Historically, landscaping has played an important role in modifying the home environment. Until the invention of mechanical heating and cooling systems, humans had to depend on their ability to change or modify their surroundings.

To encourage air flow in Florida’s moist, hot climate, people designed open homes and used trees and other landscape materials to channel tropical winds. These cooling coastal breezes offered a welcome relief from uncomfortably warm temperatures.

Florida Climate

Sunlight
Florida’s consistently warm temperatures—generated by sunlight—can be a mixed blessing. Between April and November, sunlight intensities can elevate air temperatures far above the human comfort zone.

Humidity
Being a peninsular state, Florida is exposed to moist ocean breezes. Tropical air sweeping off the Gulf of Mexico is heated by the sun, resulting in a hot, humid climate. Florida also receives an average of fifty-four inches of rain per year, increasing the already-high humidity levels. This moisture-laden air fluctuates little in temperature, with the annual average between 67°F and 78°F. For Florida’s permanent residents, living comfortably in this tropical climate can be challenging.

Winds
For much of the year and across most of Florida, winds provide natural ventilation. Coastal areas can depend on daily breezes for relief, but inland areas must rely on other factors to direct and enhance modest wind flow.

Getting Started
Florida offers an enticing atmosphere without the wide temperature fluctuations or arid conditions that trouble many other states. From the hilly regions in the North to the tropical Keys, Florida provides many unique opportunities for using landscape materials to control the home environment, creating a more comfortable home environment and reducing utility bills.

In response to intense Florida temperatures, residents continually look for ways to keep out the heat and lower inside humidity. Numerous effective planting methods will limit the amount of heat or moisture that enters your home. Trees, shrubs, grasses and other ground covers can be highly effective in controlling these elements when combined with planting strategies specific to Florida’s hot humid climate.

As a homeowner, you should begin by making a list of specific problems you would like to correct. Ask yourself the following questions so
that your landscape design can be tailored to meet your specific needs.

- Does your house have particular windows that need to be shaded?
- Is humidity a problem on one side of your home? Encouraging wind movement could make that area of your yard more usable.
- Is your home passively cooled (no air conditioning)? Houses that are passively cooled will require different landscape techniques than a home that uses air conditioning.

While you can’t actually control the weather, you can channel winds, cast shade, and reduce moisture near our homes. Modifying these forces creates more comfortable living conditions and can lower your utility costs as much as thirty percent.

**Using Shade to Reduce Temperatures**

Research indicates that shade has a dramatic effect on ground temperatures. When shaded, ground temperatures were found to drop an average of 3 - 6°F in only five minutes. Studies have also shown that temperatures on a forest floor can be as much as 25°F cooler than those recorded at the tree tops.

Home comfort levels and energy costs can be also dramatically affected by shade. Creative landscape planning with trees, shrubs and vines will help alter the climate outside your home and modify indoor temperatures.

**Trees**

Determine the best places to plant shade trees by observing which of your windows receive the most sun. Your top priority should be providing shade for east and west windows and walls, since these surfaces receive about fifty percent more sunshine during the warmer months than those facing north and south.

When planning your design, keep in mind that trees are more effective at shading when planted close to the home. A tree planted ten feet from the west wall will shade an area four times longer than a tree planted twenty feet. A tree’s shape also influences the duration of the shade. Spreading, round, and vase-shaped tree canopies will provide shade for the longest time.

 Mature tree height should also be considered when selecting plants. In general, small- or medium-sized trees (26 - 30 feet) are preferred for shading sidewalks. Taller trees should be planted farther away from the home because they can become a safety hazard when canopies begin to overhang the roof. During the summer months, deciduous trees have a full canopy of leaves that provide shade. In the winter months, they drop their leaves, allowing the warming effect from the sun to filter through. In general, the south and southeast exposures are the best locations for deciduous vines, shrubs and trees. Northern Florida is known to have winters with temperatures well below freezing, and having deciduous plants near your home can reduce how much you’ll need to run the heater.

**Shrubs & Vines**

Shrubs are also useful for shading your home. When planted a few feet away from the house, they can provide extra shade and control humidity without obstructing air currents. Trellised vines can be used to shade windows where space is limited, since they can grow in more confined spaces than trees or shrubs. Evergreen vines are a good choice for providing shade along the east and west sides of the house. To take advantage of the winter sun, deciduous vines—such as wisteria—should be planted on southern exposures.

**Air Conditioning Units**

To keep air conditioning costs to a minimum, shade the outside condensing unit. Be careful to allow sufficient room for air to move around the condenser so that it can operate at peak efficiency.

**Channeling Wind to Your Advantage**

Wind channeling is perhaps the most talked-about but least understood landscaping technique for saving energy. Using landscaping to manage breezes is a very effective means of controlling indoor home temperatures during both winter and summer. By using trees, shrubs, vines, and other vegetation, you can alter the direction of wind near your home.

Mechanically cooled homes need windbreaks to the south to control summer breezes, keeping utility costs low. In contrast, passively cooled homes should be landscaped to direct breezes into the home.

**Passively Cooled Homes**

Cooling breezes are a precious commodity for Florida’s passively cooled homes. Houses that use minimal or no air conditioning should concentrate on directing breezes toward windows and screened doors. To use these winds effectively, allow for cross ventilation. Operable windows should be positioned opposite each other on the north and south walls.

Make sure to place shade plants far enough away from the house so that they do not restrict air flow. Because they interfere with wind motion, avoid using low-branching trees (or remove the low branches) on the southeastern and southwestern exposures.

Winter wind barriers on the north and northwest sides of the home can help push breezes from the south back toward the house during the summer. Shrubs placed near the windows can also be effective in directing air into the house. Full evergreens with low branches provide the greatest protection from the chilling northern winds common to northern Florida winters.

**Homes Designed for Mechanical Cooling**

During Florida’s long, hot summers, most residents find it impossible to stay cool without air conditioning. In order to keep your air conditioning costs to a minimum, consider outside air infiltration. Steady wind movement around the home during warm weather may actually increase your energy costs by allowing warm, humid air into your home. This air enters around windows, doors and through any structural cracks. Plants can be used to slow and redirect wind movement, helping you to keep your home cooler while you save energy.

Position shrubs and trees around your air conditioned home to steer the summer southern breezes away from the home. You can also use shrubs to slow wind movement and reduce the amount of warm air entering the home. The more dense and closed a shrub is, the more the wind is slowed. To determine where you should place vegetation on your lot, observe a wind sock or another similar device over a period of several days in winter and in summer. Once prevailing winds are determined, landscape planning will be a breeze.
Ground covers are low-growing plants that can be used to cover an area in the landscape. Turfgrass is undoubtedly the most commonly used ground cover. No other plant material can withstand as much foot traffic as turfgrass. While turf makes an excellent choice for recreational areas, it does not grow well in dense shade and is difficult to establish in extremely wet or dry areas. Evidence indicates that taller ground covers—with their larger leaf surface—can provide even more cooling than shorter ground covers such as mowed grass.

There are several alternative ground covers that adapt well to conditions unsuitable for turf. Lily turf (Liriope muscari) and mondo grass (Ophiopogon japonicus) are low maintenance ground covers that tolerate dense shade. If damp soils are a problem, try planting day lilies. For seaside plantings, consider beach sunflower, which is both highly salt- and drought-tolerant.

All plants are capable of modifying their environment through a process called evaporative cooling. Plants release water through pores in their leaves. When warm winds pass over the leaf surface, surface water absorbs the heat. The warmed water then evaporates into the atmosphere, leaving behind a cooler environment. The resulting lower air temperatures around the home will reduce air conditioning costs.

In addition to saving time and energy, ground covers can provide a more beautiful and comfortable home environment. Through a profusion of color and texture, ground covers create interesting contrasts and provide an unifying element in a total landscape planting.

Low-energy Landscape Practices

Most residents delight in compliment their homes with a lush landscape bordered by a carpet of green lawn. In the process of creating an attractive home landscape, homeowners often overuse fertilizers, pesticides, and water, resulting in accelerated plant growth and requiring more frequent pruning, mowing, and general cleanup.

Fertilizers & Pesticides

A healthy, attractive landscape can be created without causing excessive plant growth or requiring extensive pest control. To achieve a good quality landscape, you must follow a planned maintenance program. Moderate applications of fertilizer can improve the appearance and condition of plants, making them more resistant to diseases and insects. Excessive fertilization requires more human effort, contributes to ground water contamination, and wastes valuable energy.

Besides the potential for ground water pollution associated with some pesticides, the manufacturing process requires large amounts of energy. Increased environmental awareness has caused many pesticides users to look for safer and more energy-efficient ways to manage disease and pests in the landscape. Moderate fertilizer and watering practices can help reduce the need for frequent pesticide use.

Water & Irrigation

A plant's growth rate is also affected by the amount of water it receives. Excessive watering—coupled with high fertilization rates—results in a rapid flush of growth and contributes to insect and disease problems. With Florida's limited potable water and mandatory water restrictions, you should implement sensible irrigation practices. Consider using micro-irrigation and drought-tolerant plant varieties wherever possible.

