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Cover photo: a gaillardia flower by Chris Dunway

Know Your Natives—Native Gaillardia: A Colorful Wildflower for Home Landscapes

Native gaillardia (*Gaillardia pulchella*), commonly known as blanketflower or firewheel, is one of the most recognizable native wildflowers in Louisiana. This member of the

Asteraceae family produces brilliant red, orange, and yellow blooms that provide season-long color while supporting pollinators. Native gaillardia thrives in Louisiana's challenging heat, tolerates drought, and performs well in sandy and well-drained soils, making it an excellent choice for low-maintenance landscapes, pollinator gardens, roadside plantings, and naturalized meadows.

Botanical Description

Gaillardia pulchella is an annual to short-

lived perennial wildflower that typically grows 12 to 24 inches tall. Plants develop branching, hairy stems and alternate leaves concentrated near the base. Lower leaves may be lobed while upper leaves are narrower and lance-shaped. Flower heads measure

approximately 1.5 to 3 inches across and display showy ray florets that are typically deep red near the base and bright yellow at the tips. The central disk is reddish-brown to purple-red. Individual blooms

resemble colorful pinwheels and are produced continuously throughout the growing season.

Flowering Time

In Louisiana, native gaillardia typically begins flowering in late spring and continues through summer and often into fall. Peak bloom generally occurs from May through August, but flowering may continue longer when periodic rainfall occurs. Regular deadheading can further extend bloom duration in cultivated landscapes.

Native Habitat

Native gaillardia occurs naturally throughout much of the Gulf Coast region, including Louisiana. It is commonly found in coastal prairies, sandy fields, roadsides, disturbed sites, open grasslands, dunes, and other sunny, well-drained locations. The species



Gaillardia pulchella growing in a wildflower meadow in Metairie, Louisiana.
Photo by Chris Dunaway

is particularly adapted to sandy and calcareous soils and is frequently observed in areas where competition from taller vegetation is limited.

How to Grow Native Gaillardia

Plant gaillardia in full sun for best flowering. Select sites with excellent drainage, as poorly drained soils can shorten plant life and increase disease problems. Seed may be direct-sown in fall or early spring. Once established, plants require little supplemental irrigation except during prolonged drought. Avoid excessive fertilization, which can result in weak growth and fewer flowers. Allow some flowers to mature and set seed if natural reseeding is desired.

Pests and Diseases

Native gaillardia is relatively trouble-free. Occasional pests include aphids, leafhoppers, and spider mites during hot, dry weather. Slugs may damage young seedlings in wet conditions. Disease issues are generally minor but may include powdery mildew, root rot in poorly drained soils, and occasional leaf spot diseases. Good air circulation,



A beautiful *Gaillardia pulchella* flowers . Photo by Chris Dunaway

proper spacing, and excellent drainage are the best preventive measures.

Propagation Tips

Gaillardia is one of the easiest native wildflowers to propagate from seed. Collect mature seed heads after flowering and allow them to dry before storage. Sow seed directly in prepared soil and lightly cover, as seed germinates best with some light exposure. Keep soil lightly moist until seedlings emerge. Established plants often reseed naturally. Clump division can also be used to propagate short-lived perennial selections during fall or early spring.

Landscape Uses

Native gaillardia is ideal for pollinator gardens, native plantings, cottage gardens, coastal landscapes, meadow plantings, and highway beautification projects. It combines well with native grasses, *Coreopsis*, *Rudbeckia*, *Liatris*,



Seeds of *Gaillardia pulchella*. Photo by Chris Dunaway



Close up of stem and leaves. Note the hairy nature.
Photo by Chris Dunaway

Monarda, and other Louisiana native wildflowers. The bright flowers attract butterflies, native bees, and other beneficial insects. Because of its heat and drought tolerance, gaillardia is also valuable for water-wise landscapes and low-maintenance public plantings.

Wildlife Value

The nectar-rich flowers attract numerous pollinators including butterflies, honey bees, and native bees and wasps. The plant serves as a larval host for the bordered patch butterfly (*Chlosyne lacinia*). Incorporating native gaillardia into landscapes can contribute to local pollinator conservation efforts.

