



Conservation Notes

November 2019

Upcoming area events:

November 9 - Native Plant Sale. 9-2. Land O Lakes Heritage Park Center. Nature Coast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

November 16 - Pasco Upcycle Festival. 10-5. Heritage Park, Land O' Lakes. Free. Come and see over 100 vendors. Sample local food and browse exhibits that share how waste can be reduced not only by recycling but by repurposing, reinventing, and creating art!

November 18 - Bromeliads. 2-3. South Holiday Library. Learn about these interesting plants and how to incorporate them into your landscaping. Registration recommended - see UF IFAS website.

November Monthly Gardening:

Annuals/Bedding plants: Create a display of fall colors with cool-season plants. Some examples include pansy, viola, snapdragon, dianthus, cape daisy, and alyssum.

Bulbs: Many bulbs like to get their start in cool weather. Bulbs to plant this month include amaryllis, crinum, and daylily.

Perennials: Divide and replant overgrown perennials and bulbs now so that they establish before the cold weather arrives.

Lawn disease: Watch for brown patch and large patch. These fungal diseases cause areas of grass to turn brown. Since treatment is difficult, prevention with proper cultural practices is key. These diseases become active when the soil temperature, measured 2-4 in. deep, is between 65°F and 75°F and go dormant when the weather warms in May.

Scale insects: Take advantage of lower temperatures to apply horticultural oil sprays to control scale insects.

Irrigation: Turn off systems and water only if needed. Plants need less supplemental watering in cooler weather.

Florida Native Plant Spotlight: By Mary Ellen Gotto

Why Use Florida Native Plants - Florida Native plants are essential to attracting wildlife to our landscape. These plants provide food such as seeds, nuts, berries/fruit, and nectar. These plants also provide cover to protect the wildlife from hawks, owls and coyotes and as a place for nests to raise their young. Florida Native plants save water and protect water quality. After planting, these plants require daily watering for only two weeks. After that, they obtain needed moisture from surrounding soil. Many native plant gardeners do not have sprinkling systems. Water quality is protected as native plants require no fertilizer. All needed nutrients are obtained from the soil where they are planted. Routine spraying with chemicals to kill all types of insects should not be used. Individual plants with a disease or fungus can be treated as needed. Remember, these native plants were present when the first European explorers arrived in Florida 500 years ago. No one was watering or fertilizing these plants and yet, they flourished.

Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia hirta) - This Florida Native plant is an excellent addition to mixed wild flower gardens. There are nine members of this genus in Florida but Rudbeckia hirta is the most common and wide spread species in Florida.

Best feature: Fast growth with large amount of seeds. Easily reseeds from year to year.

Flowers: Showy bright yellow daisy-like flowers with dark purplish to brownish center.

Plant begins to flower early Summer and generally lasts until first frost.

Soil: Adapts to most conditions, drought tolerant.

Light: Full sun to partial shade

Size: height- 1-3 ft, width- 1-2 ft.

Comments: One of the most well-known wildflowers in America. Seeds provide food for birds throughout the Winter.



Florida Friendly Landscape Suggestions from UF IFAS:

- Make sure obstructed or misdirected sprinklers are correctly positioned.
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ae451>
- Segregate irrigation zones to water lawn areas separately from plant beds. Lawns typically need more frequent irrigation than landscape plants. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/lh025>
- Repair broken or leaking sprinklers. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ae451>
- Direct downspouts onto turf, plant beds, or containment areas where rainwater can be absorbed.
- Establish a 10-foot-wide low-maintenance zone around any water bodies on the property.
- Install microirrigation (such as drip or micro-sprayers) in plant beds.