

## THINGS TO DO FOR JULY 2017

**PRUNING** – For Summer blooming plants, prune after flowering. Winter blooming plants, can wait till summer. Trim infrequently, but deeply, this keeps plants flowering longer. Think round shrubs, not square, this is more pleasing to the eye. Large dense trees should be thinned out, so storm winds can blow through, rather than up root them. Remove water shoots and root suckers from citrus. Throw away all rotten, fallen fruit. Throw away cuttings or weeds that are diseased or full of insects. Leave the clippings of a plant at its base; it will replace the nutrients that it took out of the soil. If you do not like the look, cover over with small pine bark mulch from Home Depot. If you are mulching by a walkway, use No-Float mulch. Trim back any tree limbs that will fall on your house and those that animals can use to get on your roof. Palm seeds can easily be pruned when they are young so they don't go to seed and sprout. Trim fronds at 9 o'clock and 3 o'clock. Dispose of dead diseased palms. Keep your perimeter high now to protect your yard from hurricane winds.

**INSECTS** – Control snails, which multiply rapidly in the rainy season, with Sluggo bait. A hoe works well too just after a rain. Try Organocide, it is an insecticide, fungicide and miticide. Use on croton scale. One quart makes, 16 gallons, mix 1 oz. to ½ gallon. Lubber grasshoppers can be cut in half with clippers. You have to be good at a sneaking approach from the top. Teach your kids to hunt for insects.

**PLANTING** – If you buy new plants or trees now, be sure you remember to water every day, until they are established. Potted plants that drain rapidly and have roots out the bottom of the pot can be repotted now. Choose a new pot that is one or two inches larger in diameter. Make sure the top of the mix is one inch below the rim to allow space for watering. Vegetables to plant now are Cassava, chayote, malanga, summer squash and yard long beans.

**FEEDING** - Be careful feeding your plants in this heat. You could kill them. Time released fertilizer is good to use on potted plants. Fertilize lightly only the plants that need it. Maybe, cow manure for now on bananas and papaya. Water soluble fertilizer is good too. Keep a week solution mixed in a gallon jug at the front and back door. Palms can be fertilized with Lesco palm food with minor elements. Crotons love palm food too. No weed & feed now. It's too hot. Read labels before using. For acid loving plants use your coffee grounds and used tea bags. Place kitchen scraps around plants in poor soil; it will feed the earth worms.

**WATERING** – Routinely check sprinklers for repairs. Watch for plants needing water. The main thing now is keeping them alive and well. Water your plants that are wilted in the morning, not at night. “When the going gets tuff the tuff gets going”

**BLOOMING** – There are at least 80 different annuals and perennials that are in bloom at this time, so there isn't any reason not to have a garden or patio full of flowers. Fill large pots with flowers and make sure you can move them around when needed.

Susan Berry, President of the Hollywood Garden Club, Florida Master Gardener, Advanced Master Naturalist, Garden Consultant and Landscape Designer, Florida Master Naturalist Program, Land Steward. & FFGC Earth Steward.