

Special points of interest:

- Spring Pests—It begins!!!!
- Irrigation rules in effect
- Perennial Peanut
- Patience please

Fall Army Worms in the Spring? You Bettcha!!!!

Armyworms

The fall armyworm is the most common armyworm species in Florida. Caterpillars first skeletonize the grass blades and later create bare spots.

The caterpillar is greenish when small, dark brown when mature, and can reach up to 1½ inches in length. It has a light midstripe on its back with darker bands on either side. The midstripe ends in an inverted "Y" on the head. Pupation occurs in the soil. Adult moths are brown with a wing span up to 1½ inches. Eggs are laid on leaf blades or

almost any object near lawns. They are laid in clusters covered with grayish, fuzzy scales from the body of the female moth.

Despite its name, the fall armyworm can damage turfgrass in the spring. They overwinter as pupae in the Gulf Coast region of the United States, and the moths migrate northward each spring, reaching the northern states in the fall (thus their name). Larval feeding occurs uniformly over a larger area, rather in patches. Larvae feed any time during the day or night, but are most active early in the morning or late in the evening.

crawl to the surface if present. Examine several suspected areas. Adults fly to lights at night.



Monitor by mixing 1 TBSP of liquid dishwashing soap in 1 gallon of water; pour the solution onto 4 square feet near the damage. Insects will

When To Fertilize Your Lawn Bases on the IFAS Best Management Practices

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
<u>Cool Season</u> Grasses Best Results		Fertilizer & Preemergence 15-15-10		Fertilizer & Weed Control 16-5-3			Weed & Pest Control (if Needed)		Fertilizer 25-8-15	Fertilizer & Preemergence 15-5-20		
<u>Warm Season</u> Grasses Best Results		Preemergence 0-0-9		Fertilizer & Weed Control 15-5-3		Fertilizer 25-6-10			Fertilizer 15-5-15	Fertilizer & Preemergence 5-12-20		
<u>Cool Season</u> Grasses Minimum Results			Fertilizer & Weed Control 20-5-5						Fertilizer & Pest Control 25-5-10			
<u>Warm Season</u> Grasses Minimum Results				Fertilizer & Weed Control 25-3-5					Fertilizer 15-5-18			

Ornamental Peanut. Solutions for your landscapes problem areas.

The perennial peanut evolved in tropical conditions and is adapted to subtropical and warm temperate climates. In the northern hemisphere, this would include locations below 32° north latitude (Florida-Georgia state line) having a long, warm growing season.

Perennial peanut was first introduced from Brazil in 1936 and since that time no insect, disease, or nematode pests have been identified that cause economic loss. Since its introduction, it has not spread into natural areas or become a nuisance plant in unimproved properties. Rhizomal perennial peanut does not reproduce by seed; therefore, it can't be carried by birds or wildlife or transported in plant material to unintended areas.

Perennial peanut has recently shown promise as an ornamental groundcover due to its high resistance to drought, nematodes, and pathogens and its minimal fertilizer needs. This translates into savings in water, energy, dollars, and reduced impacts to the environment. It is not only beneficial to the environment since it requires no supplemental nitrogen or phosphorus fertilization or pest control, but it also is aesthetically pleasing, can be walked on, and has edible, peanut flavored flowers.

Perennial Peanut in the Urban Landscape Success Stories

The city of Jacksonville uses perennial peanut in medians; Highway 19 south of Chiefland has a 30-year-old stand of 'Arblick' in the median; and Tampa Bay Skyway also has a highway planting of perennial peanut growing in limerock.

In Guanacaste Province, Costa Rica, medians, lawns, hotel entryways, and roadsides are planted with perennial peanut. Although this region is in a dry forest for 10 months of the year, these perennial peanut areas remain green without having to be mowed, fertilized, or irrigated.

Planting Time

Perennial peanut has been traditionally planted from January through March, when it is not actively growing. Unfortunately, this is the time of year when there is limited rainfall throughout Florida. Perennial peanut can be successfully established anytime if irrigation is available, or during the summer rainy season (June – August) in Florida. Normal spring rains are important for proper root and top development. When soil moisture is low, a percentage of shoots will die due to lack of supporting roots. Irrigation during this initial development period provides insurance against plant loss or complete planting failure. Once a root system has developed, irrigation is not required. However, to maintain a strong vegetative cover, irrigation will be required during periods of low or no rain. Water, fertilizer, and weed control are all important inputs that can maximize plant density during the first growing season.