Yard Waste

You can conserve energy by carefully planning your landscape maintenance practices. Grass clippings are a valuable energy resource that many homeowners are throwing away. When mowing the lawn, simply let your grass clippings remain on the grass and allow them to decompose. Your lawn will recycle the clippings naturally, saving you time, money, and energy.

Each bag of grass clippings contains as much as one-fourth of a pound of organic nitrogen. Nitrogen is necessary to ensure healthy, attractive landscape plants. By using this free nitrogen, you can decrease your fertilizer needs, saving the energy required to produce these products.

Filling plastic bags with grass clippings and other yard debris is hard work and wastes valuable space at landfills. When you leave clippings on the lawn, you will reduce these negative effects and recycle important nutrients for free. Get in the habit of leaving your grass clippings where they fall. You will be rewarded with a green healthy lawn and more leisure time to enjoy it.

Recycling yard wastes conserves energy. Disposing of leaves, grass clippings, and other garden refuse is often a problem for gardeners, particularly in an urban area. Garden and landscape by-products can easily be turned into useful compost. Returning these organic materials to the land perpetuates the natural biological cycle.
Hello everybody!

Welcome back to Harvest Gold! The summertime cookout is as American as baseball, hotdogs, apple pie, and Chevrolet (please forgive me, Ford fans), and as Southern as the smell of magnolia blossoms in the springtime, mint juleps, field peas and rice, and mole crickets.

Many cookouts center around barbecue, and although people have been cooking over open fires since the time of Fred Flintstone, what we now know as “barbecue” came to American shores by way of the Caribbean. In the early 1500’s, European explorers found the Taino Indians of the Caribbean slow-cooking meat on wooden platforms over open fire-pits. (The Taino called this “barabicu,” and the Spanish “barbacoa,” from whence the term “barbecue” comes.) The Europeans adopted this method of cooking for their own use, and when they traveled to what would become the United States, brought this method of cooking with them. Soon, barbecue became well established in Virginia, and from there, spread throughout the South, and eventually throughout the nation.

In the beginning, early colonists barbecued whatever meat they could catch, such as chickens, squirrels, rabbit, or deer, but eventually pigs, first introduced into the New World by the Spanish, became the mainstay of Southern barbecue. In the Antebellum South, barbecues became a social gathering point for the community where people came together to celebrate both civic and religious events. After the War Between the States, temporary barbecue stands began to spring up along roadsides throughout the South, but were usually open only on holidays and weekends. As the popularity of barbecue grew and barbecue became an everyday food, these stands were replaced by permanent structures which became the first barbecue restaurants. Beginning in the 1950’s, backyard cookouts, with the associated barbecuing and grilling, became popular. Since then, barbecue has continued to evolve, and is probably more popular today than ever before.

Do you love plants, trees, and gardening? Would you enjoy volunteering your time to help teach youth and newcomers in your community? Then perhaps you should become a University of Florida/IFAS Master Gardener Volunteer! It requires 75 hours of volunteer time to be given back to Nassau County Extension the first year and 35 hours every year thereafter. Ten sessions held on Wednesdays will begin at the end of July and end with graduation the beginning of October. CD Manuals will cost $75. If you are interested and would like an application packet please call 879-1019 or 491-7340 or e-mail rfjordi@ufl.edu.

Device: Master Gardener Program

Do you love plants, trees, and gardening? Would you enjoy volunteering your time to help teach youth and newcomers in your community? Then perhaps you should become a University of Florida/IFAS Master Gardener Volunteer! It requires 75 hours of volunteer time to be given back to Nassau County Extension the first year and 35 hours every year thereafter. Ten sessions held on Wednesdays will begin at the end of July and end with graduation the beginning of October. CD Manuals will cost $75. If you are interested and would like an application packet please call 879-1019 or 491-7340 or e-mail rfjordi@ufl.edu.

**Program Announcements**

**Landscape Matters 10AM-11AM**
*Raised Bed Gardening*
Wednesday July 2
Rebecca Jordi

*Fall Vegetable Gardening*
Wednesday August 6
Master Gardener Joseph Smith

**Plant Clinics 10AM-2PM**
Monday July 7
Monday July 21
Monday August 4
Monday August 18

Bring us your tired, diseased, insect infested plants yearning to be free of problems. When possible place your plant in a plastic bag to prevent chances of spreading issues to other plants. You will receive current researched based information on proper plant care, disease management and insect control. These sessions are free to the public. No registration required. Come anytime between 10AM - 2PM for expert advice.
Just remember, for true cookout enthusiasts, there is a difference between barbecuing and grilling. Barbecuing is cooking meat “low and slow” over indirect heat, with the flame never touching the meat. Grilling is cooking “hot and fast” over high, direct heat from charcoal or fire, with the flames often licking the meat.

Finally, a safe cookout is a happy cookout. Whether barbecuing or grilling, it is important to practice food safety. To prevent bacterial infection of food, wash all surfaces and equipment with soap and warm water before beginning the cookout, and wash hands both before and after handling food. Keep meat refrigerated before cooking, and once cooked, keep cooked meat separate from raw meat or raw meat juices (this includes washing the dish the raw meat was on before reusing it for the cooked meat). Do not use the marinade you soaked your meat in to baste with while cooking—prepare a fresh batch if needed, and remember to keep cold side-dishes cold (below 40 Degrees Fahrenheit) until ready to serve.

To destroy harmful bacteria when grilling or barbecuing, meats should be cooked to a minimal internal temperature. Poultry should be cooked to a minimum temperature of 165 Degrees Fahrenheit, and beef, veal, pork, and lamb to at least 145 Degrees. Ground meats, and fully cooked meats that are being reheated, should be cooked to a minimum temperature of 165 Degrees. When judging when a particular piece of meat is done, do not rely on looks alone—use a meat thermometer. (Some meats could look very well done on the outside, while still raw on the inside.) Insert the meat thermometer into the thickest part of the meat, away from the bone, to accurately gauge doneness. Once the meat is done, serve immediately. After eating, refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible. Food should not be left out for more than two hours; one hour if the temperature is above 90 Degrees Fahrenheit.

Well folks, that’s about it for today. Be sure to check out the delicious cookout recipes below submitted by our Master Gardeners (Thanks Master Gardeners!). Until we meet again, Happy Harvesting, and may you enjoy your summer cookouts in the loving company of family and friends. Happy 4th of July, and God Bless America!

Peace and Goodness,
Joseph

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### Master Gardener Cookout Condiments

### Kathy’s North Carolina Barbeque Sauce

#### Ingredients
- 1 Quart Vinegar
- 1/3 Cup Ketchup
- 1/4 Cup Worcestershire Sauce
- 1/4 Cup Mustard
- 1/4 Cup Salt
- 1/6 Cup Black Pepper
- 1/3 Stick Melted Butter
- 1/2 Ounce Crushed Red Pizza Pepper*
- 3 Ounces Texas Pete (Or Another Hot Sauce)

#### Directions
Mix all ingredients in a large container. Shake well. Store indefinitely in the refrigerator.

#### Notes
Being a North Carolina girl, I must say I love this sauce. I hope you all enjoy it too.

Recipe courtesy of Kathy Warner

N.B. In each of the recipes, all items that can be successfully grown here in Nassau County have been marked with an asterisk (*).
Uncle Wilbur’s Alabama White Barbecue Sauce

Ingredients
- 2 Cups Mayonnaise
- 1 Cup Apple Cider Vinegar
- ½ Cup Apple* Juice
- 2 Teaspoons Prepared Horseradish*
- 2 Teaspoons Black Pepper (Freshly Ground)
- 2 Teaspoons Lemon* Juice
- 1 Teaspoon Kosher or Sea salt
- ½ Teaspoon Cayenne Pepper*
- ½ Teaspoon Mustard Powder (Optional)

Directions
Place all ingredients in a medium bowl, and whisk to combine. (If you prefer a sweeter sauce, add a bit of sugar to taste while whisking.) Use immediately, or transfer to a jar and store in refrigerator until use.

Notes
This recipe comes from my late husband Wilbur’s side of the family. Wilbur grew up in northern Alabama, where they make and use a white barbecue sauce. I have made this plenty of times, and Wilbur always said it was even better than his Mama used to make. Here’s the recipe, and I hope you all enjoy it.

Recipe courtesy of Mrs. Henrietta Witherspoons

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Miss Alice’s Piggy Barbecue Sauce

Ingredients
- ½ Cup White Vinegar (4 Cups)
- ¼ Cup Distilled Water (2 Cups)
- 2 to 3 Tablespoons French’s Mustard or Yellow Whole Seed Mustard (1 to 1 ½ Cups)
- 1 ½ Teaspoons Kosher or Sea Salt (4 Tablespoons)
- 1 ½ Teaspoons Ground Black Pepper (4 Tablespoons)
- 1 ¾ Teaspoons Paprika (4 Tablespoons)
- ¼ Teaspoon Ground Thyme* (2 Tablespoons)

Directions
Mix all ingredients. Shake well, and let mature for at least several days to a week. (For a larger batch, use measurements in parentheses.) After several days, vinegar, mustard, water, and seasonings may be adjusted according to taste. The longer this sauce sits, the better it tastes, as the seasonings and spices have time to go through it. This sauce also makes a great marinade, and goes especially well with pork and chicken.

