

THINGS TO DO LIST FOR JUNE 2024

PRUNING – Pinch back the tips on plants that you want to be more compact and produce more flowers. We are in hurricane season now. Large dense shade trees should be topped, thinned out and tip pruned, so strong hurricane winds will pass through them. Never trim more than 1/3 of a tree at a time. For fruit trees, trim after fruiting and remove water shoots, and root suckers from below the graft line. Trim tree limbs that could hit your house. Trim palms 9:00 - 3:00 and check for manganese deficiencies. Keep perimeter shrubs high to help block the winds. Do not throw your trimmings away use them as mulch to keep the weeds down.

PROPOGATION - The best time to air layer and graft is spring and early summer. Old coleus can be cut back, and new plants started from the cuttings. Woody plants, such as hibiscus, ixora, crotons, ti and dracaena, are easy to start just by sticking cuttings in the ground, and water often till rooted. Plant cuttings in the ground at the AC drip outside. Grasses and plants can be divided now. Do not put weeds in the compost pile. Throw them in the garbage. Divide bromeliad plants when babies are 1/3 the size of the mother. Type in: Ask IFAS:Plants-EDIS

INSECTS: - Mosquito season is here, eliminate all standing water. They only need 8 days to reproduce. Wash out the water from the center of bromeliads once a week. The fan helps keep mosquitos away while you are working outside on the patio. For roaches and bugs in the house, spray Home Defense (purchased at Home Depot) around the foundation of the house and use Combat Large Roach bait trays inside. Hand pick insects off plants or wash them off with a hard spray of water, before you use insecticides. Outside lights at night can attract termites.

PLANTING –Check your orchids to see if they need repotting. For easy care, mount them on your trees. When planting potted plants or trees in the ground, soak them in a bucket of water for 15 minutes. Put them 1 inch higher than the ground level. Water them in the hole and cover with soil. Pack them firmly in the hole and water again. Place mulch around the tree or bush and keep it away from the base. Keep moist after planting for several weeks. Refresh mulch elsewhere if needed. Place the old mulch around the plants and replace with new mulch around in the beds. New mulch can take the nitrogen out of the soil when it breaks down. PLANT: cosmos, cockscomb, coleus, vinca, dianthus, salvia, begonias, marigolds, sunflowers, zinnias, gaillardia, portulaca, purslane, torenia, amaranthus, and caladium bulbs. VEGETABLES: beans, cowpeas, cassava, chayote, bonito, eggplant, peppers, cherry or Everglades' tomatoes, Chinese yams, malanga, pigeon pea, okra, peanuts, squash, onions, pumpkin and sweet potatoes. HOT WEATHER HERBS: - basil, ginger, Mexican tarragon, summer savory and rosemary. BUTTERFLY PLANTS: Corky stem passion vine, passionflower, tropical sage, milkweed, firebush, firespike, desert cassia, coontie and penta. Do not use pesticides in your butterfly garden.

FERTILIZING – It is not good to fertilize when the temperature is over 85 degrees, fertilizer only when plants show signs of being nutrient deficient. I use water soluble fertilizer with minor nutrients, ½ or ¼ strength, on my potted plants, mixed in gallon jugs. For orchids use an orchid time released and water-soluble fertilizer weakly, weekly. For bananas use cow manure, compost, kitchen scraps and lots of water on them.

FRUIT – Tropical fruits are coming into season including early avocado, banana, Barbados cherry, mango, guava, fig, bunch grapes, jaboticaba, lychee, monstera, muntingia - (strawberry fruit), natal plum, papaya, passion fruit, pineapple, sapodilla, Surinam cherry, and tamarind. Look up – IFAS Fruit tree Nurseries S. Fl.

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