sq ft/year. If you water more than that, you're in a position to save a lot of water. If you

water less than that, good job! But can you improve even more?

Reducing the days you water yields high savings. If you water 7 days a week and drop down to 2, you've reduced your irrigation by 70%! If you water less during the summer (because it rains everyday any way) you could save close to 6,000 gallons a year (or more like 30,000 gallons with the size of your yard). Converting turf grass to landscape beds that use micro-irrigation instead of high volume sprays and rotors can save between 15,500 – 31,700 gallons. Using smart irrigation technology (a device that knows whether to turn on/off your system based on environmental conditions) can save 35% - 72% of water usage.

We encourage you to explore this table more because the numbers speak for themselves. Check it out here:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ae515>

Or learn firsthand at our free FFL workshops.

## The Newest EDIS Articles

### Strategies to Encourage Adoption of Stormwater Pond Best Management Practices by Homeowners

While the benefits of healthy ponds are clear, several barriers exist that prevent good changes. Further understand how a community can overcome them with this write-up. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/wc214>

### Improving Weed Control in Landscape Planting Beds

If weeds become resistant to one method of treatment you need a different attack. Learn how to rotate through different treatments here. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag398>

### General Recommendations for Fertilization of Turfgrasses on Florida Soils

This will guide you through fertilizers types, application amounts and best time of year to apply them.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/lh014>

Have all the EDIS documents at your fingertips at [www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu](http://www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu).

# Sheila's Sunshine Spotlight: Sanford Community Garden

"I have something to confess. I don't love gardening nearly as much as I love just digging in the dirt and seeing what pops up," shares Sheila, the President of the Sanford Community Garden. "I garden a bit like a squirrel. I have no clue what I put where but then I am always pleasantly surprised when

something pops up instead of being disappointed over what I've lost," she says with a smile, while showing me her large pollinator beds, bursting with bright pink and purple flowers, buzzing with bees and Monarch butterflies. "I want this to be a haven for our pollinators, and also for the gardeners. Having butterflies greet you at the door makes pulling weeds in the heat of August a bit more enjoyable. They also help improve our crops."



Photo credit: Reg Garner

The garden is celebrating its fifth anniversary and boasts 56 beds full of vegetables and herbs. A 4x8 foot bed can be rented for only \$20.00 a year and gives the gardener full use of the tools in the shed, the pile of compost and the community of other gardeners to share with and learn from. "I love this group of people," Sheila said. "Gardeners are some of the nicest, most peaceful and creative folks you can find. I think it's the key ingredient for growing a healthy community that provides a sense of place." She only recently fell in love with gardening a few years ago when she first planted a butterfly garden at her home, in honor of her mom. Then she discovered what she calls, 'dirt therapy'. "Digging in the dirt after a crazy day at work has the most calming affect on me. Quite a few of our gardeners feel the same sentiment. They also get to know their neighbors in a very unique way, and usually become immediate friends. I try to make this a 'third place', between home and work were people can come and hang out

and remember to enjoy the sunset."



And those sunsets can be lovely as the garden is nestled in the northern end of the 18th Street Park right on 17-92 across from the Sanford Middle School. At the be-

ginning of next year the garden will be moving into a lease agreement with the city of Sanford which presents both benefits and challenges. "We now have to raise about \$1500 a year to cover our insurance and water bills, which the garden has never had to do before. So we now have to unfortunately dedicate a lot of time looking for funding instead of dedicating that time into the garden itself, and since all of the officers are extremely busy, it's a challenge. So we are looking at collaborating and fundraising and reaching out to our community for support and sponsorships. We are going to do everything we can to keep the garden affordable for everyone. We encourage everyone to adhere to organic principles and practices. And teaching sustainability is critical at this point in time when budgets are tight and organic produce is expensive for struggling families. The trend towards smaller homes and apartments has left people with nowhere to grow food. This garden serves that need. Sanford and its surrounding communities need many more of them. I'm still surprised that this is the only Community Garden in Sanford, and I still haven't found one in Lake Mary yet."