Notes
My grandson PJ loves The Pig barbecue sauce. One day when he was about 10 years old, he said to me, “Grandma, can you make Pig sauce?” I said to him, “I don’t know. Let’s try.” This is the recipe we came up with—it’s close, and PJ even likes it better than Pig sauce. This sauce is also good made with apple cider vinegar, and makes a great base for other types of barbecue sauce. You can experiment by adding some of your favorite ingredients and/or herbs and spices, such as Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder, ground sage, ground red pepper, and so on, to come up with a sauce that is uniquely your own (I sometimes add a bit of Tabasco or other hot sauce to mine to give it a little more kick).

Recipe courtesy of Mrs. Alice Marie Smith
Uncle Herb’s Famous Barbecue Sauce

Ingredients
- 1 Teaspoon Fresh Ground Black Pepper
- 1 Teaspoon Salt (Scant)
- 1 Teaspoon Paprika
- 1 Teaspoon MSG
- ½ Teaspoon Flaked Red Pepper*
- 1 Cup Brown Sugar
- 2 Buttons Fresh Garlic*
- 1 Large Can Tomatoes*
- ½ Cup Cane* Syrup (Medium Dark Type)
- 1 Bottle Catsup (32 Ounce)
- 1 Cup Apple Cider Vinegar

Directions
Put all dry ingredients, plus garlic, in a blender along with 1 cup of tomatoes. Blend at high speed to completely break up and blend the garlic and seasonings. Add remaining tomatoes and other liquid ingredients, and blend well. (Total will fill more than one blender jar, so mix in a separate bowl until whole mixture is unified.) Bring to a simmer on stovetop, then turn off heat, let cool, and pour into catsup bottles or mason jars. (If you desire a sweeter sauce, add more cane syrup to taste; if you want a sauce that is not as sweet, leave out a bit of syrup and/or sugar.) Let stand in refrigerator for 24 hours. If any separation shows, shake sauce well by hand—it will not separate a second time. Keep refrigerated because the sugar content will cause fermentation. This also makes a wonderful salad dressing when mixed with mayonnaise.

Notes
This recipe was developed by my uncle, Herb Underwood, over many years of experimentation. He kept the whole family well supplied so we never ran out of barbecue sauce. Unfortunately, I had two different versions of the recipe, one with 1 cup of brown sugar and 2/3 cup of cane syrup, and one without the brown sugar. Since I have a vague memory of seeing brown sugar on the kitchen counter when Uncle Herb was making the sauce, I included the brown sugar and reduced the amount of cane syrup when I typed up the recipe. By the way, this is not a thick sauce, but it tends to thicken over time when stored in the refrigerator.

Recipe courtesy of Susan Woods

Aunt Henrietta’s Homemade Ranch Dressing

Ingredients
- ½ Cup Buttermilk
- ½ Cup Sour Cream
- ½ Cup Mayonnaise
- 2 Tablespoons Fresh Chives* (Chopped)
- 2 Tablespoons Fresh Parsley* (Chopped)
- 1 Clove Garlic* (Crushed)
- 2 Teaspoons Fresh Lime* Juice
- Coarsely Ground Black Pepper (To Taste)

Directions
Combine all ingredients in a bowl, and whisk well. Refrigerate for a couple of hours (or overnight) before use. Makes about 1 ½ cups.

Notes
This delicious dressing will soon become a family favorite. It is not only good on a salad, but makes a great dip for hot wings as well. (For a low-calorie version, substitute light sour cream and light mayonnaise for the regular.)

Recipe courtesy of Mrs. Henrietta Witherspoons
Aunt Henrietta’s Homemade Dijon Mustard

**Ingredients**
- 2 Cups Chardonnay
- 1 Large Onion* (Chopped)
- 3 Garlic* Cloves (Minced)
- 1 Cup Mustard Powder (4 Dry Ounces)
- 3 Tablespoons Honey
- 1 Tablespoon Vegetable, Canola, or Olive Oil
- 2 Teaspoons Sea or Kosher Salt
- 4 Drops Tabasco* Sauce (Optional)

**Directions**
In a non-stick saucepan, combine the wine, onion, and garlic. Heat to boiling, and simmer for 5 minutes. Cool, and discard solids. Add the dry mustard to the cooked liquid, stirring constantly until smooth. Blend in honey, oil, salt, and Tabasco sauce. Heat slowly until thickened, stirring constantly. Pour into a glass jar, and let cool overnight at room temperature. Refrigerate for 2 to 8 weeks to age flavor before using.

**Notes**
Any favorite dry white wine may be substituted for the Chardonnay. Also, if you prefer a whole grain mustard, substitute 1 cup whole mustard seeds (or ½ cup yellow mustard seeds and ½ cup brown mustard seeds) for the mustard powder; one tablespoon onion powder for the chopped onion, and 1 teaspoon garlic powder for the minced garlic. All other ingredients are the same as in recipe above. Place all ingredients in a bowl, stir well, cover tightly, and let sit at room temperature for two days. After two days, transfer mixture to a blender, and blend until the desired consistency is achieved. Once blended, let age in the refrigerator.

Recipe courtesy of Mrs. Henrietta Witherspoons

Jacque’s Citrus Finishing Salt

**Ingredients**
- Zest of 1 Lime*, 1 Lemon*, or 1 Grapefruit*
- 2 Tablespoons Fine Sea Salt

**Directions**
Use a micro-planer or zester to remove the fine peel from the citrus without getting any of the white pith. Pinch and rub together zest with salt to combine. Depending on the size of your fruit, you may need a little more or a little less salt. Use this salt to rim glasses, or add a little zip to seafood, chicken, or stir fry by omitting the salt while cooking, and then sprinkling the finishing salt onto the individual servings as they are plated. You may also use individual salt cellars and allow guests to control their own amount.

**Notes**
This finishing salt keeps nicely sealed in the fridge for about 2 weeks, or frozen for one month. You may also let it dry out on a cookie sheet, and bottle it up—it will rehydrate in the steam when used to top a hot dish. I zest any citrus I eat and keep it this way—in a decorative bottle it makes a nice gift!

Recipe courtesy of Jacque Cormier
Kathy’s Barbecue Lamb

Ingredients
- 1/3 Cup Pimento (Finely Chopped)
- 1/4 Cup Capers
- 2 Teaspoons Salt
- 1/2 Teaspoon Ground Pepper
- 1/2 Teaspoon Dried Dill Weed*
- 1/2 Teaspoon Dried Tarragon*
- 1/2 Teaspoon Oregano*
- 3/4 Cup Olive Oil
- 3/4 Cup Wine Vinegar
- 3 Tablespoons Soy Sauce
- 1 Bay Leaf* (Crushed)
- 5 Cloves Garlic* (Minced)

Directions
Mix all of the above ingredients. Pour over butterflied leg of lamb. Marinate in refrigerator over night. The next day, remove lamb from refrigerator, reserving marinade. Cook lamb until done. Heat reserved marinade to at least 165 Degrees Fahrenheit, and serve over meat.

Notes
I made this one time for a group of eight people. We started tasting it before dinner. The lamb never made it to the table. All gone—bye bye!

Recipe courtesy of Kathy Warner

Becky’s Chicken Salad

Ingredients
- 1 Pound Chicken Breasts
- Olive Oil (To Taste)
- Chopped Parsley* (To Taste)
- Chopped Rosemary* (To Taste)
- Garlic* Salt (To Taste)
- 1 Cup Celery* (Chopped)
- 1 Cup Red Grapes (Halved)
- 1/2 Cup Roasted Pecans* (Chopped)
- 1 Cup Mayonnaise
- 1/2 Teaspoon Salt
- 1/2 Teaspoon Ground Black Pepper
- Leaves of Romaine Lettuce*
- 1/2 Cup Dried Cherries (Optional)
- Celery Leaves* (Chopped, Optional)
- Romaine Lettuce*

Directions
Season chicken breasts with olive oil, chopped parsley, chopped rosemary, and garlic salt to taste. Roast chicken in oven until done. Let cool and cut into 1/2 inch cubes. Add cubed chicken to a large bowl along with celery, grapes, chopped pecans, mayonnaise, salt, and pepper. If using chopped celery leaves, or dried cherries, add these now as well. Stir together until just combined. Refrigerate before serving. Serve on fresh leaves of Romaine lettuce.

Notes
I made this for the Master Gardener Appreciation Luncheon this year, and it went over very well. One of the Master Gardeners even said it was one of the best chicken salads he ever tasted (That was me, JS). Enjoy!

