

Message from Flagler Horticulture Agent

Horticulture Friends,

Another winter has passed demonstration garden area and spring is here in full effect. The plants experienced a hard freeze this year which seems to have provided a new chapter in some older plant's lives. It is apparent that the cold weather contributed to a bounty of spring blooms and vigorous new growth. This is a good sign for Flagler County Master Gardeners who plan on donating plants from their collections for the Spring Plant Sale scheduled for May 12. The landscape is in good condition despite some tropical perennials being frozen back to the base. Improvements to the demonstration garden area and the shade

We are off to an excellent start to the season!

**SOL LOOKER—UF/IFAS Flagler County Extension
Horticulture Extension Agent I, Master Gardener Coordinator**

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Hydroponic Update in the Master Gardeners' Demonstration Garden

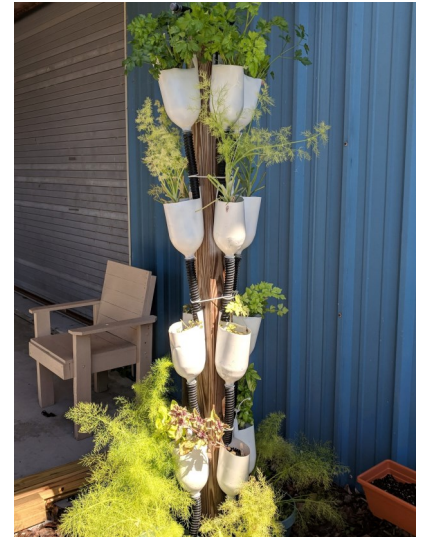
Thank you to Maryann Andreychak and Debbi Black

We are finished with planting three hydroponic demonstration gardens. We thought we would give you some additional information on the raft system for growing lettuce and other leafy plants.

This type of system is probably the easiest of the three to set up and maintain. The system is composed of two parts, a reservoir and a floating raft.

The reservoir needs to be sturdy and opaque (to prevent algae growth). It can be as simple as a kiddie pool or a 14-gallon heavy duty plastic tote. You can also construct a reservoir from treated lumber and line it with heavy mil plastic sheeting. This is what we have at the extension office.

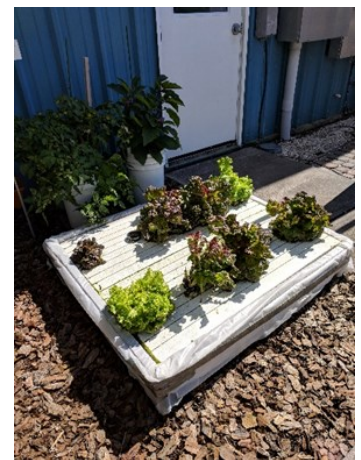
The next necessary part is the floating raft. This can be made simply from a piece of rigid Styrofoam insulation. These sheets can be purchased at the big box stores. You need to cut the sheet(s) to fit your reservoir. Again, you will want to cover the surface completely in order to prevent algae growth. You also need to cut holes to accommodate the net pots that will be holding your plants.



Once you have constructed the system, you can fill the reservoir $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water. Use a 5-gallon bucket so you can measure the amount of water. For each gallon of water, add 2 tsp. of fertilizer and 1 tsp. of Epsom Salts. The UF recommendation for fertilizer is a 20/20/20 mix. We found that Miracle Grow for tomatoes was the closest to the recommended ratio. Occasionally you may have to add more water when evaporation occurs. Add the fertilizer and Epsom salts to the replacement water.

If the root system of your seedlings is well-established you can place them directly into the net pots without the clay balls. Be sure that the roots are able to make contact with the water below the raft. Also, do not plant seeds directly in this system, only seedlings.

Lightweight, leafy plants do best. Lettuce, parsley, basil and dill are good options. In doing research online we found the raft system referred to as a "living salad." An apt description as this system can keep growing delicious, fresh lettuce almost indefinitely.



Keep picking and keep enjoying!

For additional information please visit *Building a Floating Hydroponic Garden HS943*

New Projects in our Gardens!

What Is Compost? Compost is a dark, crumbly material created when micro-organisms break down organic matter such as leaves, grass clippings and kitchen waste. Compost is not completely decomposed (like humus); it will contain small pieces of debris that can be recognized as bits of twigs and leaves, bones. Foods with oils, dressings, or fats should not be composted because they may attract animals or produce an objectionable odor. The manure of animals that eat plants (cows, horses, etc.) is a great “green” material for a compost pile. However, carnivorous animal waste (dogs, cats, etc.) should not be used due to the possibility of diseases.