~Dr. Joe W Willis

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August Planting Guide

Crop	Recommended Variety	Planting Depth	Spacing Inches	Days Until Harvest * from transplant date
Bell Peppers	Aristotle XR3, Blushing Beauty, King Arthur	⅝ inch	15-18	140-150
Broccoli	Green Magic, Everest, Castle Dome, Packman	⅝ inch	18-24	70-90*
Brussels Sprouts	Jade Cross E, Long Island Improved	⅝ inch	12-15	90*
Cabbage	Bravo, Rio Verde, Caraflex, Blue Vantage	⅝ inch	12-15	65-75*
Cauliflower	Snow Crown, Cumberland, Incline, Freedom	⅝ inch	18-24	55-65*
Chinese Cabbage	None Given	¼ inch	12	60-80*
Collards	Champion, Flash, Georgia, Top Bunch, Yates	⅝ inch	6-12	75
Cucumbers	Slicers = Dasher II, Diva, Fanfare HG, Indy Pickler = Calypso	¼ inch	12-18	50-65
Irish Potatoes	Red-Dark Red Noland, Red Lasoda White-Kennebec, Yukon Gold, Autumn Gold	4 inches	12	90-120
Kale	Siberian, Vates	½ inch	12-18	25-50
Lima Beans	Dixie Buttercup, Fordhook 242, Jackson Wonder	½ inch	2-3	48-55
Luffa Gourd	None Given	½ inch	48	90
Mustard	Florida Broadleaf, Greenwave, Red Giant, Savannah	⅝ inch	1-2	35-50
Pumpkins	Atlantic Giant, Baby Bear, Prankster, Sorcerer	½ inch	36-60	90-120
Rutabagas	American Purple Top, Laurentian	⅝ inch	4-8	88
Shallots	Matador, Prisma	1 inch	4-8	50
Snap Beans	Blue Lake 274, Bronco, Contender, Derby, Lynx	½ inch	2-3	48-55
Squash	Zucchini = Declaration II, Justice III, Payroll Straight Neck = Multipik, Patriot II, Liberator III Crook Neck = Destiny III, Gentry, Medallion	⅝ inch	36	50-90
Tomatoes	Bella Rosa, Sun Chaser, Florida 91, Phoenix, Solar Fire, BHN-216, Solar Set	⅝ inch	16-24	100-115
Turnips	Royal Crown, Purple Top White Globe,	⅝ inch	2-6	40-50

Creating a Wildflower Meadow

If you plant it, they will come. Installing a wildflower meadow will attract wildlife and human biophiles and aesthetes. Additionally, starting a wildflower meadow is a powerful way to support declining native pollinator populations, stabilize heavy clay soils, and embrace the vibrant natural heritage of the Gulf