Recipe courtesy of Rebecca L. Jordi
Cousin Woody’s Chili

**Ingredients**
- 1 ½ Pounds Ground Round
- 1 Can (10 Ounce) French Onion* Soup (Not Creamy)
- 1 Can (21 Ounce) Red Kidney Beans* (Un-drained)
- 1 Can (8 Ounce) Tomato* Sauce
- 1 Can (6 Ounce) Tomato* Paste
- 2 Tablespoons Olive Oil
- 1 Tablespoon Chili Powder
- 2 Teaspoons Ground Cumin
- ½ Teaspoon Black Pepper
- Several Drops Tabasco* Sauce (Optional, To Taste)

**Directions**
Blend onion soup for a few seconds in blender. In a large pot, brown hamburger on medium. Just before meat is completely brown, drain off grease, pour the onion soup over the meat, stir, and let simmer at medium high for about 5 minutes, or until well done. Add remaining ingredients, stir well, and cover. Simmer on low for at least two hours, stir occasionally, and add water as needed. After two hours, taste and adjust seasonings if necessary. At this point, the chili is ready to be served, but keep in mind the longer chili simmers, the better it tastes. Serve with corn chips and grated cheddar cheese. Be sure to save some to reheat tomorrow—it’s even better then.

**Notes**
This chili recipe is based on an old family recipe that has been passed down for generations on my late husband's side of the family. The above recipe comes from my husband's cousin Woodrow (he's named for Woodrow Wilson, you know), who makes by far the best version of this chili I have ever tasted. I hope you all enjoy it. Just don't be afraid to add the Tabasco sauce!

Recipe courtesy of Mrs. Henrietta Witherspoons

George’s Fish Chowder

**Ingredients**
- 4 Cups Vegetable Stock
- 2 ½ Cups Potatoes* (Diced)
- 1 Cup Carrots* (Diced)
- 4 Tablespoons Butter
- ¼ Cup Red Onion* (Chopped)
- 1 Clove Garlic* (Minced)
- 1 ½ Stalks Celery* (Diced)
- 1 Bay Leaf
- 1 Teaspoon Dried Dill*  
- Salt to Taste
- White Pepper (To Taste)
- 8 Ounces Favorite Fish (Cut Into Soup-Sized Chunks)
- 3 Tablespoons Flour
- ¾ Cup Half-and-Half
- ½ Cup Fresh Italian Parsley* (Chopped)

**Directions**
In a large pot, boil potatoes and carrots in vegetable stock until tender. In a fry pan, sauté onion, garlic, and celery in two tablespoons of the butter until tender, then add to stock. Add bay leaf, dill, salt, and white pepper. Simmer for 5 minutes. Add fish, and simmer until fish is cooked through (about 5 minutes). Stir gently to avoid breaking up the fragile chunks of fish. Make a roux by melting the other two tablespoons of the butter in a pan. Add flour, and whisk over medium heat for about three minutes. Remove from heat, and gradually add half-and-half while whisking. Whisk until smooth. Do not cook any further. Add roux mixture to soup, stir gently, and heat until soup is just starting to think about boiling, then remove from heat. Check seasoning and adjust if necessary. Garnish with chopped fresh Italian parsley and serve.

**Notes**
Our son George, owner of the Angry Trout Café in Grand Marais, Minnesota, has this recipe in his cookbook, and has made the chowder for us many times. He loves fishing at Little Talbot when he visits, and always leaves us wonderful local fish filets to enjoy after he departs. He also believes in the culture of sustainability.

Recipe courtesy of Libby Wilkes
Vicki’s Grilled Skirt Steak

Ingredients
• 2 Skirt Steaks (About 1 Pound Each, Trimmed of Fat, and Cut in Half Crosswise)
• Sea Salt and Fresh Ground Black Pepper (To Taste)
• 1 Teaspoon Onion Powder
• 1 Tablespoon White Wine Vinegar
• 1 Tablespoon Extra Virgin Olive Oil
• Vegetable Oil Cooking Spray

Chimichurri Sauce
• 4 Cups Flat-Leaf Parsley (About 1 Large Bunch)
• 6 Cloves Garlic
• ½ to ¾ Cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
• ¼ Cup Red Wine Vinegar
• Sea Salt and Freshly Ground Black Pepper (To Taste)
• 1 Heaping Teaspoon Red Pepper Flakes (Optional)

Directions
Rub a generous amount of salt and pepper into both sides of the steaks. Rub the onion powder into the steaks, dividing it evenly. Put the steaks into a baking dish or container that holds them comfortably. Sprinkle the wine vinegar over the steaks, and brush them with the olive oil. Marinate the steaks at room temperature for up to 30 minutes, or refrigerate for up to 2 days. Heat a gas grill to medium-high, or heat a large grill pan over medium-high heat. Spray grill with cooking spray. Grill the steaks, turning only once, to desired doneness. Remove from the grill, and let rest for 5 minutes. If desired, slice the steaks thinly against the grain before serving. Drizzle some of the chimichurri sauce over the steaks and pass the rest separately. Serves 4 to 6.

For the chimichurri sauce, using a food processor, pulse the parsley and garlic until finely chopped. Scrape into a bowl, and mix in the olive oil and wine vinegar. Season with salt and pepper. Stir well. (For a spicy chimichurri, stir in red pepper flakes with the salt and pepper.) Yields about 1 cup.

Notes
This Skirt Steak recipe came from a neighbor many years ago. It's very tasty, and I love it on tortillas.

Recipe courtesy of Vicki Martin

Becky’s Garlic-Herb Grilled Corn

Ingredients
• 2 Heads of Garlic
• 4 Teaspoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil
• Finely Grated Zest of 1 Lemon
• 1 Tablespoon Unsalted Butter
• ¼ Cup Parsley (Chopped)
• ¼ Cup Tarragon (Chopped)
• Salt and Freshly Ground Black Pepper
• 6 Large Ears of Corn (In Husks)

Directions
Preheat the oven to 350 Degrees Fahrenheit. Cut off the top third of the garlic heads. Stand them cut side up on foil, and drizzle with 1 teaspoon of oil. Wrap the garlic in the foil, and bake until very soft (about 1 hour). Squeeze the garlic into a bowl. Stir in the lemon zest, butter, cilantro, tarragon, and the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Start your grill. Peel back the corn husks, keeping them attached. Discard the silk. Spread the herbed garlic all over the corn. Fold the husks back over the corn and tie the tops with string. Wrap the corn in foil. Grill the corn over moderate heat, turning, until the kernels feel tender, which should be about 15 minutes. Remove the foil. Grill the ears over moderately high heat, turning, until the husks are nicely charred (about 5 minutes). Serve immediately.

Notes
Other herbs of your choice could be substituted in this recipe—I often use a Mrs. Dash combination. Any way you prepare it, this garlic-herb corn is sure to please.

Recipe courtesy of Rebecca L. Jordi
Kathy’s Barbecue Beans

Ingredients
- ½ Pound Cubed Bacon
- ½ Cup Onion* (Diced)
- 1 Pound Ground Chuck
- 1 Can Lima Beans* (Drained)
- 1 Can Pork & Beans
- 1 Can Kidney Beans* (Drained)
- 1 Can Butter Beans* (Drained)
- ½ Cup Ketchup
- 2 Teaspoons Prepared Mustard
- ¾ Cup Brown Sugar
- 1 Tablespoon Apple Cider Vinegar

Directions
Brown meat until no longer pink—begin with bacon, and add ground chuck after bacon has cooked for several minutes. Drain grease. Add other ingredients. Stir all ingredients together, place in an oven proof pan, and bake at 375 Degrees Fahrenheit for 40 to 45 minutes. You can also prepare this dish in a slow cooker for several hours if you wish—I find this the easiest to do. In addition, I tend to add a lot more of the ketchup, mustard, brown sugar, and vinegar than the recipe calls for. Adjust to your own taste.

Notes
When I got the notice asking for cookout recipes, I thought of a recipe I had not made for many years. Thus, I went on a quest to find it. It was in the last place I looked (I know, a real corny joke). I am not sure where I got this recipe, but it has been with me for more years than I care to count. In fact, the recipe calls for 16 ounce can sizes (which I don’t think have been on grocery shelves for some time).

Recipe courtesy of Kathy Stevenson

Vicki’s Awesome Bow Tie Pasta Salad

Ingredients
- 1 Package (16 Ounce) Bow Tie Pasta
- 2 Green Onions* (Chopped)
- 1 Package (6 Ounce) Feta Cheese (Crumbled)
- ½ Cup Balsamic Vinegar
- ¼ Cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 2 Cups Fresh Tomatoes* (Chopped)

Directions
Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes, or until al dente. Drain and place in ice water until cool. Toss pasta with onion, feta, balsamic vinegar, olive oil, and tomato. Chill for 1 to 2 hours. Serves eight. (Cherry tomatoes can be substituted for the chopped, and, if you like, you can also add black olives.)

Notes
This is “Awesome” bow tie pasta Salad, and is very easy and quick to make up for a picnic or BBQ. I don’t remember who gave me the recipe, but I know several of my relatives make it. It is very light, and I love the fresh tomatoes in it. So yummy!

