



# reemendous Tidbits

Distributed by Artistree Landscape Maintenance & Design to Educate and Inform the Communities That We Service.

“A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.”—  
Greek proverb

## Hurricane Preparedness for the Landscape

It's heating up in the tropics, and that means we have begun yet another hurricane season. We all know we need to prepare ourselves and our homes for these powerful storms, but have you ever thought about preparing your landscape for hurricanes?

As we all know, not all of the damage to structures is due to strong hurricane winds alone. Damage also occurs from falling trees and flying landscape debris during a storm. Building codes exist to reduce damage from strong winds and high water, but there are no standards for designing and maintaining hurricane-resistant landscapes. Is it possible to create a landscape that can reduce hurricane and storm damage to structures and plantings? The answer is yes. By choosing the right plants and maintaining them correctly, we can reduce storm damage.

Storm-sustaining trees should be selected for their root development, mass, density and growth characteristics. Most of Florida's native trees and plants are good choices. These plants have proven resistant to

strong winds by surviving previous storms. A storm “survivor” tree is one that is compact, with a low center of gravity, has a strong, sturdy trunk and a large deep root system. Our native live oak is a great example of the “survivor” tree, given the right environment and care during its life.



Live Oak

### “Survivor” Tree

Trees that are thought to be hurricane-resistant may still be vulnerable to strong winds. Construction damage, poor growing conditions, small root zones, and disease or insect problems make trees susceptible to toppling during storms.

Proper maintenance needs to be practiced during the life of any tree. The first step is to provide the tree, with good growing conditions and to keep it as healthy as you can, free of insects and diseases. Second, proper pruning needs to be maintained on the tree.



A strong deep-rooted tree may not fall during a storm, but weak limbs

in the canopy may. Broken, dead and damaged limbs can be torn from trees during a storm and turned into dangerous projectiles. Even “survivors” can grow very large and unbalanced, which could make them hazards during storms.

Regular pruning during a tree's development should create a sturdy, well-spaced framework of healthy branches with an open canopy that allows air to flow freely through it. It is important for a tree to have a central leader with no narrow forks or branches that leave the trunk at an acute angle.

When a storm is on the horizon, gardeners who have kept their trees thinned and in proportion have little to do to prepare. The neglected tree that has become immensely overgrown is another matter. Just remember the “survivor” trees are hurricane-resistant, not hurricane-proof.

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June/July 2007  
Volume 1, Issue 3

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### Tidbits & Trivia

Did you know. . .

- The Mockingbird is the Florida state bird.
- In one year, an acre of trees can absorb as much carbon as is produced by a car driven up to 8700 miles.
- Love Bugs are not the product of research gone wild, they migrated into our state from tropical America over 50 years ago.
- A Humming Bird is the only bird known that can fly backwards.

## Too Dry, Too Wet—I'm Stressed

It is something we must deal with every year—the dry season, which is typically March, April, and May. **Drought in the landscape** means plant stress from lack of water. With little rain and water restrictions, the dry weather often takes its toll on new landscapes that have not developed adequate roots. Damage is also seen in many of our tropical plants, which have higher water requirements. Many native plants are adapted to our seasonal weather patterns, they have developed special ways to help themselves survive. This spring has been especially difficult; as we have had to deal with low humidity and windy days, which creates another serious issue—wildfires, and there have been plenty of wildfires throughout the entire state this year.

There are indications that your plants and turf are suffering from drought stress, some of

the things to look for are dead patches of grass, wilted or off-color foliage, poor or uneven growth, dead branches or plants, sudden death of an entire tree or shrub. There are also signs of residual plant stress—water sprouts and uneven growth,



pests move in on stressed plants, and some plants may display



nutrient deficiencies.

There are certain sites that may be more stressful. Pay close attention to plantings where roots were confined or restricted, raised beds, sidewalk cutouts, dense plantings, compacted soil, and parking lot

islands. Also, pay close attention to recently planted trees, shrubs, and sod.

There may be a few surprises once the rains begin. Some “drought tolerant” plants will suddenly die or show injury. These plants usually have root damage or disease that was not evident during the drought. High temperatures and “full” growth flushes increase transpirational water loss, and damaged root systems can't keep up.