Coastal Plain. Unlike a traditional turf lawn, a regional meadow thrives in the intense heat and humidity of Louisiana's subtropical climate. Establishing a self-sustaining habitat requires careful site preparation, species selection tailored to local weather, and a distinct approach to seasonal maintenance.

Groundwork and Site Preparation

Proper site preparation is the most critical factor for long-term success. In Southeast Louisiana, you must combat aggressive perennial turf grasses like Bermuda, Bahia, and St. Augustine and annual invasive weeds. Choose a sunny site that receives at least six hours of direct daily sunlight.

Avoid the temptation to rototill the soil blindly; doing so stirs up a dormant weed seed bank that will quickly outgrow your wildflowers. Instead, use non-chemical eradication methods. Laying down heavy cardboard topped with several inches of dye-free mulch is an effective way to smother tough lawn grasses. Alternatively, solarization—covering the area with clear UV-stabilized plastic during the blistering



A mass blooming of Lanceleaf Coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*) in New Orleans City Park. Photo by Chris Dunaway

hot months of June through August—uses Louisiana's intense summer heat to bake out weeds and their seeds. Repeated use of non-selective herbicides can also be used to clear the area before planting. Be sure to not use a product that leaves residual pre-emergence herbicides that would prevent seeds from germinating.

Selecting Native Seed Blends

For an authentic, low-maintenance ecosystem, prioritize regional native species that are naturally adapted to the local climate. Excellent wildflower species for Southeast Louisiana include:

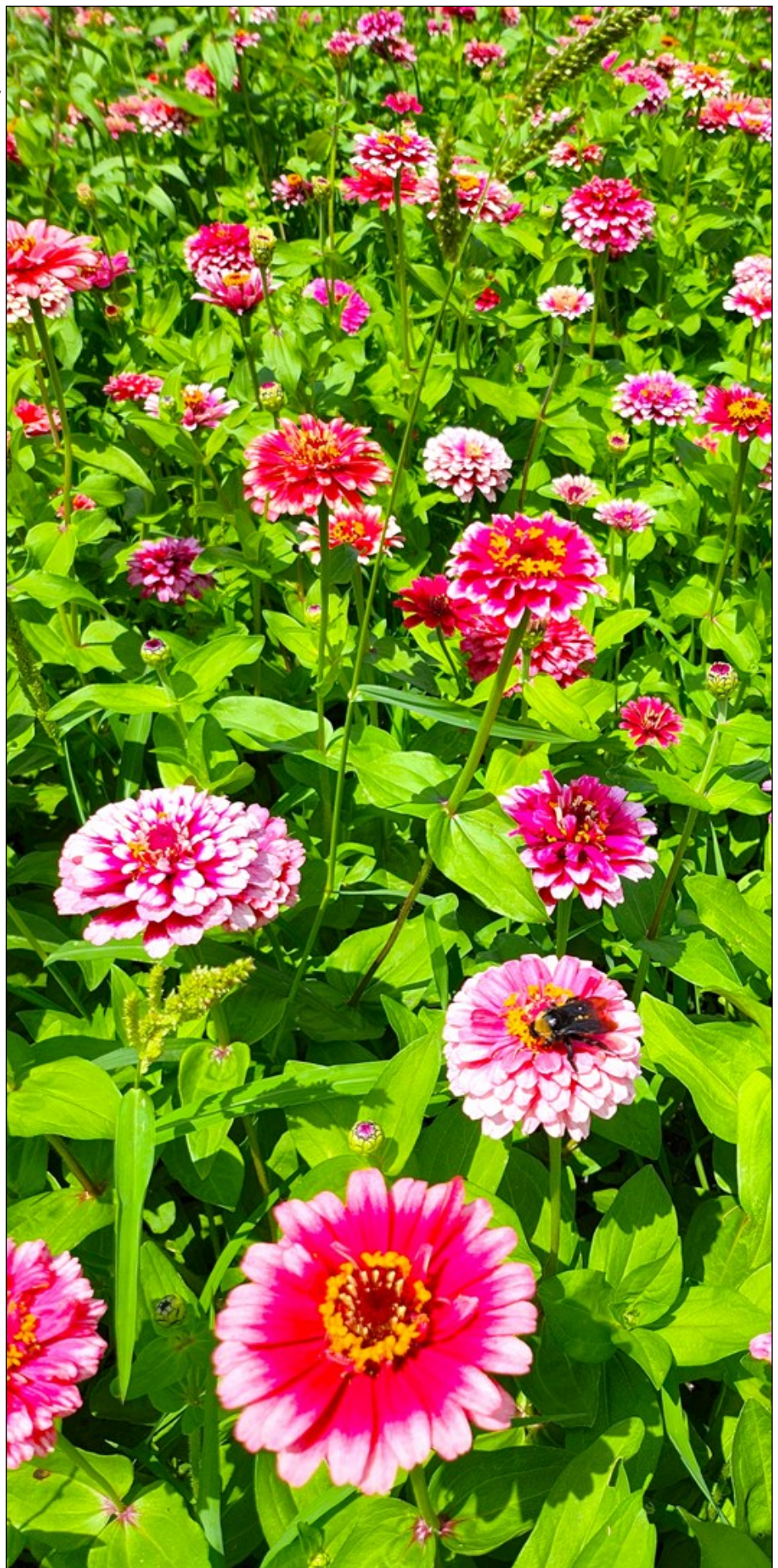
- Gulf Coast Penstemon (*Penstemon tenuis*)
- Lanceleaf Coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*)
- Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)
- Blanketflower (*Gaillardia pulchella*)
- Scarlet Sage (*Salvia coccinea*)