Recipe courtesy of Vicki Martin
Winifred’s Pasta Salad

Ingredients
• Cork Screw Pasta (Cooked)
• Cheddar Cheese Chunks
• Ham Chunks
• Cucumber* (Diced)
• Red Onion* (Diced)
• Black Olives
• Cooked Shrimp (Peeled)
• Zesty Italian Dressing (Bottled)
• Grape or Cherry Tomatoes*

Directions
My pasta salad actually has no set recipe. Every time I make it, it turns out different. All I do is combine the first 7 ingredients (above) together, pour on the Italian Dressing, and garnish with tomatoes and a few of the shrimp. When you decide to try this recipe, use the above ingredients as a guide, and put in the amounts according to your taste. It will turn out just perfect.

Notes
This pasta salad is really simple, and done to my taste. Some people don’t use the shrimp or ham, and they just use diced pepperoni. It’s good like that too. Enjoy! (Winifred’s Pasta Salad is one of the best I have ever tasted. JS.)

Recipe courtesy of Winifred Favors

Jessica’s Sweet and Spicy Foothills Coleslaw

Ingredients
• 3 Tablespoons Dijon Mustard
• ¼ Cup Light Brown Sugar (Packed)
• 3 Tablespoons Malt Vinegar
• 1 ½ Teaspoons Mustard Seed Oil or Very Spicy Mustard (Such as English or German)
• 1 ½ Teaspoons Kosher Salt (Plus More to Taste)
• ¼ Teaspoon Freshly Ground Black Pepper (Plus More to Taste)
• 1 Cup Mayonnaise
• 3 Cups Red Cabbage* (Thinly Sliced)
• 3 Cups Green Cabbage* (Thinly Sliced)
• 1 ½ Cups Carrots* (Shredded)
• ¾ Cup Red Onion* (Shredded)

Directions
In a large bowl, whisk together the Dijon mustard, brown sugar, malt vinegar, mustard seed oil, salt, and pepper, whisking until the sugar dissolves. Whisk in the mayonnaise. Add the red and green cabbage, carrots, and onion, and toss until the vegetables are coated. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Strain the coleslaw. Taste and season with more pepper if desired. Serve.

Notes
This recipe is from my daughter, Jessica, who says it’s fabulous, even for folks who don’t like coleslaw. It’s from Blackberry Farm. (For maximum crunch, make no more than two hours before serving.)

Recipe courtesy of Susanne Schlaifer
Chad’s Loaded Baked Potato Salad

Ingredients
- 8 Large Baking Potatoes*  
- Olive Oil, Salt, and Pepper (For Baking Potatoes, To Taste)  
- 1 Package Bacon  
- 2 Tablespoons Bacon Fat  
- 1 1/2 Cups Sour Cream  
- 1 1/2 Cups Mayonnaise  
- 1 Teaspoon Salt  
- 1 Teaspoon Pepper  
- 8 Ounces Cheddar Cheese (Shredded)  
- 7 Green Onions* (Chopped)

Directions
Wash potatoes under cold water. Dry off, and drizzle lightly with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Wrap each in foil, and bake for about 1 hour at 350 Degrees Fahrenheit (consistency should be slightly less done than a regular baked potato). Cook bacon to desired crispness (I prefer to use the oven). Chop bacon into pieces, and set aside, reserving bacon grease for the dressing. Once potatoes are done, open foil, let cool, and then dice—removing skin is optional. Put diced potatoes in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, mix sour cream, mayo, and two tablespoons bacon fat. Add salt and pepper. Mix together, and pour over potatoes. Add half of the crumbled bacon, 6 green onions (chopped), and 4 ounces of cheddar cheese. Mix together. Place in a serving bowl, and top with remaining cheddar cheese, bacon pieces, and chopped scallion. Lightly sprinkle additional salt and pepper across top. Serves 8 to 12 people.

Notes
My wife Amanda never liked potato salad before she had this. It’s like a cold baked potato with all the toppings. Enjoy!

Recipe courtesy of Chad Ream

Master Gardener Cookout

Desserts

Mrs. Cooper’s Blueberry Crunch

Ingredients
- 1 Can (20 Ounce) Crushed Pineapple* With Juice  
- 3 Cups Blueberries* (Fresh or Frozen)  
- 1 Yellow Cake Mix (Sifted)  
- 1 Cup Pecans* (Chopped)  
- 1 Stick Butter

Directions
Spray a 9 x 13 Inch pan with Pam. Layer ingredients in this order: pineapple, blueberries, cake mix, and pecans. Dot with butter. Bake at 350 Degrees Fahrenheit for 40 minutes, or until top is golden.

Notes
My former neighbors, James and Loree Cooper, removed all pine trees from a portion of their property in the mid 1980’s, and planted a blueberry field. It wasn’t long before it was producing wonderful berries. They ripen about mid-June, and continue producing through July. Mrs. Cooper shared her recipe for blueberry crunch with me. Some folks refer to it as a dump cake because there is no mixing required. This makes a great July 4th dessert, and is super easy to prepare.

Recipe courtesy of Janet Barnes
Aunt Henrietta’s Vinegar Pie

**Ingredients**
- ½ Cup Butter (Melted and Cooled)
- 3 Eggs (Beaten)
- 2 Tablespoons Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1 ½ Cups Sugar
- 2 Tablespoons Flour
- 1 Tablespoon Vanilla
- 1 Unbaked Pie Shell (9 Inch)
- Whipped Cream (Optional)

**Directions**
Beat butter, eggs, vinegar, sugar, and flour together on high until smooth (about 1 minute). Stir in vanilla. Pour mixture into pie shell. Bake at 300 Degrees Fahrenheit for 50 minutes, or until top forms a pale golden crust (inside will be slightly liquid). Cool, and serve at room temperature (topped with whip cream if desired).

**Notes**
This is an old-timey classic. In the Old South, vinegar pies were the alternative to lemon pies when lemons were not in season, and were very popular at summertime cookouts and community barbecues. This recipe was passed down to me from my Grandmother. I fondly remember her making these pies for the annual church picnic, and Ladies’ Poker Nights at the Moose Lodge. Needless to say, wherever she brought it, her pie was always the first to go.

Recipe courtesy of Mrs. Henrietta Witherspoons

Candace’s Peach Cobbler

**Ingredients**

**Filling**
- 5 Cups Sliced Peaches* (Peeled)
- ¾ Cup Sugar
- 2 Tablespoons All-Purpose Flour
- ½ Teaspoon Cinnamon
- ¼ Teaspoon Salt
- 1 Teaspoon Vanilla
- ¼ Cup Water
- 1 Tablespoon Butter

**Batter**
½ Cup Sifted All-Purpose Flour
½ Cup Sugar
½ Teaspoon Baking Powder
¼ Teaspoon Salt
2 Tablespoons Butter (Softened)
1 Egg (Slightly Beaten)

**Directions**
To prepare filling, combine peaches, sugar, flour, cinnamon, salt, vanilla, and water in a medium bowl. Turn into a 9 x 9 x 1 ¾ Inch baking pan. Dot peaches with butter. To prepare batter, combine all batter ingredients in a medium bowl. Beat with wooden spoon until smooth. Drop batter in 9 portions on peaches, spacing evenly (batter will spread during baking). Bake in a preheated 375 Degree Fahrenheit oven for 35 to 40 minutes, or until peaches are fork-tender and crust is golden brown. Serve warm with light or whipped cream. Makes six servings.

**Notes**
This newspaper-clipped recipe is glued next to another recipe scrawled onto a piece of 1958 calendar inside a homemade fabric-wrapped notebook—my first recipe keeper as a young teen. I have noted on the page to double it, but there’s also a “4x” note so I’ll be sure to make enough! Enjoy!

Recipe courtesy of Candace Bridgewater
Beverly’s Dreamsicle

**Ingredients**
- 4 Cups Orange Sherbet (Softened)
- 8 Ounces Cream Cheese
- 14 Ounces Sweetened Condensed Milk
- ½ Cup Orange Juice
- 8 Ounces Cool Whip (Softened)

**Directions**

Line a loaf pan with foil. Spread 1 cup softened sherbet in bottom of pan. Freeze at least 10 minutes. Beat cream cheese until creamy, then add the milk and juice, and mix to combine. Gently stir in the cool whip, and spread mixture over the sherbet. Freeze until firm. Add the remaining cup of sherbet to the top, and return to freezer for at least 3 hours. Unmold, slice, and serve.

**Notes**
This dreamsicle is a great dessert for any backyard cookout. It really cools you off on a hot day.

*Recipe courtesy of Beverly Stormoen*

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**Beverly’s Fruit "Soft-Serve"**

**Ingredients**
- 1 ½ to 2 Cups Chopped Fruit Frozen Solid (Peaches*, Nectarines*, Berries*, Etc.)
- 6 Ounces Low Fat Vanilla Yogurt

**Directions**

Add frozen fruit to a food processor, and process until finely ground. Add yogurt, and process until smooth. Serve immediately, or put in freezer for up to 2 hours. (If left in freezer beyond two hours, soft-serve will need to be thawed some, and processed again until smooth and creamy).

