

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- **Sunshine Spotlight: The Fertilizer Ordinance**
- **Butterfly Gardening**
- **Fertilizer Workshops**



# The New Leaf Newsletter: Florida-Friendly Landscaping

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## Fertilizer Calculator

We fertilize because we want to improve the health, vigor, and growth of our plants and lawn. We fertilize *correctly* so that we have healthy turf and clean waterbodies. The whole fertilizing process, however, isn't all that fun. You have to select the right fertilizer then calculate the exact amount you need. And fertilizer smells awful! You get dusty and sweaty spreading it out on a sunny April morning. We can't do anything about the smell, but we can do all the calculations for you!

The new fertilizer ordinance in Seminole County requires a 50% or more slow release nitrogen product. The nitrogen is released in smaller amounts over time so that the grass roots have a better opportunity to absorb it all. You can apply one pound of total nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. Is your fertilizer 50% or more slow-release? If so, how much

fertilizer do you have to use on your lawn? Find out with our Fertilizer Calculator!

When you are looking at your fertilizer bag, visit

[www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fertcalculator](http://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fertcalculator) (it's mobile-friendly!).

The fertilizer label will say the percent of total nitrogen. Enter this number into the first box on the calculator. The label will also say the percent of slow-release nitrogen. Enter this in the second box of the calculator (If you do not see any notation for slow-release nitrogen, assume there is no slow release forms in that fertilizer). At this point the calculator will tell you if this is a 50% or more slow-release product. Yay!

Secondly, you need to know how much fertilizer you need in order to put down one pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet. This depends on how big your yard is. You can find your home on Google

Fertilizer Calculator	
Look at the fertilizer bag for the Total Nitrogen. This is on the front of the bag, the first of the three large numbers, or on the back of the bag on the label.	Enter Total Nitrogen: <input type="text" value="15"/>
Also on the label, sometimes beneath the total nitrogen or at the bottom of the label, is the percent of slow release nitrogen.	Enter Slow-Release Nitrogen: <input type="text" value="10"/>
Seminole County requires your fertilizers be 50% slow-release nitrogen. This fertilizer is a slow-release product. You can apply up to 1 pound of Nitrogen per 1000 sq ft.	Slow-Release Nitrogen Percentage: <input type="text" value="66.67"/>
This is the pounds of fertilizer you need in order to apply 1 pound of Nitrogen per 1000 sq ft.	Fertilizer per 1,000 sq ft: <input type="text" value="6.7"/>
Calculate length x width or try to visualize how many parking spaces or volleyball courts would fill your yard. A parking space is about 100 square feet and half a volley ball court is 1000 square feet.	Enter sq ft of yard: <input type="text" value="1600"/>
This is how many pounds of fertilizer you need for your yard. Measure out the pounds with a scale or take the portion of fertilizer you need based on how many pounds are in one bag.	Amount of Fertilizer to apply: <input type="text" value="11"/>

Maps and use their tools to calculator your yard's area or you can roughly measure length x width or you can do your best to visualize the area (half a volleyball court is 1000 sq ft. A parking space is about 100 sq ft). When you know the square footage of you yard, enter it into the calculator. Pow! Computer mathematical magic has now told you how much fertilizer you need.

We hope this new tool is helpful to you. For any other fertilizer questions, visit [www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fertilizer](http://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fertilizer) or email [fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov](mailto:fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov)

## The Newest EDIS Articles

Learn all the latest UF research at [Edis.ifas.ufl.edu](http://Edis.ifas.ufl.edu)

### Tissue Testing and Interpretation for Florida Turfgrasses

What nutrients can your turfgrass absorb? Only a tissue test will tell you for sure! <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep539>

### Estimating Benefits of Residential Outdoor Water Conservation: A Step-by-Step Guide

Learn how far your water savings go! <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fe1009>

### Managing Scale Insects and mealybugs on Turf Grass

These tiny guys can pack a punch. Learn how to identify and treat these pests! <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in1166>

## Sunshine Spotlight: Shannon Saves Seminole

The Watershed Management Division is responsible for monitoring the lakes and rivers throughout Seminole County. Our long term monitoring assessments are used to analyze the health of County waterbodies and assist with project planning. As an Environmental Scientist at the County, Shannon could be involved in any number of different activities depending on the day, such as: collecting water samples, investigating stormwater pollution or illicit discharge complaints, coordinating water quality improvement projects or analyzing data. Although the tasks Shannon is involved with on a day to day basis may vary, her overall goal is to protect and improve the surface water quality of our County's waterbodies. The County's biggest water quality issue is the presence of excessive nutrients in our waterways, particularly nitrogen and phosphorus. Excessive nutrients in our



lakes and rivers can throw a system out of balance and lead to algae blooms, fish kills and ultimately decreased recreational value. Regardless of whether you live directly on the water, in a neighborhood, or in a rural area, we all live in a watershed. A watershed encompasses all of the land that drains or runs off to a waterbody. For example, if you live near Wekiwa Springs State Park but not directly on the Wekiva River, you are still part of the Wekiva Watershed and what runs off your yard eventually ends up in the river. Seminole County just adopted a Fertilizer Ordinance to help reduce nutrient runoff.



### How will the Fertilizer Ordinance help Seminole County?

The County has a number of watershed-based programs and projects designed to reduce the different sources of nutrient runoff. The Fertilizer Ordinance provides another tool to address nutrient runoff from residential lawns. This Ordinance restricts the application of nitrogen and phosphorus, the major nutrient pollutants during the rainy season (June 1 - September 30). Applications of "summer blends", fertilizers with micronutrients such as iron and magnesium, are more appropriate for the summer rainy season and compliant with the Ordinance. Nitrogen fertilizers must contain at least 50% or more slow release nitrogen need to be used which results in less leaching of nitrogen into our groundwater and surface waters. No fertilizer should be applied within 15 feet of a waterbody or wetland. More information about the County's new Fertilizer Ordinance can be found at [www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fertilizer](http://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fertilizer).