Building a Compost Pile Composting is all about supplying the microorganisms that do the decomposing with the essentials of life: food, water, and oxygen. Microbial activity is affected by the proportion of carbon (brown materials) to nitrogen (green materials). This is commonly referred to as the C/N ratio. The optimum C/N ratio for rapid composting is about 30/1 or less. Table 2 lists the approximate C/N ratio for materials commonly used for composting. A compost pile or unit should be sited in an area protected from drying winds and where it can be reached with a hose. Place it in a shaded area where you will be more comfortable when you “work” it. Depending on what type of compost “unit” you buy or build, you may want it screened from view by neighbors and yourself. Keep in mind that there is nothing magical about commercial compost units; they are simply holding units and will not produce compost any faster or better than a simple pile. The most important feature is that the pile or unit be a minimum of 3' x 3' x 3' (For more information on compost bins refer to <http://sarasota.ifas.ufl.edu/compost/compost-bins.shtml>, Fact Sheet AE23 *Construction of Home Compost Units* <http://ufdc.ufl.edu//IR00003583/00001> or your county Extension office <http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/map/>.)

Why Compost? Converting yard debris to compost has many benefits. It is an environmentally friendly way to reduce the amount of solid waste that must be disposed of, and it provides useful and beneficial products for yards and gardens. Compost is an excellent soil amendment that improves the health and structure of both sandy and clay soils. It can be applied on top of soil as mulch. Mixed with other components, it makes a good potting soil and some gardeners brew it in water to make a compost “tea” for plants.



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Sydney Park Brown, associate professor emeritus, Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.



Master Gardeners added a compost area this spring at the Flagler County Extension Office. Great team effort from those that helped.

A Message From the UF/IFAS Master Gardener Event Coordinator Jeanne Florio

We have had a very busy past few months providing UF/IFAS research-based formal education to our Flagler County residents. Recent events include Master Gardener PM Reddy's presentation on the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators at the Palm Coast Arts Foundation's Luncheon, and hands on learning opportunities for children at Farm Days at the Florida Agricultural Museum. We have increased our availability to the Community with an ever increasing presence through our Information Booth at local events.



During these events we discuss individual client gar-

dening and landscape needs, Florida-Friendly Landscaping™, our role, and the services we provide for Flagler County residents. We continue to be present at the Washington Oaks State Park plant sale, held the 2nd Saturday of every month. In addition, we were in attendance at the Palm Coast Garden Club's plant sale and at the Arbor Day event held at Town Center in May.



Our Spring Fling will be held at our Extension Office on Saturday, May 12th, from 9am to 1pm. Native plants, vegetables, herbs, Master Gardener propagated plants will be available. There will also be gently used garden items for sale. Presentations on horticultural topics will be given hourly in our auditorium.



Please come and join us for a fun and educational day.





**If you are interested in joining the Flagler County Master Gardener Program, please contact Sol Looker at lookers@ufl.edu
Next class will be starting August 16 for 12 Weeks
9:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

UF/IFAS Flagler County Master Gardener Volunteers Activities

As UF/IFAS Flagler County Master Gardeners we are dedicated to assisting the Flagler County Horticulture Extension Agent in providing University of Florida research based horticultural recommendations and education to Flagler County residents. We promote Florida Friendly-Landscaping™ principles based on the latest science to reduce maintenance, conserve and protect natural resources, and save citizens money.

Services we provide for our Community include:

Demonstration Gardens (located at our UF/IFAS Extension Office), which include: Florida-Friendly Landscape™, Pond Garden, Shade Garden, Edible Garden, Herb Garden, Succulent Garden, Wildlife Garden, Butterfly Garden, Container Garden, and season Hydroponic Garden

Education

- Annual Master Gardener Training, public horticultural education, Green Industries Best Management Training, speaker's bureau, participation in community events, plant clinics, our Master Gardener Newsletter, and articles in local newspapers

Proctoring Pesticide Exams

- For green industry professionals to meet local and state requirements to apply fertilizers and pesticides

Plant Clinics

- Plant pest and disease diagnostics and control recommendations, plant identification, horticultural advice, landscape maintenance and design recommendations

Partnering with Flagler County Community Agencies to provide needed services

- Boys and Girls Community Garden in Bunnell and care of the plants inside the Flagler County Government Services Building

Soil and Irrigation Testing

- For acidity, alkalinity and salinity with recommendations based upon results



Congratulations to all for being recognized at the university-wide Superior Accomplishment Awards. Flagler County Extension Office congratulates our own County Extension Director, Sharon A. Treen who was recognized as a Superior Accomplishment Award winner.