**Notes**

For a cool summer treat, try this fruit "soft-serve."

*Recipe courtesy of Beverly Stormoen*

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**Beverly’s Avocado Semifreddo**

**Ingredients**
- 1 Large Avocado*
- 1 Can Sweetened Condensed Milk
- 1 Tablespoon Lemon Juice
- 1 Small Container Whipping Cream

**Directions**

Spray a loaf pan and line with plastic wrap leaving a good over hang. Puree the avocado flesh, milk, and lemon juice. Whip the cream until stiff, and fold into the avocado mixture. Pour mixture into the loaf pan, and freeze for at least 5 hours. Unmold, slice, and serve.

**Notes**

The word “semifreddo” means “half-cold” in Italian, and the dessert itself has the consistency of a frozen mousse. I hope you enjoy this refreshing summertime treat as much as we do.

*Recipe courtesy of Beverly Stormoen*

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**Old Fashioned Chocolate Icebox Dessert**

**Ingredients:**
- 1 pkg. plain chocolate wafers (Famous Wafers), about 40
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla

**Directions**

Beat together cream, powdered sugar and vanilla until stiff. Spread a strip of whipped cream down the center of a serving plate to put the cookies on. Spread a generous spoonful on each cookie and stack them on their sides on the whipped cream on the plate to make a long log. When about 1/3 of the cream is left, stop adding cookies and start frosting the outside of the log. When the cookies are frosted and stacked, cover the entire log with more whipped cream thickly and thoroughly. Be sure to get all the way around the sides of the cookies with the cream. Cover and chill in refrigerator for at least eight hours. Slice on a diagonal to serve.

**Notes**

This is a classic!

*Recipe courtesy of Mrs. Henrietta Witherspoons*
Master Gardener Cookout
Beverages

Stephen’s Sangria

Ingredients
• 2 Bottles of Wine
• 1 Pint Raspberries
• 1 Pint Blueberries
• 1 Pint Blackberries
• 2 to 3 Ounces Simple Syrup (Or To Taste)
• Juice of 1 Lemon and 1 Lime
• 1 Lemon and 1 Lime (Thinly Sliced)
• 8 Ounces Orange Juice
• 1 Can Ginger Ale

Directions
Choose a suitable wine for the sangria. For a red sangria, use 2 bottles of Merlot; for a white sangria, use 2 bottles of Pinot Grigio; and for a mixed sangria, use 1 bottle of Merlot and 1 bottle of Pinot (Any favorite red or white wine may be substituted for the Merlot or Pinot). Next, in a large container, slightly muddle the berries. Add all other ingredients to container, stir well, cover, and refrigerate overnight. Serve ice cold. (Also, if more guests arrive late, don’t be afraid to add more wine to the fruit mixture.)

Notes
I made this for Aunt Henrietta’s 49th birthday party this past year (Aunt Henrietta has been celebrating her “49th birthday” since I was a teenager). It was the hit of the party (It’s a good thing I tripled the batch).

Recipe courtesy of Stephen Rhodes

Stephen’s Michelada

Ingredients
• Salt
• Ice Cubes
• Juice of ¼ Lime
• 1 to 2 Ounces Tomato Juice (To Taste)
• Dash Hot Sauce
• Mexican Beer

Directions
Salt the rim of a frozen glass. Add ice cubes, lime juice, tomato juice, Mexican beer. Stir and serve. Makes a single serving.

Notes
This is one of my three favorite summer cocktails, and is great for Cinco de Mayo or any occasion.

Recipe courtesy of Stephen Rhodes

Stephen’s Moscow Mule

Ingredients
• Ice Cubes
• 2 ounces Vodka
• Juice of ½ Lime
• Ginger Beer

Directions
Add ice to a copper mug. Pour vodka and lime juice over ice, and fill with a good quality ginger beer (such as Goslings or Fever-Tree). Stir and serve. Makes a single serving.

Notes
If you cannot find ginger beer, Vernors is an acceptable ginger ale substitute. Either way, you will love this refreshing drink.

Recipe courtesy of Stephen Rhodes
If you hear loud buzzing coming from trees in the daytime, the noise is most likely caused by cicadas. You can tell when cicadas are present by the brown exoskeletons they leave on tree trunks and shrubs.

Cicadas are found throughout North America, including here in Florida.

**Sound**

The sound of cicadas is distinctive, and species can be differentiated by their calls. Only males can make sounds, most of which are calling songs to attract mates. The whirs and buzzes of cicada songs can be similar to the sounds of power tools. Some homeowners and contractors have even reported cicadas being attracted to their lawn mowers and power saws.

The reason only male cicadas can produce songs is that they are the only cicadas with timbals—drum-like body parts on the sides of their abdomen. The timbals are a combination of stiff ribs, flexible membranes, muscles, and air sacs that pop in and out and produce sound.

**Life Cycles**

Cicada nymphs live underground where they feed on sap from the roots of trees, grasses, and woody plants. Not much is known about how long cicada nymphs stay underground—some species have two-year life cycles, but others have life cycles of 10 or more years. Nymphs will molt four times underground, then climb to the soil surface and up a tree or shrub, and molt a fifth time to become an adult. The skeleton left after this last molt is what people find anchored on tree trunks and other plants.

Cicada adults are strong fliers that will spend most of their time in trees, eating, singing, mating, and laying eggs before they die a few weeks after emerging. When the eggs hatch, the nymphs fall to the ground and burrow into the soil, starting the whole process over again.

**Population Cycles**

Keep in mind that although cicada species have certain life cycles, not all their broods in the soil are at the same stage in their life cycles. The overall adult population will depend on the size of the broods at the end of their nymph stage that year.

Periodical cicadas are species that have synchronized their development so that they mature into adults in the same year, usually on 13- or 17-year life cycles. News reports and interest pieces are popular around the time these group emergences are expected. Florida, however, does not have periodical populations of cicadas, and adults emerge every year from late spring through the fall.

**Cicadas in Florida**

Cicadas are not considered to be a pest of any significance in Florida. They do not require treatment and are best left alone, since any damage they cause is negligible. Cicadas are active in tree canopies and shrubs in the daytime. They will not swarm or be attracted to people (nor will they splatter on your vehicle).

Sometimes their egg-laying can damage tree twigs. The twigs will break, and the leaves die, causing brown “flags” at the end of branches. This problem is rarely reported in Florida because we do not have large periodical cicada populations.

Cicadas do not bite or sting and do not carry harmful diseases. They are a food source for wildlife and can even be a food source for people.

If you have questions about cicadas in your area or insect identifications, contact your local Extension agent.

Adapted and excerpted from:
T. Walker and T. Moore, Cicadas (of Florida) (EENY327), UF/IFAS Entomology and Nematology Department (rev. 03/2011).

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**Selected cicada species in Florida**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Found In</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small (Wing length &lt; 7 mm)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little brown cicada</td>
<td>Melampsalta calliope</td>
<td>Meadows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Little green cicada</td>
<td>Melampsalta floridensis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Medium (Wing length 23 – 32 mm)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bequaert’s cicada</td>
<td>Diceroprocta bequaerti</td>
<td>Western Panhandle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass-winged cicada</td>
<td>Diceroprocta vitripennis</td>
<td>Panhandle; oaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hieroglyphic cicada</td>
<td>Neocicada hieroglyphica</td>
<td>Oaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympic cicada</td>
<td>Diceroprocta olympusa</td>
<td>Pines, waste fields</td>
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<td>Diceroprocta viridifascia</td>
<td>Coastal</td>
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<td>Keys cicada</td>
<td>Diceroprocta biconica</td>
<td>Keys, Everglades</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dog-day cicada</td>
<td>Tibicen canaliculatis</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Cicadas in Florida: If you have questions about cicadas in your area or insect identifications, contact your local Extension agent.
Invasive Plants: Brazilian Pepper-Tree
(Schinus terebinthifolius)
Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants University of Florida, IFAS

Introduction
The family Anacardiaceae contains poison ivy, poison oak, poison sumac, and Schinus terebinthifolius, or Brazilian pepper-tree. People sensitive to poison ivy, oak or sumac may also be allergic to Brazilian pepper tree because it also has the potential to cause dermatitis to those with sensitive skin. Some people have also expressed respiratory problems associated with the bloom period of pepper tree.

Brazilian pepper tree is native to Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil. Brazilian pepper tree was brought into Florida in mid-1800 for use as an ornamental plant. Its bright red berries and brilliant green foliage are used frequently as Christmas decorations.

Distribution of Brazilian pepper tree throughout Florida is widespread, although limited to the warmer areas due to sensitivity to cold temperatures. Brazilian pepper can be found as far north as Levy and St. Johns Counties, and as far west as Santa Rosa County. It is an aggressive invader of disturbed habitats; this characteristic has led to its placement on the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council’s list of invasive species. Many plant communities such as hammocks, pinelands and mangrove forests are often invaded and dominated by Brazilian pepper tree.

