

# *The Backyard Gardener*

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Slugs, Snails - 2  
Bad News

2012 Spring 3  
Trends in the Garden

Congratulations 4  
on 10 years with the Master Gardener Program

Fundraising with 4  
Growums

Grandma Gets 4  
Promoted!

## Coordinator's Corner

This has been one busy winter. We are actively training the new 2012 class of Master Gardeners. The new class is made up of 15 eager volunteers that are a wonderful addition to the Volusia County Master Gardener program. We look forward to introducing them to the public when they begin their clinic training in late March.

I am finishing up my masters degree in Entomology at the University of Florida. It is hard to believe that three years have flown by so quickly. I am honestly glad to see it finally end.

The Gardener's Hotline program also will be coming to an end this year. I had a great time meeting so many people enthusiastic about horticulture. It served as a great educational outreach for the residents of central Florida. We will miss our collaboration with Daytona State College. Here's to new beginnings and bittersweet endings!



Karen Stauderman  
Master Gardener Coordinator  
Residential/Urban  
Extension Agent



It's that time again for the International EPCOT Flower and Garden show. The Master Gardener class of 2012 will be representing Volusia County this year.

The Flower show runs from early March through early June.

## More Pomegranate Trees

Due to the recent interest in pomegranate trees, we have had a shortage of supply in the central Florida area. As a result, we have enlisted the help of some additional nurseries with building up the supply. The list is not comprehensive or intended to be a list of recommended suppliers of pomegranate plants. It is simply a partial list of Flor-

ida nurseries. Any attempt to locate plants also should include an internet search as there are many other nurseries able to supply plants.

1. Chestnut Hill Tree Farm,  
Alachua  
<http://chestnuthillnursery.com>

386-462-2820

Toll free: 1-800-669-2067

2. AgriStarts, Apopka  
<http://www.agristarts.com>  
407-889-8055

3. Lee's Nursery, Branford  
8316 US Highway 27,  
Branford, FL 32008

Email:  
[Leenur1@windstream.net](mailto:Leenur1@windstream.net)  
386-935-1410

Continued on Page 2



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## Pomegranate Trees Continued

4. Hopkins Nursery, Immokalee

<http://www.hopkinstropicalfruitnursery.com>

239-658-0370

5. Green Sea Farms, Zolfo Springs

<http://www.localharvest.org/green-sea-farms-M36650>

863-604-3778



**Blooming Jade Plant**

Photo courtesy Kathi Hooton

## Slugs, Snails - Bad News

After seeing shells, which I attributed to beachside soil, it finally dawned on me that I had snails. This resulted when a whole bed of new begonias disappeared in a short time. Also, I couldn't figure out why my flower bed and roses were declining so much.

There are hundreds of species of slugs and snails which are land dwelling mollusca related to clams and oysters. Their size is 1/2" to 8", but only a few eat plants. Snails have shells, slugs do not.

They can cause great damage to gardens by eating leaves, stems, flowers, and even roots. Their diet includes: roses, chrysanthemums, daffodils, dahlias, day-lilies, gladiolas, hollyhocks, and even potato roots... the list goes on. They even eat grass!

Snails are nocturnal, and can

make tender seedlings disappear overnight. They begin eating from the bottom of plants and work their way up leaving large ragged holes. They are said to leave slimy trails.

In our warm climate, they do not tolerate our cold winters very well. They breed in the warm part of the year and lay clusters of 25 or more eggs that can hatch in about a month. They live in moist, acid, and shady gardens.

They do have predators; rove beetles, garden birds, garter snakes, salamanders, toads, turtle, centipedes, firefly larvae, etc. We must remember too, that they are important in the conversion of plant material and are important food for some forms of wildlife.

To control them, begin monitoring activity in early

spring. Clean up rotting debris around your plants. They do not like to be dry and will hide in moist environments. You can sprinkle salt on them to kill, hand pick them at night, (use thin gloves or tongs because the slime is hard to get off hands), or set up a beer reservoir (they are attracted to yeast) to drown them. Other methods include the use of abrasive materials such as egg shells, diatomaceous earth, or sand sprinkled around the plants.

Pellet baits also are an excellent option. Slug baits act as a stomach poison, sprinkle around or place under a saucer for best use. Always follow labeled directions on the back of the product bag. Avoid getting the pellets wet and keep them away from wildlife.

For more information:  
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in891>

# 2012 Spring Trends in the Garden

Spring is just around the corner, what better time than to look ahead at the new garden trends of 2012. Some of the new trends are familiar to Floridians. According to Anthony Tesselaar, an experienced horticultural traveler and blogger they include:

## Drought tolerant plants and products

Sharon Coates, co-owner of Zaretsky and Associates, a landscape design-and-build firm in Rochester, NY emphasizes the new trends start with the importance in issues surrounding gardening, water use and, the cleaning of water.

Choosing drought tolerant plants and watering responsibly has been in the forefront of Florida landscapes. Rain sensors and micro-irrigation systems have provided water savings to homeowners in smart landscapes. Responsible irrigation also is a must. By monitoring your irrigation system, you become good stewards of our precious resource avoiding waste by watering driveways and sidewalks.

According to Coates, people are turning to rain gardens to help clean water, especially storm water carrying pollutants like fertilizers and motor oil into local waterways. Retention ponds filled with deep-rooted plants and grasses—all of them non-invasive, native, or locally adapted—provide filtration in excess water and the occasional drought.