**The rainy season** is a welcome relief, but unfortunately it has a few disadvantages. In addition to grass that doesn't know when to quit, are the high winds and lightning that may accompany summer thunderstorms.



Lightning Damage

This is a good time to survey your landscape and remove any weak or dead branches that may come crashing down in a violent downpour.

The onset of warm wet summer weather is an ideal time for planting new trees and shrubs or repairing or replacing damaged turf areas, however be aware that several lawn insects are active at this time and may warrant treatment. Summer rains also bring an increase in a number of plant diseases and insects that love to feed on the new growth generated from the wet weather.

And, if that is not enough stress for our plants, flooding and soil saturation also become a concern during this time of year. Flooding can cause the air filled pores in the soil to become filled with water. This creates a condition which greatly limits the oxygen roots can obtain.

Excess soil moisture can actually interfere with water uptake by oxygen-deprived roots.



The result ranges from increased stress and reduced growth to injury, to death of trees or other plants. Tree vigor at the time of flooding or saturation influences tolerance. Vigorously growing, healthy trees withstand flooding better than less vigorous trees. Trees that have undergone prolonged stress from causes such as poor fill dirt, compaction, drought or prolonged saturation, will be more prone to injury or death.

With all these climatic conditions that our landscape endures, it is no surprise that we may see evidence in the landscape of plant stress.

### Resources:

Home and Garden Column  
Alleviate Dry Season Effects  
Eleanor Foerste  
Natural Resources Agent, Osceola County Extension

Helping Landscapes Recover from Drought  
Power Point presentation by Gary W. Know, Professor  
Extension Environmental Horticulturist, UF

The Rainy Season Brings Pluses and Minuses  
Hendry County Horticulture News, Cooperative Extension

The Effect of Soil Saturation on Trees and Other Plants  
Hillsborough County Cooperative Extension



## Summer Annuals



With the increase in heat and humidity it is time for planting warm season annuals. Here are some choices of annuals that can “take the heat.”: Coleus, Crossandra, Caladium, Portulaca, Purslane, Penta, Salvia, Torenia. Success in growing bedding plants depends on the characteristics of the planting site. The amount of sun or shade, soil moisture and soil type dictate the kinds of bedding plants that can be successfully grown at a particular site. Although bedding plants have different requirements, most will grow and flower best on well-drained sites which have exposure to full sunlight or partial shade. Bedding plants will do very poorly when heavy rains continuously keep the planting beds saturated with water. With the exception of a few shade-tolerant bedding plants, most planted in shady areas will be weak and spindly, with few flowers. *Resource: University of Florida Your Florida Guide to Bedding Plants Selection, Establishment, and Maintenance By Robert J Black and Edward F. Gilman*

## A Team Player You Should Know—Meet Michael Casper

Mike became a part of the Artistree team in October 2005, bringing with him more than 15 years of experience in the irrigation field. Formerly working as a superintendent for a golf course he is experienced in many different types of irrigation systems and equipment. According to Mike, “the only difference between the irrigation system at a golf course and a residential area is the golf course is ten times bigger, but the operations and principles of irrigation are the same.”

Mike was ready for a new challenge when he joined the Artistree team, looking forward to getting more involved in customer relations.

He started out as the irrigation and landscape lighting manager for the landscape division, but it didn't take long before Mike's excellent skills, knowledge, and experience were noticed and he was promoted to Irrigation Manager for the entire company.

With his new duties he now oversees and is responsible for all irrigation crews in both the maintenance and landscape division, along with landscape lighting, covering territory

from Bradenton to Punta Gorda. This is quite an area, so Mike has two great field assistants, which he relies on heavily for the daily operations. Alex Guadarama assists Mike with the communities in Bradenton and Sarasota, and Leonel Gomez assists with the communities in Venice and south into Charlotte County.

*“Mike is really comfortable to work for. We have worked together many times in the field solving problems. He allows me to work independently and prepare the schedule each month before giving his final approval. He is always available to answer questions and provide support whenever needed.”*

*Leonel Gomez*

With confidence in his two assistants Mike has time to concentrate on his primary duties of handling all the purchasing, overseeing the daily operations for everyone, scheduling and estimating. He works closely with builders regarding new installations, attends many homeowner association meetings answering questions and concerns, and can often be found walking properties with the Property Manager answering questions and solving problems.



