

July in the

## July in the Tallahassee Garden

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*Photo to be credited to David W. Marshall, UF-IFAS Leon County Extension: For late summer color plant annuals that can tolerate the heat, such as melampodium.*

**N**ow is a good time to review your landscape and decide what changes you might want to make. Keep a list of what you would like to move or transplant and where you would like to move it. Then make the move in the fall when the plants will suffer less stress from the heat. Some good candidates for a move would be taller plants in front of smaller ones, poor color combinations, or sun-loving plants in too much shade. Plants that have gotten too big for their location can be removed or cut down.

**Trees and Shrubs:** Fertilize young shrubs for a last time this season. Apply a slow-release fertilizer such as 15-0-15 around the drip line and water well. Root cuttings from woody ornamentals. Take cuttings from a long stem with mature new growth. Remove any flowers. Cut the stem into sections with two pairs of leaves. Remove one pair of leaves, apply a rooting hormone to the stems and stick several pieces in a pot of moist potting soil or vermiculite. Keep them moist, in the shade. They will be ready for planting once the roots are well-developed. Crape myrtles are starting to bloom so it's a good time to select a suitable cultivar for your landscape. Consider the growth habit and ultimate size of the cultivar as well as the color.

**Flowers:** For late summer color plant annuals that can tolerate the heat, such as gomphrena (globe amaranth), melampodium, portulaca, pentas, salvia or *Zinnia angustifolia*. In the shade plant coleus, gingers or caladiums. Continue deadheading annuals and perennials. Cut back the leggy growth on annuals such as impatiens or begonias to encourage new growth. Annuals need a light monthly application of fertilizer to keep them blooming well. Finish pinching the tips of chrysanthemums and feed them with a balanced fertilizer. Dig spring or early summer blooming perennials such as daffodils, iris or daylilies which need dividing. Replant the best clumps, discard the diseased or damaged portions and give the left-overs to friends or neighbors.

**Lawn care:** Lawns maintained with appropriate irrigation, fertilization and mowing practices are more resistant to pests than those which are not properly maintained. Sharpen your mower blade when you notice the grass

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blades have a ragged edge after mowing. When the lawn begins to wilt, water deeply, applying one-half of an inch of water. Inspect your lawn frequently so that problems can be identified and managed early. Spittlebugs (on centipede), chinch bugs (on St. Augustine ), and gray leaf spot fungus ( St. Augustine ) are common problems in midsummer. For help with your lawn care questions visit the University of Florida/IFAS lawn website at [http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/TOPIC\\_Lawns](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/TOPIC_Lawns)

Vegetables: Begin seeding tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, cauliflower, cabbage and broccoli for transplanting later into the fall garden. Remove suckers from your tomatoes and root in sterile potting soil, sand or vermiculite. Keep moist, out of direct sunlight and transplant in three to four weeks. Plant eggplant and tomatoes toward the end of the month. Choose a heat tolerant tomato variety. As vegetables are harvested, remove old plant material. Don't compost diseased or insect infested debris.

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