Description
Brazilian pepper-tree is a shrub or small tree that reaches over 30 feet in height, typically with a short trunk hidden in a thicket of branches. Some trees can live over 30 years. The leaves are alternately arranged with 1-2 inch long, elliptic, and finely toothed leaflets. The leaves are also reddish, often possessing a reddish mid-rib. The flower clusters are white and 2-3 inches long with male and female flowers that look very similar. The glossy fruits are borne in clusters that are initially green, becoming bright red when ripe. Seeds are dark brown and 0.5 mm in diameter. Flowering occurs from September through November and fruits are usually mature by December. Birds and mammals are the primary mechanisms for dispersal, although seeds may be transported via flowing water. Seeds are viable for up to 2 months, losing viability as time progresses. Germination is improved by scarification. Typically, acids in an animal’s digestive tract provide adequate scarification required for germination.

The invasiveness of Brazilian pepper tree in Florida can be attributed to its high germination rates and dispersal agents.

Impacts
This shrub/tree is one of the most aggressive and widespread of the invasive non-indigenous exotic pest plants in the State of Florida. There are over 700,000 acres in Florida infested with Brazilian pepper tree. Brazilian pepper tree produces a dense canopy that shades out all other plants and provides a very poor habitat for native species. This species invades aquatic as well as terrestrial habitats, greatly reducing the quality of native biotic communities in the state.

Management
Preventative
The public should be notified to avoid cultivating, transplanting, or promote proliferation of Brazilian pepper. Care should also be exercised to avoid seed spread through disposal of cut trees. Due to its invasive nature, it is placed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection under section 62C-52.011 as a Class I - “Prohibited Aquatic Plant.” This law prohibits sale and or movement of this species.

Cultural
A well-established native cover or plant community is a way to suppress Brazilian pepper-tree. However, the rapid growth and high germination rates make Brazilian pepper-tree difficult to suppress from a cultural weed management standpoint.

Mechanical
When utilizing aggressive mechanical methods, the entire plant, particularly the root system, should be removed. Roots ¼ inch in diameter and larger are able to resprout and produce new plants, so follow-up from this type of control method will be necessary. Pepper-tree seeds cannot tolerate heat and will not germinate following a fire, but the plant has the potential to resprout after a fire from roots.

Biological
Currently there are no known biological control agents used for Brazilian pepper-tree. Over two hundred insects have been identified that feed on Brazilian pepper-tree in its native land. Before any insect is released into the U.S. as a biological control, it must be proven to be specific to the target pest, and non-harmful to native species. A sawfly and a thrips are currently under investigation at the University of Florida as potential biological control agents for Brazilian pepper-tree. The sawfly causes defoliation and the thrips feeds on new shoots.

Chemical
Chemical methods for Brazilian pepper-tree control can be separated into soil residual, foliar and basal bark/cut stump treatments. Each of these will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

Soil Residual - Bromacil, diuron, and hexazinone are root-absorbed herbicides that can be very effective for the control of Brazilian pepper-tree. However, these are the slowest acting and have the most residual activity. This residual activity is beneficial for long-term control but can pose problems to non-target species. Oaks, maples and other hardwoods are particularly sensitive to these herbicides, so care must be exercised when using these materials.

Foliar Herbicide Application - Foliar applications can also be very effective, but thorough coverage is essential. Due to their large size and often-inaccessible habitat, these types of applications are limited in scope. However, foliar treatments are very good on seedlings. For larger trees, triclopyr or glyphosate herbicides should be applied directly to the tree’s foliage and will be translocated to other parts of the tree. The advantage of these materials is low to no soil residual activity. Arsenal is also effective, but has extensive soil activity and may pose problems to non-target vegetation. Another overall disadvantage of foliar applications is non-target damage to desirable species, especially with aerial foliar applications to larger trees.

Basal Bark/Cut Stump Treatments - (The following is taken from Gioeli and Lampland) Brazilian pepper-trees can be effectively controlled by cutting and treating the stumps with herbicide. The trunk should be cut as close to the ground as possible. Within 5 minutes, a herbicide containing glyphosate or triclopyr should be applied as carefully as possible to the thin layer of living tissue, called the cambium, which is just inside the bark of the stump. The best time to cut Brazilian pepper-trees is when they are not fruiting, because seeds contained in the fruits have the capability of producing new Brazilian pepper-trees. If Brazilian pepper-trees that have fruits attached are cut, care should be taken not to spread the fruits to locations where they can cause future problems. Caution: Avoid touching the tree’s cambium. A rash can result. Some individuals are very sensitive to touching only the leaves. Use proper protective gear when sawing the tree and applying the herbicides.

Brazilian pepper-trees can also be controlled using basal bark herbicide application. An application of triclopyr ester (Garlon, Remedy – 44% concentration) herbicide is applied to the Brazilian pepper-tree’s bark between one half and one foot from the ground. Triclopyr is pre-mixed with a penetrating oil at a concentration of 14% triclopyr. The oil will cause the herbicide to pass through the bark. Therefore, girdling the tree’s trunk is not necessary and may, in fact, reduce the effectiveness. Once the basal bark treatment has been completed, it may take several weeks for the symptoms of control. Defoliation and the presence of termites is an indicator that the treatment has been successful.

Basal bark treatments are most effective in the fall when the Brazilian pepper-trees are flowering. This is due to the high level of translocation occurring within the tree. Fruiting occurs on trees that have been controlled using a basal bark treatment may retain their fruit. This situation will require that the area be checked for seedlings on a regular basis.
A ride down a country road in Yulee is always a delight, but you never know what lovely tree, bush or plant you might see. This Red Tip Photinia, has pretty white flowers in compact clusters and interesting red and green leaves. There are red berries in the fall.

The fringe tree, *Chionanthus virginicus*, is a shrub like tree with beautiful white blooms in May. They are showy, fragrant and attract birds, with a black fruit in the fall.

Then who knows what wonderful flowers(weeds?) you might see on the sides of the road.... blue spiderwort, purple and pink phlox, and many other colors and varieties. The definition of a weed is “a plant growing at the wrong place” and so these beautiful blossoms are not weeds. Enjoy the Country Roads in Nassau.
Chris and Vicki Peters have a lovely yard under a tree canopy with neat garden beds and flowers blooming most of the year on Amelia Island. They enjoy doing all of the planning and gardening themselves. Around a blue and white vase are blue Lobelia, the white Oak Leaf Hydrangea, variegated leaf Flax Lily and a Crepe Myrtle tree that will bloom later.

In another area the white petunias and variegated Liriope are a beautiful contrast to the dark green Holly Fern. At this time there are many lovely blue Agapanthus in bloom. They also have several Nikko Hydrangeas that can have blue blooms if planted in acidic soil and pink blooms if planted in alkaline soil. What a delight!

Spotlight on Nassau Gardens

June Winner
Planning a Garden

View more photos online at http://nassau.ifas.ufl.edu/horticulture/spotlight/spotlight.html. To be considered for Spotlight on Nassau Gardens, send a digital photo, with a description of your garden, along with your name, address and phone number to nmg@nassaucountyfl.com. For more information contact Rebecca Jordi at 491-7340 or 879-1019.
Would you like to give your garden a different look? Hypertufa pots look aged and rustic, like coarsely textured stone. They are made from a combination of concrete, peat, vermiculite and perlite (although you will probably find lots of other recipes to use.) It is like making mud pies for adults. Since you are making them yourself, they can be any size you like. When you make your pots, wear clothes that can get dirty. Also, wear rubber gloves and a dust mask or a bandana as a dust mask.

**Recipe:**
- 7 parts peat moss
- 5 parts portland cement
- 4 parts vermiculite
- 3 parts perlite
- 5½ parts water

**Equipment:**
- Dust Mask
- Rubber Gloves
- Mixing Tub
- Measuring Cup
- Molds
- Plastic Drop Cloth

**Technique:**
Measure, then mix dry ingredients thoroughly. Make sure to wear mask and gloves during this part of the process. Add water and mix thoroughly again. Consistency should be something like brownie mix. Cake mix consistency is too runny, bread dough too stiff. You may add water or dry ingredients to achieve the correct "feel".

After this mixing, you may not add large amounts of water! It may inhibit the cement from setting.

Line your mold with a piece of the drop cloth. After molding the hypertufa, leave it molded for 24 hours (longer in cold/cloudy weather or for large molds). Then gently work with it to remove the mold.

At unmolding, your piece will be soft. Don't handle it a lot, just place it in a quiet spot for a day or so and you will see it start to dry and harden. It is not totally cured for 90 days, but you may plant in it after a few days. You may drill a drain hole with a masonry bit before or after drying. If you are working in a different part of the county, these instructions may vary.

**Coloring process:**
You may apply color before or after the curing process. The younger the piece, the more color it will absorb. Copperas (Iron Sulfate) is the color I use. Make a dip vat or spray it on. The recipe is one to four tablespoons per gallon of water.

Color is not required. I like the gray look with seashells and certain plants. Experiment. You may want to make a color wash with a small amount of white or mushroom colored paint with a lot of water. Pour over the piece and hose off, or pat/sponge on for an uneven appearance. You may combine the two techniques.