A healthy meadow mix should pair these blooms with native bunchgrasses like Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*). These grasses provide crucial structural support during heavy summer downpours, hold the soil together during localized flooding, and prevent weeds from filling empty spaces.

Sowing the Seed

The optimal window for sowing wildflower seeds in South Louisiana is late autumn, specifically from late October through November. Sowing during this timeframe allows the seeds to settle over the winter and undergo natural cold stratification, which triggers robust spring germination.

Because native wildflower seeds are remarkably small, mix them into a bucket of fine sand at a four-to-one ratio of sand



Native plants are not a requirement. Here is a large patch of zinnias (*Zinnia elegans*) growing at the Hope Haven Fitness Trail in Marrero, Louisiana. Photo by Chris Dunaway

to seed. This acts as a carrier to ensure even distribution and shows you exactly where you have broadcasted. Walk across the area or use a light lawn roller to compress the seeds firmly into the bare dirt. Do not bury the seeds, as they require sunlight to germinate.

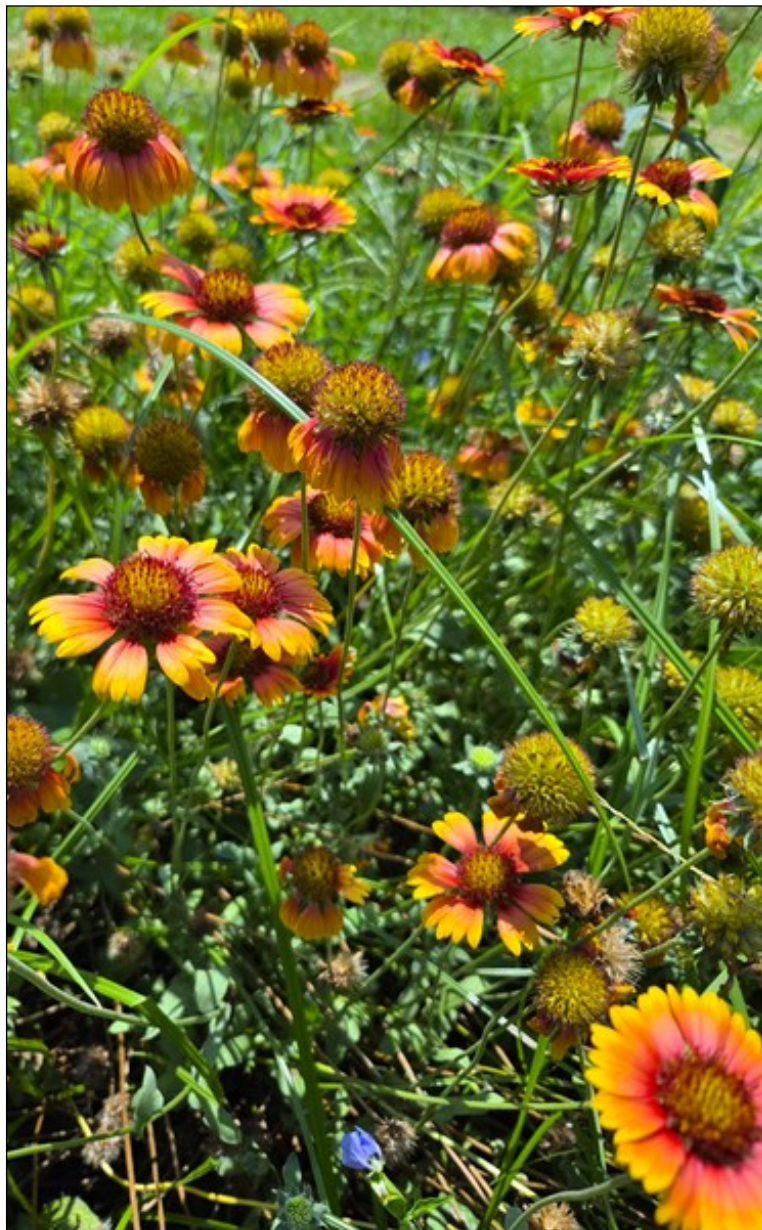
Long-Term Maintenance

During the first spring and summer, your meadow's primary goal is root establishment. Perennial wildflowers grow slowly and may not bloom fully until their second or third year. If fast-growing weeds begin to overtop your seedlings, trim the area to a height of six inches using string trimmers to give the native seedlings access to sunlight. Hand pulling or using hoes or other tools is a good way to stay ahead of problem unwanted plants taking over.

Once established, the meadow will require minimal watering except during severe summer droughts. The primary management event occurs once a year in late



Some regular maintenance may be required. This wildflower meadow in Metairie, LA is becoming overgrown with Spanish Needles and other noxious plants. Photo by Chris Dunaway



Blanketflower *Gaillardia pulchella*, growing in a wildflower meadow at the Mike Miley Playground in Metairie, Louisiana.
Photo by Chris Dunaway

winter or early spring (typically late January). Mow or cut the entire meadow down to about three to four inches. This recycles nutrients back into the ground, opens the soil to the warm spring sun, and prevents woody brush from taking over your beautiful prairie habitat.

I do not suggest that you turn your front lawn into a wildflower meadow but why not set one up in that unused piece of land to the side. You will certainly be visited by nature's creatures including butterflies and birds. You may even find someone taking their graduation or wedding photos in your garden.

~Chris Dunaway

Plants Get Sunburned Too!

It's no secret that summers in our area are not particularly comfortable or fun. While many of the landscape plants we use are adapted to subtropical conditions, some plants, such as those that typically grow as understory plants or in low light situations, as well as quite a few things from the vegetable garden, can suffer a sunburn.

Sunburn on foliage and fruits can mimic symptoms of plant pathogens, including fungal diseases, bacterial infections, or even viruses. Sunburn can also leave gardeners second guessing themselves about their watering schedules, especially when plants begin to shed damaged leaves. Learning to recognize the signs of sunburn or sunscald on plants is a useful skill for any gardener.

Look for sunken, yellow or white patches on the leaves or fruits. On the foliage, sections of patchy brown that do not trace along the leaf margins or veins can indicate sunburn. If the leaves tend to collect rainwater or irrigation water in small depressions or contours, the sun can magnify through the water, heating it, leading to sun damage, much like a magnifying glass burning ants. If the brown sections on the damaged leaves seem random and don't follow a pattern, this can point to sunburn. Moving plants, sudden changes in light exposure, or adding new plants to a landscape this time of year can all lead to sunburn as the plants are not gradually exposed to the increased light levels of summer. Most garden centers have shade cloth, poly, or some other protection from the sun over their stock. Hardening these plants off by gradually exposing them to full sun takes time.

Sunken areas on fruits and vegetables, especially on things like peppers, eggplants, and tomatoes, tend to be watery. If you look carefully, often these damaged patches are all on the south or west side of the plant. On citrus trees, the

fruits will be brown or scabbed over on the southern exposure, while fruits on the north side of the canopy look fine. When the canopy of a plant is thin, the fruits get exposed to sunlight quickly, leading to damage. Proper fertilization and pruning time in the spring can help to prevent this.



Sun damage to a philodendron

Firstly, know the sun exposure needs of the plants you are growing, and take that information with a grain of salt. Many plant labels and seed packets are developed by larger horticultural distributors for use across the United States. Full sun in places like Minneapolis, Minnesota, or even Atlanta, Georgia means something totally different than full sun in New Orleans, Louisiana. We sit at a considerably lower latitude than most of the county, meaning we are closer to the equator than most of the rest of the country. This means that sun exposure is more intense and prolonged. During the summer months, even plants labeled "full sun" can benefit from some partial shade, especially on western exposures

or in the afternoon hours. Add a shade cloth or shade sail over plants that are struggling with sunburn or overexposure. Mirlitons in particular seem to respond well to the addition of a shade cloth in July and August.

Planting location can also impact sun stress. Foundation plantings along brick walls with southern or western exposures can create trapped heat pockets as the bricks absorb and radiate heat back out onto the plants. This can magnify heat and sun damage, essentially cooking the plants. Gardenias, azaleas, and camellias seem to be especially susceptible to this in our area. Choosing hardier plant material or planting these species a bit further out from brick walls on the south and west exposure can help.