- CONGRATS TO SHARON -

MEET ANOTHER BOARD MEMBER

Maryann Johnston – Master Gardener – Treasurer 2016-2018



Maryann Johnston is the Treasurer for the UF/IFAS Flagler County Master Gardener Volunteers. She grew up in Missouri and spent several years in Hong Kong. She returned to the US living in New Jersey for three decades. Four years ago, she relocated to Ormond Beach. She is retired from the Union County Prosecutor's Office where most of her tenure was the Confidential Aide to the Prosecutor, In-Service Training Director at the police academy and directing a program for at-risk youth.

She was a New Jersey Master Gardener for a few years prior to her move south with her interest being maintaining the gardens at the Miller-Cory House Museum, built in 1740, and editing the newsletter.

At the Flagler Extension Service demonstration garden Maryann maintains the rose and olive tree area.

Maryann has two daughters, four grandchildren and enjoys swimming, bike riding, knitting, and of course, gardening.



MASTER GARDENER EVENTS

**Seminars,
Garden Showcase,
Plant and Gently Used Garden Equipment Sale
Saturday
May 12, 2018
9 am-1 pm**

at the UF/IFAS Extension Flagler County Office

2018 Master Gardener Volunteer Training

150 Sawgrass Road Bunnell, FL 32110

Starts August 16

The UF-IFAS Flagler County Master Gardeners are looking for new members!!!

12 weeks of intensive training starting August 16

Thursdays from 9:15 am– 3:30 pm

For additional information join our mailing list

Contact Sol Looker, Horticulture Extension Agent

Phone: 386-437-7464

Email: lookers@ufl.edu



Upcoming Events



February 28 to May 28 - Epcot International Flower and Garden Festival. 100 topiaries, bonsai, butterfly house, vendors, much more. Admission to Epcot. www.disneyworld.com/flower

May 12th – Flagler County Master Gardener Spring Fling and Plant Sale – 9:00AM – 1:00PM - UF IFAS Extension Office, Flagler County, 150 Sawgrass Road, Bunnell

May 12th – Washington Oaks Second Saturday Plant Sale Washington Oaks Gardens State Park, 6400 N. Oceanside Blvd., Palm Coast. 10-2. www.washingtonoaks.org - Master gardener information booth will be there

May 18th – Sol Looker (UF/IFAS Flagler County Extension Horticulture Extension Agent I) - "Lessons Learned from Hurricanes and the Resulting Urban Forest Recommendations" - Palm Coast Public Library, 5200 Palm Coast Parkway NW 32137 Presentation will be in "The Meeting Room" @ 2:00PM

August 16 - Master Gardener Volunteer Training – Thursdays 9:15 am – 3:30 pm – (16 Weeks) classes split between Flagler and Putnam Counties; Contact Sol Looker – lookers@ufl.edu or 386-437-7464

UF IFAS Flagler County Community Horticulture Education

Future Horticulture Education is listed on www.eventbrite.com

Registration on <https://www.eventbrite.com>

150 Sawgrass Road Bunnell, FL 32110-4325

“Speakers Bureau” available to non-profits, homeowners associations, clubs, etc. Contact us if you would like a Master Gardener to present information to your group on horticultural topics.

Contact us for More Info: Sol Looker 386-437-7464 or lookers@ufl.edu

**UF/IFAS Flagler
County Extension
Master Gardeners**

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University of Florida Master Gardener Volunteers

Our Mission

To assist Extension Agents in providing research-based horticultural education to Florida residents.

Our Vision

To be the most trusted resource for horticultural education in Florida.



Stay Connected with Flagler County Horticulture!

Flagler County Extension.....<http://district3.extension.ifas.ufl.edu/flagler.shtml>

University of Florida Solutions for Your Life.....<http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/>

Florida Friendly Landscaping.....<http://http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/>

University of Florida Gardening Solutions.....<http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/>

University of Florida Master Gardener.....<http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener>

If you are interested in joining the Flagler County Master Gardener Program, please contact Sol Looker at lookers@ufl.edu or 386-437-7464.

The Flagler County Master Gardener and Horticulture program is open to all regardless of gender, race, color, nationality, creed or disability.