

September in the Tallahassee Garden

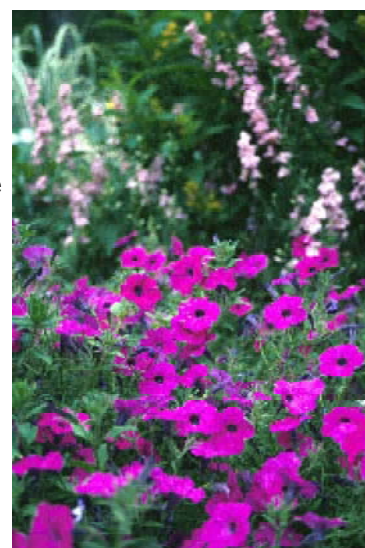
Katherine LaRosa*

Sunday, September 1, 2002

Summer vacation is over. Fall is a busy and rewarding gardening season in our area. So grab your gloves and boots and get out in the garden and play.

Shrubs and Trees: Don't prune any more this year, except for cosmetic reasons. Container-grown trees and shrubs can be planted now. If you plan to transplant trees and shrubs this winter, while they are dormant, you should root prune them this month. Cut a circle around the base of each plant just outside the dripline. This will stimulate new root growth so that there will be a healthy ball of roots when moved. Keep the plant well watered.

Flowers: Plant annuals such as petunias and snapdragons for cool weather color. Plant paperwhite narcissus, snowflakes (*Leucojum vernum*), Easter lilies, Madonna lilies, and Louisiana irises. Divide and replant overgrown clumps of perennials that have finished blooming. Lift and divide daylilies. Cut the leaves back, replant at the same depth and water well. To separate irises, dig, cut the foliage back to three inches and allow the rhizomes to air dry for a few days. Cut the outside rhizomes and replant them in full sun. Do this every three to four years.



Lawn care: If your lawn needs fertilizing again before winter, do it before the end of September. Fall is typically dry. If so, continue to water your lawn so that it will be able to recover well in the spring. Watch for sod webworm problems in lawns, indicated by areas where the grass is chewed off and becomes yellowish to brownish in color. If infested grass was previously healthy and is kept well watered it can recover from large amounts of webworm feeding.

Vegetables: Plant fall vegetables now including collards, mustard, beets, kale, turnips, radishes, lettuce, onions, spinach, and parsley.

Ask a Master Gardener: Master Gardener volunteers answer gardening questions weekdays from 9-4:30 at the University of Florida IFAS Extension in Leon County, (850) 487-3004.

Question: Recently, several pine trees in my neighbor's yard turned brown at the top and appear dead. I have a lot of pine trees. Is this something that I should be concerned about?

Answer: Yes, especially if their pine is close to your pines. A pine tree which browns and dies quickly probably has an infestation of pine bark beetles, according to Stan Rosenthal, UF-IFAS Leon County Extension Forestry Agent. The best control for preventing the spread of pine beetles to other pines is to remove the infested tree before the beetles spread. Also, examine the trunks of any adjacent pines for "pitch tubes" or gobs of saps on the trunks which indicates that they are infested also. If pitch tubes are present, remove these trees also, as there are no longer

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any proven insecticidal controls for any of these bark beetles. Removal is the best control.

For more information about gardening in our area, visit the University of Florida IFAS Leon County Extension website at <http://leon.ifas.ufl.edu>.

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Photo by David W. Marshall, UF-IFAS Extension

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