Weed Control in Southern Lawns

Methods

As previously stated, it is essential that turf be properly maintained in order to minimize weed invasion. If weeds become established, several methods of control are available.

Mowing - If proper mowing height and frequency are maintained, many annual weeds will be eliminated. Mowing prior to weed seed head formation will also reduce weed seed reserves. Some weeds, however, will readily establish below the optimum mowing height for the turfgrass. Control of these weeds will require additional control methods.

Hand Pulling - If only a few weeds are present, it is easier and less time-consuming to physically remove the plant. If weeds are a major problem, however, other alternatives should be considered.

Mulch - Smothering with a mulch of nonliving material to exclude light is effective in certain areas, such as flowerbeds,

footpaths, or nurseries, where turf is not grown. Materials used in such a manner include straw, sawdust, hay, wood chips, and plastic film. Care must be taken to prevent mowing accidents due to movement of these materials into a maintained turf area. To be effective, a minimum of 2 inches is required when using natural mulch materials. Synthetic mats impregnated with herbicides are an alternative available for use in the landscape. These provide long-term weed control when properly used, but care must be taken to keep desirable plant roots from encountering these layers.

Herbicides - An herbicide is any chemical that injures or kills a plant. Herbicides are safe and effective if product label instructions are followed. For best results, herbicides should be applied at the proper time, at the labeled rate, using the appropriate application method. Timing of post emergence herbicide application during the plant's growth cycle is important. For example, weeds not treated before seed head

formation are harder to control and are able to deposit new seeds for future problems. Herbicides are classified based on how and when they control weeds.

Most spring weeds will quickly burn out as the temperatures heat up. Patience is the key.

Spring Annuals

As the weather warms, the local garden centers are inundated with shoppers looking for those colorful plants. Be warned, a lot of what you are seeing this time of year will quickly succumb to the heat.

Stick with the tried and true varieties of Spring annuals. Begonias, salvia, snaps, coleus, impatiens (shade), and marigolds. Used in borders and mass plantings these will all provide excellent color and longevity.

Consider using perennials of varying heights and colors to provide visual appeal. This planting style will provide character and color. While not the accepted standard in formal entries, this can provide high level ac-

cents for the entire year.

Choose plants with well formed and developed root systems. They should come out of the pot with a slight pull, but have a well developed and clean root system. Stay clear of root bound or small rooted plants as you will have a hard time with survivability.



- Residential irrigation is allowed on Wednesday and Saturday at addresses that end in an odd number or have no address.
- Residential irrigation is allowed on Thursday and Sunday at addresses that end in an even number.
- Nonresidential irrigation is allowed on Tuesday and Friday.
During Eastern Standard Time (first Sunday in November until the second Sunday in March) irrigation is limited to no more than one day per week on scheduled days.
- Residential irrigation is allowed on Saturday at addresses that end in an odd number or have no address.
- Residential irrigation is allowed on Sunday at addresses that end in an even number.
- Nonresidential irrigation is allowed on Tuesday.
- Irrigation is limited to no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of water per zone per irrigation day.
- Irrigation is limited to no more than one hour per irrigation zone per irrigation day.
- Irrigation is limited to only that amount necessary to meet landscape needs.
- When reclaimed water is available for irrigation use, the use of private irrigation wells is not authorized.
- Irrigation limitations apply to water withdrawn from ground or surface water, from a private well or pump, or from a public or private utility.
- Irrigation limitations apply to all landscape irrigation not currently regulated by a consumptive use permit. Typically, this includes residential, commercial and industrial establishments.

and operate a rain sensor device or switch that overrides the system when adequate rainfall has occurred.