Irrigation Manager—Michael Casper

Mike has employee meetings once a month to cover safety, training, employee issues, and address seasonal conditions and what they need to do to handle these conditions; such as the drought, making sure that we are adhering to all water restrictions and conserving water as required. He instructs the employees as to when it is time to make adjustments to time clocks, check rain sensors and will make recommendations to the homeowners and property managers for dealing with the climatic changes.

Mike has many challenges to face each day, but is always willing to help, is always available when needed, and always has a great sense of humor; and when Mike is not working, he will most likely be found at the golf course, as he is an avid golfer with an '8' handicap. Thanks for a great job!

## The Power of COLOR

**A Rainbow of Reactions**—Different shades in the landscape can evoke a variety of psychological and physical reactions.

As gardens increasingly become a source of rest and relaxation among overstressed Americans, we need to expand our understanding of how colors in the landscape influence us. Gardens should be stimulating environments—both mentally and physically—and can be designed to provide a rich sensory experience.

**WHITE** provides energy and stimulates the production of serotonin, a substance that regulates both sleep and the nervous system. It is often used to treat people who suffer from seasonal depression. Colors retain their truest appearance beside white.

**VIOLET** is effective for over-activity, repairing exhaustion by normalizing glandular and hormonal functions. It is a blood purifier, assisting the building of white blood cells for immunity. In the garden, try stronger tones of violet balanced with yellow.

**BLUE** reduces blood pressure and calms both breathing and heart rate. It has anti-inflammatory and muscle-relaxing effects. Blue is often used to assist in relaxation and engenders a feeling of spaciousness. It is best balanced with orange.

**GREEN** is the most effective healing color and is balancing, restorative, and calming. It regulates the pituitary gland, fights depression, bulimia, and other psychosomatic conditions affecting the gastric system. It is used to combat irritability and reduce insomnia. In the garden, green will appear to enlarge a space and is best complemented by red.

Continued on the back side



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## Accomplishments and Awards



2007 has been an exceptionally proud year for us so far at Artistree, as we have received several company awards, recognition and employee certifications. It is nice to know that our hard work and dedication has been rewarded, so beaming with pride we would like to share some of our accomplishments and recognize some of our dedicated employees.

Best Landscaper, Sarasota Magazine 2007

Business of the Year Nominee 2007, Venice Chamber of Commerce

Best Landscaping, Parade of Homes, 4 categories, February 2007

Inc. 5000, "Fastest Growing Private Companies in America", September 2007

Overall Safety Award, FNGLA, February 2007

We encourage continuing education and certifications at Artistree and want to recognize and thank the following dedicated employees.

In April, Scott Acton, Tim White, Bill Gipp, Terry Lipman, and Jeremy Lepper all received certification in "Best Management Practices" for Protection of Water Resources in Florida from the University of Florida and Sarasota County Cooperative Extension.

In May, Jennifer Hamill received her FNGLA Certified Horticulture Professional certification.

Please send any questions to  
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## The Power of COLOR

**YELLOW** increases neuromuscular tone, helps purify the blood, clean the liver and the gallbladder, and helps digestion. Yellow strongly stimulates happiness, well-being, and a sense of security. If you are not careful, yellow can easily dominate a garden, as it is the brightest color in the spectrum. For best results, balance it with violet.

**ORANGE** the color of joy, frees the movement of body fluids. It fortifies the immune system and promotes the absorption of calcium. In some color therapies, orange light is used as a first-aid treatment for shock and trauma. Orange can be overpowering, so use it with restraint and balance it with blue.

**RED** promotes heat in the body, helping the circulation and production of healthy red blood cells. It affects the heart by increasing pulse rate, and the muscles by increasing their tension. Red is often used to promote excitement and sensuality. Commanding attention in the garden, red can make a space appear smaller. It is best complemented with green.

**PINK** softly warms and more subtly energizes, making it especially useful for the young, old, and weak. Pink is warm and nourishing, but it needs green or blue to refresh it.

A year-round desired color balance in a garden can be easily achieved by recognizing the color value of materials and accessories in the garden.

Resource: "Ornamental Outlook" April 2006 *The Power of Color* by Joy Dorst