Sheila has a vision for the garden expansion that will include more beds, and a children's garden. "I would like to create a space for children to come and learn and enjoy the miracle of growing food in an enriching space that enlivens their senses. It is desperately needed in our culture and provides benefits that can last a lifetime for that child. I hope we can provide that. I plan to begin collaborating with nearby schools, and home-schooling leaders to see how they could benefit from a

garden based educational space." The park that extends south from the garden is technically a green space, and she, along with many of the neighbors surrounding the space would love to see it dedicated as an official park to assure that future generations of children will continue to enjoy it's expansive green space which supports a multitude of activities like football, softball, cricket, golf or a place just to have a picnic or fly a kite. "Preserving it's openness is key because this is one of the only 11-acre open green spaces in the county. It's vastness is great for stargazing, flying kites, or festivals and picnics. Lining its perimeter with a soft trail would be the encouragement we need to get our residents out for an evening walk or jog. I also see an educational eco-trail through the thicket of trees adjacent to the garden that children of all ages would enjoy. The space desperately needs some parking on the south end as well as restrooms, and some picnic tables. It could be such an asset to this community and combine both it's recreational and educational needs. Currently it is still the only place for the Pop Warner Sanford Seminoles to practice."

Recently Sheila has asked to connect with the Master Gardeners to try and get some assistance with the garden. "I would love to have a Master Gardener be available to our gardeners a couple times a month when we have our Meet and Weed with Donuts mornings. Over half of our gardeners are digging in the dirt for the first time and would really appreciate the help and as we all know, gardening is a lesson in patience. We don't always reap what we sow! Since I am so new to gardening I would love to have some help from our local professionals. I'm also looking for someone to oversee the garden itself as a sort of leadership position to work more with the gardeners. We also have a Friend of the Garden membership for only \$12 a year, which allows someone to join us for our weed days, as well as our celebrations, guest speaker events and workshops."

For more information or to offer your services or donations please go to [www.SanfordCommunityGarden.com](http://www.SanfordCommunityGarden.com) or email [SanfordCommunityGarden@gmail.com](mailto:SanfordCommunityGarden@gmail.com).

If you're interested in volunteering at the Sanford Historic Student Museum gardens, visit [www.sanfordhistorictrust.org](http://www.sanfordhistorictrust.org).



## Upcoming Events

### For the Birds

Fellow bird-lovers! This class will focus on plant selection and the structural features that best provide habitat in your yard for a variety of our feathered-friends.

Date: Wednesday, Oct 15, 2015, 6:30 – 8:30pm

Location: Extension Auditorium

Cost: Free - Register online at:

<http://www.eventbrite.com/event/18052057189>

### Landscape Design

Are you thinking of redoing your landscape? This class will cover the basics on which plants will work best in your yard and how they can be arranged.

Date: Tuesday, Oct 20, 2015, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Location: Extension Auditorium

Cost: Free - Register online at:

<http://www.eventbrite.com/event/18052099315>

### Turf Alternatives

Is grass in the past? We'll go over other groundcover options for different areas in your yard.

Date: Thursday, Nov 5, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Location: Extension Auditorium

Cost: Free - Register online at:

<http://www.eventbrite.com/event/18052242744>

### Rain Barrel Workshop

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.

Date: Thursday, Nov 12, 2:30 - 4:30 OR 6:30 - 8:30

Location: Extension Auditorium

Cost: \$20.00 –Register online at:

2:30pm: <http://www.eventbrite.com/event/18795483798>

6:30pm: <http://www.eventbrite.com/event/18786254192>

### Compost and Mulching

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

Date: Monday, Dec 7, 2015, 6:30 -8:30 pm

Location: Extension Auditorium

Cost: Free –Register Online at:

<http://www.eventbrite.com/event/18052307939>

**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](mailto:fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov)**

**Extension Auditorium address:  
2520 W County Home Rd., Sanford, 32773**



# Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM



## FLORIDA YARDS & NEIGHBORHOODS



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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, including the cities below.



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