~Anna Timmerman

Not Your Daddy's Roundup

It used to be you could walk into a garden center or the plant section of a big box store and ask for Roundup and everyone knew what you were

talking about. But now, they may lead you to a section that looks like this and ask, “Which one?” (Figure 1.)

Roundup containing glyphosate was first introduced in 1974 by Monsanto. The mode of action, quick breakdown, and effectiveness made Roundup the best-selling and most widely used pesticide in the world. Glyphosate containing products are still relied on for over 80% of no-till soybean and corn production in the U.S. Beginning in 2018, massive monetary awards were granted from lawsuits claiming that Roundup caused Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma in users and Monsanto had failed to warn users of the risk. In 2023, these lawsuits lead Bayer AG, who had purchased Monsanto, to discontinue the sale of Roundup products containing glyphosate to consumers intended for residential use. Roundup containing glyphosate was replaced with products containing alternative active ingredients.

Roundup containing glyphosate is still marketed for commercial use and sold as Roundup Pro Concentrate, Roundup Pro MAX, and Roundup

PowerMAX3. The primary difference being the glyphosate salt base used, how quickly it penetrates the leaf surface, and how quickly it becomes rainfast.

Roundup products readily available to home consumers are varied. It is important that you read the label on these products and know how they work, how to apply them, and what results to expect. There are many formulations of these products available including concentrates and as ready-to-use sprays.

In 2017, a line of lawn products was introduced. Roundup for Lawns^{1, 2 or 3} contains the active ingredients: MCPA, dimethylamine salt, Quinclorac, Dicamba, dimethylamine salt, and

sulfentrazone. This product became known as Roundup for Northern lawns because it will cause damage to southern turf grasses like St. Augustine, Bermuda, Centipede, and Bahiagrass.



Figure 1: Roundup brand products sales display.
Photo by Dr. Joe W Willis

Roundup for Lawns^{4, 5 or 6} says specifically For Use on Southern Grasses (Figure 2) and contains the active ingredients: penoxsulam, sulfentrazone, 2,4-D dimethylamine salt, and dicamba. Note that the major difference in product name is the little subscript number (1-3 for the North or 4-6 for the South) just after the word “Lawns”. The active ingredients are the same in the within each group. The difference is that #1 and #4 are ready to use products with wand applicators, #2 and #5 are concentrates and #3 and #6 are hose end applicator bottles. An interesting tidbit is that both formulas can be used on Zoysiagrass.

In 2019, Roundup Landscape Weed Preventer was introduced. The granular formulation contains the active ingredient pendimethalin. Pendimethalin inhibits cell division and elongation making it a very effective pre-emergent herbicide.

In 2022, as Roundup products containing glyphosate were being removed from the residential consumer market, several new Roundup products were introduced. These new products contained combinations of active ingredients designed to give similar activity to glyphosate but with different modes of action and



Figure 2: Roundup For Lawns₅ for use on Southern Grasses.
Photo by Dr. Joe W Willis

symptomology.

Roundup Weed & Grass Killer₄ Exclusive Formula (Figure 3) contains the active ingredients: triclopyr, diethylamine salt, fluazifop-P-butyl, diquat bromide. It has similar results to products containing glyphosate though the symptomology will be different and they may act more rapidly.

Roundup Dual Action Weed & Grass Killer Plus 4 Month Preventer (Figure 4) contains the active ingredients: triclopyr, triethylamine salt, fluazifop-P-butyl, diquat bromide, imazapic, ammonium salt. This formula kills actively growing plants and functions as a pre-emergent herbicide. It is important to know that you can't plant seeds in the treated area for 4 months or more. Most pre-emergent herbicides will also harm young transplants if planted into treated areas or they are used on newly planted transplants. Check the label for more specific information.



Figure 3: Roundup Weed & Grass Killer Exclusive Formula.
Photo by Dr. Joe W Willis

Roundup Dual Action 365 Plus 12 Month Preventer (Figure 5) contains the active ingredients: triclopyr, triethylamine salt, fluazifop-P-butyl, imazapic, ammonium salt, diquat bromide. This formula is very similar to the previous product but has a much higher concentration of imazapic resulting in a 12 month pre-emergent activity.

The main take home point is, “Read the Label Before Purchasing Any Pesticides!” Even if it is something you think you are familiar with, make sure that what you are purchasing will do what you want and that you know how to make safe and effective applications. And remember, “The Label Is The Law!”

So, what is the current status of glyphosate? Is glyphosate now a restricted use pesticide? Do you need a license to purchase glyphosate containing products? While Roundup products containing glyphosate have been removed from the residential consumer line of products, it is still highly popular



Figure 4: Roundup Dual Action Weed & Grass Killer Plus 4 Month Prevention. Photo by Dr. Joe W Willis

and found in the commercial/professional line of products. Products like those previously mentioned: Roundup Pro Concentrate, Roundup Pro MAX, and Roundup PowerMAX3. And yes, you can purchase these products. Glyphosate is not a restricted use pesticide, so no license is required to purchase glyphosate-containing products. Additionally, when the glyphosate patent expired in 2000, many other companies began selling products that contain glyphosate as the active ingredient. So, there are many generic brands of glyphosate-containing products readily available at local garden centers.

This article is meant only to provide information and in no way is an endorsement or denunciation of glyphosate or Roundup products.