For glue, my favorite is Landscape Bloc Adhesive because it sets quickly.
July Checklist

Citrus: Depending on citrus fertilizer label, apply fertilizer every six weeks or as directed. Check for citrus insects and disease. If adding horticulture oil or insecticidal soap be sure to use it only before 10am or after 6pm. Also be sure to use ultra-fine horticulture oil rather than dormant oil. Weed as needed, keep mulch away from trunk. Water once a week unless it rains.

Fruit: Remove about 1/4 to 1/5 of the oldest blueberry canes (usually 1 to 3 of the oldest canes.) Apply 6-6-6 or 8-8-8 fertilizer to nectarine. Weed as needed.

Flowers: Annuals to plant include celosia, co- leus, crossandra, excum, impatients, kalanchoe, nicotiana, ornamental peppers, portulaca, torenias, salvia, and periwinkle.

Bulbs: Separate bulbs and give away to friends. Bulbs planted too deeply need to be removed. Transplant bulbs if the area is receiving too much water.

Herbs: Bay laurel, culantro, ginger, horehound, lavender, Mexican tarragon, mint, parsley, oregano, rosemary, sesame, and thyme can be planted now.


Lawns: Add iron sulfate to green up lawn but avoid high nitrogen fertilization or high amounts this month. “Take-all-root-rot” will be in full force during the summer - be sure to avoid over watering and over fertilizing.

Perennials: Cut off old flower heads, prune off dead or insect infested areas, and pinch off tips of stems to encourage denser growth.

Trees: Remove crape myrtle seed heads to encourage blooming through September. Remove old flower and seed stalks. Prune now for trees flowering in the winter. Palms should have a “palm special” fertilizer applied over the root system under the spread of the fronds. The configuration should be 6-2-12-4 (N-P-K-Mg). Ideally this would also include manganese, boron, sulfur, etc. with appropriate formulations. Use a slow release fertilizer. Many palms are deficient in potassium, in spite of using palm fertilizers. Apply Muriate of Potash to correct this deficiency.

Vegetables: It’s too hot to be planting anything now but lima beans, eggplant, okra, Southern peas, peppers, and watermelon. However, this is a good month to solarize your fall garden. Till your plot, moisten the soil, cover the ground with clear plastic. Place heavy objects around the edges to keep the plastic from blowing away. Let the sun bake your soil. It will help control fungi and nematodes. After 30 days till soil, replace the plastic and bake another few weeks. Plant your August or September garden.

Selected from Florida Vegetable Guide by JM Stephens, RA Dunn, G Kidder, D Short, & GW Simone, University of Florida and Month-by-Month Gardening in Florida by Tom MacCubbin

August Checklist

Citrus: Depending on citrus fertilizer label, apply fertilizer every six weeks or as directed. Check for citrus insects and disease. Weed as needed, keep mulch away from trunk and grass out beneath the canopy. Water once a week unless it rains.

Fruit: Apply azalea fertilizer to blueberry shrubs, at 1/2 pound per 3 feet of shrub. Weed as needed. Check irrigation to ensure it is working. Make repairs.

Flowers: Plant aster, balsam, begonias, black-eyed Susan, blue daze, cats whiskers, coleus, cosmos, cockscombs, dianthus, forget-me-not, gaillardia, golden globe impatients, marigolds, melampodium, moon vine, pentas, periwinkles, petunias, phlox, porterweed, portulaca, purslane, salvia, sahajiosa, strawflowers, sunflowers, thistles, torenia, torenias, verbena, and zinnias.

Roses: Repeat July procedures. Water, water, water. Weed as needed.

Bulbs: Plant African Iris, agapanthus, amaryllis, cannes, crinums, daylilies, gladioli, gloriosa lilies, society garlic, and rain lilies (Zephyranthes).

Herbs: Bay laurel, culantro, ginger, horehound, lavender, Mexican tarragon, mint, parsley, oregano, rosemary, sesame, and thyme can be planted now.

Lawns: There is still time to install a seeded lawn but do not delay. Select good quality seed such as Argentine Bahia, common bermudagrass or centipede. Initially the seeds to need stay moistened but once they have germinated irrigation can be reduced. These grasses do well without heavy irrigation and high nitrogen fertilizers. They turn brown earlier than St. Augustine grass in the winter. Contact your local Extension service regarding a pH test for your soil pH. Common bermudagrass has a wide range of of pH numbers; bahia and centipede prefer acid soils so be sure to have soil tested to wounds. Remove old seedheads from crape myrtle trees to encourage additional blooms.

Vegetables: To produce fruit August plantings are especially important for corn, eggplant, pumpkin, peppers, tomatoes, and watermelons. Each of these crops takes about 90 days to come to fruition. Do not wait too late, or an early frost may reduce the yield. Other cold tolerant vegetables to plant include snap beans, pole beans, lima beans, broccoli, cauliflower, collards, corn, cucumber, bunching onions, Southern peas, peppers, pumpkin, summer squash, tomatoes, turnips, and watermelons. One pest to be especially aware of is the cutworm.

Trees: Cut back unwanted limbs to a branch angle or the trunk. Remove old fronds and seed stalks from palms. Do not apply paints or coverings to wounds. Remove old seedheads from crape myrtle trees to encourage additional blooms.
Garden Talk - with Rebecca Jordi

Q: What is the vine I see everywhere with the bright yellow flowers on it?

A: The vine you are describing is most likely Carolina jasmine, Gelsemium sempervirens, and also called Yellow jessamine or Carolina jessamine. This vine is found in forest or natural areas in open woods and thickets. Carolina jasmine is native to the United States and found in most areas along the eastern Seaboard. Although it can be weedy in an ideal environment, it is not invasive. The sunny yellow, tubular flowers will be in higher production in full sun which is why the vine grows to the top of trees and shrubs – it is seeking the most sun possible. There is a double-flowered cultivar called ‘Pride of Augusta’ (sometimes known as ‘Plena’) which has a longer blooming period. Carolina jasmine would be a good vine to grow on arbors if the area received a good amount of sun exposure. All parts of the plant are poisonous and it can be fatal if eaten. It can grow in cold hardiness zones 7-9, prefers moist, well drained acid soils.

Q: I would like to plant some plums in my yard but I am not sure which ones to buy.

A: The names of all University of Florida plum cultivars begin with the prefix ‘Gulf’. These cultivars are Japanese type plums (Prunus salicina Lindl.) and have resistance to plum leaf scald (Xylella fastidiosa) and bacterial spot (Xanthomonas campestris). Fruit size is about 1½ to 2 in. diameter and fruit quality is good. They ripen in early to late May. ‘Gulfbeauty’ was released in 1998 and patented by the University of Florida which is the tree we have in the demonstration garden in Yulee. Fruit color is dark reddish purple and the flesh is yellow with a green hue. The skin is sour, which is common in Japanese plums, but the flesh is sweet, sub-acid and firm when ripe enough to eat. The flesh clings to the stone even when soft ripe. ‘Gulfblaze’ was released and patented by the UF and provides a mid-season plum. Fruit are very firm, medium-large, round and semi-freestone which means it is a little easier to pull the flesh from the stone pit. Fruit color is dark red to purple and the flesh is orange, sweet and sub-acid. Other plum choices are ‘Gulfrose’, ‘Gulfruby’ and ‘Gulfgold’. Plums fruit better when planted with more than one type of tree so consider purchasing two or more different types for cross-pollination. However, if you have a wild plum nearby, the bees will use it for cross-pollination. There are also some cultivars developed by Auburn University which would work well in our area too and those trees have Au in the front of the name, such as ‘Au-Rosa’ or ‘Au-Rubrum’. For more complete information check out the University of Florida publication: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs250
Garden Talk with Rebecca Jordi

Q: My potatoes have cracks in them. What causes this and how can I correct it?

A: The good news is the cracks are not caused by an insect or disease but by physical conditions in the soil and climate. The growth of the potato has alternating times of good nutrition and water followed by drought and temperature changes or such environmental conditions. Some potato varieties are more susceptible than others. For instance, ‘Atlantic’, used for making potato chips and ‘Red Lasoda’ for cooking often produce cracked tubers. ‘La Chipper’ and ‘Harley Blackwell’ are not as susceptible but they have been known to produce cracks during hot, wet years. So what can you do?

There are a few things you can do to reduce the potential of cracked potatoes. The most important thing is to keep soil moisture consistent. Not too wet, but not too dry. Having said that - not too much can be done about excessive rain from a tropical storm but be sure irrigation is not the culprit. However, when the tubers are growing quickly (usually later in the season), they will need more water to stay healthy. Space plants in even rows and equal distances from each other. Overcrowding potatoes is not a good practice for strong plant and tuber growth. Be sure fertilizers are applied evenly as well. Attached is a publication from the University of Florida on this cracking problem. http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/HS/HS18200.pdf

For more Garden Talk” questions answered by Ms. Jordi, see our website at nassau.ifas.ufl.edu/