Many municipalities throughout the country are mandating the use of reclaimed water and rain barrels for use in the landscape and gardens. This water wise trend also is Florida friendly.

## Mediterranean Style

Mediterranean garden styles continue to be hot in 2012, according to Genevieve Schmidt, a northern coastal California landscape designer. This style offers open and airy courtyards, light-colored, textured hardscaping such as mosaic walls, gravel beds or unglazed terra cotta pots, and low-growing, drought-tolerant plants, hedges, topiary trees and vines (i.e. olive, bay and lemon trees, succulents, lavender, palms, roses and grasses). Splashes of vivid color help achieve this style.



Photo courtesy of Genevieve Schmidt

Black and amber shades in plants continue to be a “hot” color trend. Schmidt explains that “amber heucheras (perennial), the amber Flower Carpet roses, and other plants with amber tones are going to be big in nurseries this year.”

## Color Trend

Black and amber shades in plants continue to be a “hot” color trend. Schmidt explains that “amber heucheras (perennial), the amber Flower Carpet roses, and other plants with amber tones are going to be big in nurseries this year.”

## Low-risk, high-value plants

Low-risk, high-value plants that look good in the garden center and work well in the landscape will always be the trend. Plants bred for disease and pest resistance as well as drought tolerance are the ones to look out for. Some of the plant selections include new varieties from the Flower Carpet rose, Festival Burgundy cordyline, Storm agapanthus and Volcano phlox. This trend dovetails with the principle of selecting the ‘right plant for the right place’ in the landscape.

Inexpensive, long lasting shrub color includes selections like Flower Carpet roses, hydrangeas, potentilla (shrubby cinquefoil) and spirea.

## Smaller water features

Look for a trend in downsizing water features, there is less interest in large ponds. Cut stone slabs, a boulder or a beautiful glazed urn with water bubbling out of the top offering less maintenance are what we will be looking for suggests Sharon Coates, co-owner of Zaretsky and Associates, a landscape design-and-build firm in Rochester, NY.

## Seasonal interest

In northern areas, Coates is seeing an increase in ornamental grasses. They provide winter interest especially where deciduous leaves have fallen. Northerners are looking for plants with winter berries, evergreens, barks of different colors, and textures or deciduous trees and shrubs with dramatic forms. Plants with a seasonal impact also are introduced in the landscape in order to offer new interest throughout the year. This is especially true for Florida where the seasons are not as distinct.

“Customers have grown tired of the stark, all-season gardens that were so fashionable a decade ago,” Tesselaar admits. “Every garden needs its backbone of plants that look great year round, but that doesn’t have to be at the expense of seasonal interest and color.”

Look for these new trends in the coming season. For more information on Hot Garden trends for 2012, go to [www.youareasygarden.com](http://www.youareasygarden.com).

## Congratulations on 10 years with Volusia County MG Program



Penny Bragg (top), Norma Adamczyk (L), and  
Evelyn Shapiro (R)

## Fundraising with Growums

Getting children outdoors and keeping them active is not an easy task these days. Growums Garden Kits, are a new fundraising concept that can help keep children engaged and entertained in the garden. Even better: It will encourage children to eat more healthy foods and teach them skills for growing their own delicious fruits and vegetables - for a lifetime!

Available in six different garden themes (Pizza, Taco, Herb, Stir-Fry, Salad, and Ratatouille),

Growums Garden Kits combine outdoor fun with a unique and exciting online educational experience. Children start by registering their garden kits online at [Growums.com](http://Growums.com). From there, they'll follow fun-loving Growums characters through a virtual garden world of delightfully animated step-by-step how-to videos that teach how to grow and care for vegetables and herbs, from seed to harvest. This is a fundraising idea that 'grows' on you.



## Grandma Gets Promoted!

My grandson's kindergarten teacher decided to follow her class to the first grade. She brought me along as well for the gardening class. This year presented a real challenge; no garden area, just school yard and school yard soil! Yuck!

Again, my garden club sponsored the financing, so I accepted the challenge and devised a modified plan of Lasagna Gardening by Patricia Lanza. My plan was to use boards for garden walls, similar to a child's sandbox then to layer the following over grass or dirt in the defined area: Lay newspaper to cover the area up to ½"-1" thick; water until soggy; layer soil on paper; compost; peat; mulch; and, repeat layers ending with the peat. Water again, but don't get the area mushy. When planting, pull back to the peat layer.

In September, we learned how to beautify our garden by planting mums, and how to mix fertilizer in buckets. The children especially liked that part. I used the same format from the previous year: Arrive at the same day and time of the week, have a set time (15 minutes for each group to make it fair), and keep the groups small, up to four children per group.

In October, we began planting our vegetable pizza garden with tomatoes, peppers, onions, and herbs. Over the Christmas vacation, it all froze. We began again and by the end of the school year, we had vegetables for pizza and herbs for Mother's Day. The teacher made sauce from the vegetables and the cafeteria made small pizzas from English muffins. The class invited

fifth graders, who helped with their reading skills, to the pizza party. What fun!

At the end of the school year, take the boards down and rake the garden down into the school yard.

Marty Borkosky ('80)



Look what's blooming in the garden -  
*Formosa azalea!*