### Why do you believe in Florida-Friendly Landscaping?

Florida-Friendly Landscaping provides the tools and knowledge that a homeowner needs to manage their yard in Florida. Florida is a unique place to try and maintain a healthy lawn and landscaping. There are the dry and wet seasons, low lying areas, the sun and heat, pest control, and many more obstacles that can make Florida lawn care seem overwhelming. The Florida-Friendly Landscaping Program and our local coordinator can help us figure it all out!



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

Be aware and informed! What you do in your yard has the potential to affect our local waterbodies. Everyone is part of a watershed and it takes a lot of small efforts by everyone to make a big difference when it comes to protecting our natural resources. Having environmentally informed and educated citizens is the key to our long term success.

## Your Yard Calendar

What sights in your yard do you get to look forward to? Flowering trees and frolicking critters will make their debut at different times of year. Yard maintenance can also be most effective when paired with the seasons.

### April

**Flowering:** Rose, Southern Magnolia, Bottlebrush, Gardenia, Glossy Abelia, Yesterday-Today-and-Tomorrow

**Wildlife:** Black bears moving around after winter weather. Alligators begin moving for new territories and mates. Plant parsley for black swallowtail butterfly.

**To Do:** Watch for aphids on new tender growth and thrips on gardenias and roses. You can water two days a week now. Consider applying a 50% slow-release nitrogen fertilizer.



### May



**Flowering:** Hibiscus, Oleander, African Iris

**Wildlife:** Breeding begins for many resident and summer songbirds. Alligators begin to court and “bellow”.

**To Do:** Thrips, scales, and mites active in warm weather. May is dryer

so do not confuse irrigation problems with pests like chinch bugs or mole crickets.

### June

**Flowering:** Chaste tree, Crape Myrtle, Ixora, Oakleaf Hydrangea

**Wildlife:** Coastal shorebirds nesting. Height of Gopher Tortoise breeding season. Cicadas emerge.

**To Do:** Lightly prune summer-flowering shrubs. As rainy season starts, stop irrigation and *do not fertilize*.



Learn more at:

Central Florida Gardening Calendar:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep450>

Florida Wildlife Extension, Wildlife Happenings:

[http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife\\_info/happenings/](http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/happenings/)

**\*Registration is required at least two days before the event. Extension Auditorium, 250 W County**

**Home Rd,  
Sanford FL, 32773**

## Upcoming Events

### The New Gardener

**Saturday, May 20 9:30 -11:30. Extension Auditorium**  
Sure you like flowers and admire a grand, old tree, but you’ve never really tried to grow them yourself. This is a beginners’ class on the right plant for the right place and basic landscape design. Come discover your gardening potential! Register online at <https://seminole-newgardener.eventbrite.com>  
Cost: \$10.00

### Butterfly Gardening

**Saturday, May 27, 10:00 - Noon. Extension Auditorium.**  
What plants can you choose and maintain to create a butterfly paradise? This class will teach you the best practices for butterfly gardening. Register online at <https://seminole-butterflygardening.eventbrite.com>  
Cost: \$5.00

### Awesome Moths

**Wed, May 31, 6:30 -7:30 pm. Extension Auditorium.**  
Butterflies are beautiful but moths are awesome! Learn about some of the more spectacular moths you’ll see in Florida and how we can provide for them. Register online at <https://seminole-moths.eventbrite.com>  
Cost: Free

### The Good, the Bad, and the Bugly

**Wed, June 21, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Extension Auditorium**  
Take an integrated approach on pest management in your yard. Help out the good bugs and prevent the bad bugs. Register online at <https://goodbadbugly.eventbrite.com>  
Cost: \$5.00

### Eco-Paddle the Wild and Scenic Wekiva River

Learn how to benefit our waterways and see the Wekiva first hand on a canoe tour.  
Saturday, May, 2017 9:00 –11:30 am  
Wekiva Island, 1014 Miami Springs Drive, Longwood.  
Cost: Free! Space is limited. Please pre-register by calling 407-665-5560.

### Fertilizer Workshop!

How can we have healthy lawns and clean waterways? Get the scoop on the new fertilizer ordinance and learn, hands-on, the best management practices. Please register at <https://seminole-fertilizer.eventbrite.com> . FREE.

**Extension Auditorium. Multiple Dates/Times:**

**Saturday, June 10, 10:00 –Noon**

**Wednesday, June 28, 6:30 –8:30 pm**

**Wednesday, July 12, 6:30 – 8:30 pm**

**Saturday, July 22, 10:00 – Noon**



Disclaimer: “The Foundation for the Gator Nation” an Equal Opportunity Institution.

# Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM



# FLORIDA YARDS & NEIGHBORHOODS



Taryn Sudol, Editor  
Florida-Friendly Landscaping/  
Florida Yards and Neighborhoods  
Extension Agent

Extension Office  
250 W. County Home Road  
Sanford, FL 32773

Phone: 407-665-5575  
E-mail: [fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov](mailto:fyn@seminolecountyfl.gov)

[www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fyn](http://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/fyn)  
[www.fyn.ifas.ufl.edu](http://www.fyn.ifas.ufl.edu)

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. Seminole County's program is a partnership between the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Service, the Public Works Department's Watershed Management division, and local government, including the cities below.



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