~ Dr. Joe W Willis and Dr. Colton Blankenship



Figure 5: Roundup Dual Action 365 Weed & Grass Killer Plus 12 Month Prevention. Photo by Dr. Joe W Willis

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Yellow foxtail (*Setaria pumila*)

Yellow foxtail (*Setaria pumila*) is a summer annual grass in the Poaceae family and is one of the most common foxtail weeds found in agricultural fields, landscapes, roadsides, turfgrass, gardens, and other disturbed areas throughout Louisiana and much of North America. It reproduces exclusively by seed and can compete aggressively with crops, ornamentals, and turfgrasses.

Native Range and Natural Habitat

Yellow foxtail is native to Eurasia and was introduced into North America. It has become naturalized throughout the United States and southern Canada. The species thrives in disturbed habitats, including row-crop fields, vegetable gardens, nursery production areas, roadsides, railroad rights-of-way, pastures, lawns, waste places, and open urban sites. It grows best in full sun and tolerates a wide range of soil conditions.

Description

Yellow foxtail is an erect annual grass typically growing 1–4 feet tall (Figure 1). Stems are smooth and somewhat flattened. Leaf blades are pale green to gray-green, 2–12 inches long and up to 0.5 inch wide. The leaf sheath is generally smooth and hairless. A key identifying feature is the presence of long, sparse hairs near the base of the leaf blade where it joins the sheath (Figure 2). The ligule consists of a fringe of short hairs. Seedheads are dense, cylindrical, brush-like panicles 2–6 inches long. Bristles surrounding the spikelets are yellow to golden-brown, giving the plant its common name. Spikelets are approximately 3 mm long, each subtended by 5–20 stiff, yellow to golden bristles (Figure 3). The relatively large number of bristles combined with the long silky hairs near the leaf collar region are important diagnostic features for distinguishing yellow foxtail from other common *Setaria* species. Mature seeds are larger than those of many other common foxtails.



Figure 1: Clump of Yellow Foxtail growing in an open field.
Photo courtesy of Dr. Joe W Willis



Figure 2: Closeup of long hairs at the leaf base of Yellow Foxtail.
Photo courtesy of Dr. Joe W Willis.

How to Differentiate Yellow Foxtail from Other Common *Setaria* Species

Yellow foxtail can be distinguished from green foxtail (*Setaria viridis*) by the long hairs at the base of the leaf blade; green foxtail lacks these conspicuous hairs.

Giant foxtail (*Setaria faberi*) has dense hairs on the upper leaf surface and leaf

sheaths, whereas yellow foxtail is mostly smooth except for hairs near the leaf blade base. Bristles of yellow foxtail are typically yellow to golden, while green foxtail has green bristles and giant foxtail often has drooping seedheads. Yellow foxtail also typically produces larger seeds than green or giant foxtail.

The presence of long hairs at the leaf blade base adjacent to the collar region is generally considered the quickest and most dependable field characteristic for identifying yellow foxtail in Louisiana landscapes, turf, and agricultural settings.

Recommended Control Measures

Integrated management provides the most effective control. Prevent seed production whenever possible, since plants reproduce solely by seed. Maintain dense, competitive turf or desirable vegetation to suppress establishment. In landscape beds, apply organic mulches 2–4 inches deep to reduce seed germination. Hand-pull or cultivate seedlings when young before seedheads develop. In agricultural systems, crop rotation, cover

crops, timely cultivation, and prevention of seed set can reduce infestations. Preemergence herbicides containing pendimethalin, prodiamine, dithiopyr, or similar grass-control active ingredients may provide control when applied according to label directions. Postemergence grass herbicides are most effective when plants are small and actively growing.



Figure 3: Spikelets of Yellow Foxtail showing 5-15 yellow subtending hairs. Photo courtesy of Dr. Joe W Willis.

Importance in Louisiana

Yellow foxtail is commonly encountered in Louisiana crop fields, landscapes, nurseries, and turfgrass systems. Heavy infestations can reduce crop yields, interfere with landscape aesthetics, and contribute substantial quantities of seed to the soil seedbank.

~ Dr. Joe W Willis

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What's Bugging You: Red Velvet Ants

Dasymutilla occidentalis

Have you ever glanced down and noticed a big red fuzzy-looking ant scurry across the ground? If you've lived in the south for a while, then there's a good chance you

have. Especially during the warm summer months. Those impressive looking insects are known as red velvet ants and believe it or not, they don't harm your landscape plants.

Red velvet ants are ants in name only. Another common name for this insect is the cow killer because females can inflict a painful sting when aggravated. The sting of a red velvet ant scores a 2.0 on the Schmidt sting pain index. The creator of the Schmidt sting pain index, Justin Schmidt, described the sting as, "instantaneous, like the surprise of being stabbed". To provide some context, fire ant stings are rated between 1.0 and 1.2 and one of the most painful insect stings rates a 4.0, delivered by the bullet ant.

Even though they appear to resemble a large ant, they are classified as wasps of the family Mutillidae. However, ants and wasps are closely related insects with both belonging to the order hymenoptera. In ancient Greek, hymen translates to thin skin or membrane and ptera translate to wing. Members

of hymenoptera have wings with thin membranes that almost look translucent. If you look closely at the wings of ants, wasps, and bees this is easily noticed.