Exceptions to the rules



- Irrigation using a micro-spray, micro-jet, drip or bubbler irrigation system is allowed anytime.
- Irrigation of new landscape is allowed at any time of day on any day for the initial 30 days and every other day for the next 30 days for a total of one 60-day period, provided that the irrigation is limited to the minimum amount necessary for establishment.
- Watering in of chemicals, including insecticides, pesticides, fertilizers, fungicides and herbicides when required by law, the manufacturer, or best management practices, is allowed anytime within 24 hours of application. Watering in of chemicals may not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of water per application except as otherwise required by law, the manufacturer, or best management practices.
- Irrigation systems may be operated anytime for maintenance and repair purposes, not to exceed 20 minutes per hour per zone.
- Irrigation using a hand-held hose equipped with a spray nozzle that can be adjusted so water flows only as needed is allowed anytime.
- Discharge of water from a water-to-air air-conditioning unit or other water-dependent cooling system is not limited.
- The use of water from a reclaimed water system is allowed anytime. A reclaimed water system includes systems in which the primary source is reclaimed water, which may or may not be supplemented from another source during peak demand periods.

The use of recycled water from wet detention treatment ponds for irrigation is allowed anytime provided the ponds are not augmented from any ground or off-site surface water, or public supply sources.

Water Restrictions.

Know the designated days

Watering restrictions

“Landscape irrigation” means the outside watering of plants in a landscape such as shrubbery, trees, lawns, grass, ground covers, plants, vines, gardens and other such flora that are situated in such diverse locations as residential areas, public, commercial and industrial establishments, and public medians and rights-of way. “Landscape irrigation” does not include agricultural crops, nursery plants, cemeteries, golf course greens, tees, fairways, primary roughs, and vegetation associated with intensive recreational areas, such as playgrounds, football, baseball and soccer fields.



“Residential landscape irrigation” means the irrigation of landscape associated with any housing unit having sanitary and kitchen facilities designed to accommodate one or more residents, including multiple housing units and mobile homes.

“Nonresidential landscape irrigation” means the irrigation of landscape not included with the definition of “residential landscape irrigation,” such as that associated with public, commercial and industrial property, including commercial or transient housing units, hotel and motel units, and public medians and rights-of-way.

The St. Johns River Water Management District’s watering restrictions are designed to ensure the efficient use of water for landscape irrigation. The restrictions allow enough water to maintain healthy landscapes year-round. The mandatory restrictions specify the time when watering may occur, the amount of water that may be applied, and the days when watering may occur for residential and nonresidential locations. These days depend on whether the address ends in an odd or even number, and on the time of year.

Summary of the restrictions



- Irrigation is prohibited between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
 - During daylight saving time (second Sunday in March until the first Sunday in November) irrigation is limited to no more than two days per week on scheduled days.

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Exceeding Expectations

Can Plants Grow in the Shade?

Most areas of north Florida have environmental conditions which enable many ornamental plant species to thrive. These plants can normally be used by homeowner in a wide variety of locations or situations with little problem. However, a number of areas will have planting problems if plant selection is not done carefully. One of these problem areas is the shady site.

All plants need light to grow and develop. Light intensity and duration have a marked effect on plant and leaf size, color, shape, foliage density and amount of flowering. Some plants have certain requirements of light intensity and duration while others are tolerant of a wide range of light conditions.

Most plants can be categorized as requiring one of three levels of light; full sun, partial shade and full shade. These levels are based on the number of hours of sunlight the plant needs for proper growth and development. Full sun is normally considered to be sun exposure from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., plants in partial shade would receive direct sun from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and plants in full shade would receive no direct sunlight. Most plants do very nicely in a partial shade situation. However, in full shade many plants develop a spindly, thin shape and will not flower normally. Not only does shade duration have to be considered but also shade intensity. A light shade would be provided by pines or other tall, high-canopied trees. Most plants will thrive under these conditions but if the shade is dense, special care in planting definitely should be exercised. In these situations plants should be selected which have adapted in nature to these shade combinations.

Occasionally, shade is combined with wet site conditions. In this situation a plant must be chosen which can cope with both conditions. For assistance in choosing the right plant for the right place, please feel free to ask. We would be happy to assist you.

Company Information

Down to Earth would like to congratulate the following employees

Recent Certifications

- Joshua Boucher—Licensed irrigation contractor exam passed
- Michael Wooldridge—FNGLA certified Horticultural Professional Certificate awarded
- Todd Burgoyne—Florida best Management Practices Certification
- Patrick Hutzler—Florida best Management Practices Certification
- Andrew Rexrode—Florida best Management Practices Certification
- Danny Moskal—Florida best Management Practices Certification
- Brent McRoy—Florida best Management Practices Certification

The management of Down to Earth thanks you, our valued employees for taking the time to increase your knowledge. Your certifications shall assist you in better serving the environment and our customers.