A solitary female red velvet ant. Photo courtesy of Denis Oudard, BugFuide.net

The common velvet ant in Louisiana is the eastern velvet ant, *Dasymutilla occidentalis*. The adults are

sexual dimorphic which means that males and females have a different appearance. Both are red or reddish orange in color with a black stripe across the abdomen, black legs, and black antennae. The velvet description comes from the presence of dense hairs throughout most of the body. Males are more slender than females and possess two pairs of wings. Females lack wings but can sting using their ovipositor appendage.

Velvet ants share a similar life cycle to butterflies in that they are holometabolous meaning they go through specific egg, larva, pupa, and adult life stages. They are considered brood parasitoids and use other insects as hosts for development. Adult velvet ants search out burrows of ground nesting insects like

bumblebees, cicadas, and wasps and lay their eggs onto the host's larvae where they eventually hatch and feed. Velvet ant larvae pupate in the host burrow and eventually emerge as adults.

Red velvet ants are not considered pests to humans. They play an ecological role in the local environment by functioning as natural control for other bees and wasps. The only time a velvet ant stings a human being is when they are touched or handled. The bright appearance is easily noticed. No control is recommended as these insects are easily avoided. So, the next time you encounter a red velvet ant in the garden or landscape all you need to do is admire their beauty and let them pass.

~William Afton



The male red velvet ant has powerful flight wings Johnny N. Dell, Bugwood.org

Should I Spray or Should I Mow?

The ongoing Clash between desirable plants and weeds can turn contentious, especially if poor management practices are employed in the landscape. Weed management practices vary by the weed species (and lifecycle stage) and can be controlled using a slew of integrated pest management practices. Two of the most common practices for addressing weeds in the landscape include using herbicides for chemical control and using mowers/weedeaters to physically cut them down. I reached out to an LSU AgCenter Weed Science Specialist to offer insight into which practices are appropriate. In returning my message, it was not London Calling, it was Dr. Colton Blankenship. I cut to the chase, and said “You got to let me know, should I spray or should I mow?”

If only the answers were that simple. Instead, I was provided with several things to consider. First being the importance of early action. Addressing weeds

early can be accomplished using preemergent herbicides and preemptive scouting to identify emerging weeds. Don't let small weeds linger in the landscape, or else they can manifest in bigger issues later on if allowed to reproduce. “If you say that they are fine, they'll be here till the end of time”, well, certainly if you let certain weeds, like Chamberbitter and Pigweed, set seed. Hand pulling weeds can be exhausting, where it's always “weed, weed, weed” and you're certainly not happy when you're on your knees pulling them all day. There must be an easier way. So again, I asked, “Should I spray, or should I mow now?” Well, timing of season is also important. Certain lawn herbicides should not be sprayed when temperatures are high ($>90^{\circ}\text{F}$), as off-target movement may occur. And of course, with all herbicide applications, make sure you are following the label. Remember, **THE LABEL IS THE LAW**. Improper pesticide handling and application is not the way you win the war on



Be sure to follow recommended cultural practices and label directions.

How many things can you find wrong in this AI generated picture? Send your answers to cdunaway@agcenter.lsu.edu

weeds, or else you will be saying, “I fought the lawn, and the law won”.

So, does that mean mowing is the right choice? Not always. Certain weed species like Alligatorweed can fragment upon mowing/weedeating and the remnants can create new weeds to worry about. It may seem like you are stuck between a rock and a hard place in terms of making maintenance decisions. If I mow, there will be trouble... but if weeds stay there will be double (or exponentially more if setting seed). So, come on and let me know.... Should I spray or should I mow?

Rather than repeat that question, remember the importance of IPM (integrated pest management, or using a mix of practices to maintain a pest and weed

free environment). Maintaining a healthy mulch layer in garden beds, routine removal of weeds as they emerge, and timely applications of the right herbicides are great ways to keep weeds at bay. If weeds unfortunately reach the point where they are setting seed, placing a bag to cover the seed head can support a safe removal without spilling and spreading seeds in the landscape. If weeds with seeds are in the lawn, use the bagging mower to collect the clippings and dispose of them. Every seed left behind has the potential to grow next season.

~Dr. Damon Abdi and Dr. Colton Blankenship

In the Kitchen with Dr. Austin

Frozen Fruit Yogurt

On a summer day, there's nothing like a scoop of ice cream to cool you off. This recipe frozen yogurt is lighter, super simple, and really versatile because any type of fruit can be used.

Ingredients:

- 1-32 oz. container of Plain Greek Yogurt
- 1 ½ cups fresh fruit of choice
- 1 to 2 Tbs. white sugar



A cup of fresh peach yogurt

Directions:

Cut fruit into bite-sized pieces and freeze.

Place yogurt, frozen fruit, and sugar in a food processor.

Blend until smooth.

Taste mixture and adjust sweetness to your liking. If more sugar is added to the mixture, blend again until dissolved and well incorporated.

Pour mixture into an airtight container and freeze for 3 hours.



Enjoy!

Farmers Markets in the GNO Area

Orleans Parish

Crescent City Farmer's Market- Mid-City

500 N. Norman C. Francis at the Bayou
Thursdays from 3-6PM
Walk-up and curbside pre-orders at
www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org

Crescent City Farmer's Market- City Park

City Putt Parking Lot
Dreyfous Dr. @ Anseman Ave.
Sundays from 8AM-Noon
Info at www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org

Crescent City Farmer's Market- Uptown

200 Broadway
Tuesdays from 8AM-Noon
Walk-up and curbside pre-orders, info at
www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org

Vietnamese Farmer's Market

4861 Alcee Fortier Blvd., New Orleans East
Saturdays, 5:30AM-9:00AM

Marketplace at Armstrong Park

901 N. Rampart
Thursdays from 3-7PM
<https://www.facebook.com/MarketplaceArmstrongPark/>

New Orleans French Market

Lower Decatur Street
Daily, 9AM-6PM

Mid-City Arts and Farmer's Market

Comiskey Park, New Orleans
Market dates vary.
Check <http://midcityaf.org>

Laughing Buddha Farm

4516 Clearview Pkwy, Metairie, LA
Or online at:
<https://laughing-buddha-nursery.localline.ca/online-store>

Barcelo Gardens Farmer's Market- Upper 9th Ward

2301 Gallier Street at the garden, Saturdays
from 10AM-1PM
3440 Piety Street Fresh Market open daily,
10-4.
Check here the link below for other times
and locations.
<https://www.facebook.com/BarceloGardens/>

BOUNYFUL Farmer's Market-Algiers Point

530 Powder St, New Orleans, LA
First and Third Sundays of the month, from
10AM-1PM
See more times and events at the link below.
<https://www.bounyfulgreenmarket.com/>

Sankofa Fresh Stop Market

5200 Dauphine Street, New Orleans, LA
<https://sankofanola.org/rfq/>

FUBU Market NOLA

3101 Erato Street New Orleans, location
changes, check website/social media
<https://www.facebook.com/TheFUBUMarket/>

St. Tammany Parish

Covington Farmers' Market

Covington Police Department
609 North Columbia St., Covington, LA 70433
Saturday: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM (rain or shine)
Covington Trailhead
419 N. New Hampshire
Wednesday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM (rain or
shine)www.covingtonfarmersmarket.org
General information: 985.966.1786

Mandeville Trailhead Community Market

Mandeville Trailhead
675 Lafitte St, Mandeville, LA 70448
Saturday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM (rain or shine)
<https://www.facebook.com/TheMandevilleTrailhead>
985.624.3147

Folsom Village Market

Hwy 40, one block east of Hwy 25
Saturday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM (weather per-
mitting)
Every 2nd and 4th Saturday
985.507.6496 (daytime only)

Abita Springs Art and Farmers' Market

22049 Main St., Abita Springs, LA 70420
Sunday: 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM (rain or shine)
<https://www.townofabitasprings.com/farmers-market>
985.892.0711

Camellia City Farmer's Market

2055 2nd Street, Old Towne Slidell
Saturday: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM (rain or shine)
<https://www.facebook.com/CamelliaCityMarket/>
985.640.7112

St. Charles Parish

German Coast Farmer's Market-East Bank

St. Charles Parish East Regional Library
160 West Campus Drive, Destrehan, LA
Saturdays, from 8AM-Noon
<http://www.germancoastfarmersmarket.org/>

German Coast Farmer's Market-West Bank

Westbank Bridge Park-Luling
13825 River Road, Luling, LA
Wednesdays, from Noon-5PM
<http://www.germancoastfarmersmarket.org/>

Farmers Markets in the GNO Area

Jefferson Parish

Gretna Farmer's Market

Between 3rd & 4th St. along Huey P. Long
Every Saturday, except the Saturday of
Gretna Fest, 8:30AM-12:30PM
<https://www.gretnala.com/visitors/farmers-market/>

Nawlins Outdoor Market

1048 Scotsdale Dr., Harvey
Saturdays 9AM-5PM & Sundays 9AM-4PM
Fridays 11AM-3PM
<https://www.facebook.com/NawlinsMarket/>

Old Metairie Farmer's Market

Bayou Metairie Park, Between Metairie Lawn
Dr. and Labarre
1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month, 3:30PM-
7:30PM** Check for seasonal dates!
[https://www.oldmetairiegardenclub.com/
tag/farmers-art-metairie-market/](https://www.oldmetairiegardenclub.com/tag/farmers-art-metairie-market/)

Jean Lafitte Town Market-Lafitte

920 Jean Lafitte Blvd.
Last Saturday of the month, 9AM-2PM
<https://www.facebook.com/JeanLafitteLa/>

Lafreniere Park Market-Metairie

3000 Downs Blvd.
Wednesdays, from 1-6PM
[https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?
id=100064920097975](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064920097975)

Westwego Farmer's Market

484 Sala Ave., Westwego
3rd Tuesday of the month, 11AM-3PM
[https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?
id=100075979938725](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100075979938725)

Laughing Buddha Farm

4516 Clearview
Store Pickups, preorder online at
<https://www.laughingbuddhanursery.com/>

Westwego Shrimp Lot

100 Westbank Expressway at Louisiana St.,
Westwego
Daily Mon-Thurs 8AM-6PM, Fri 8AM-7PM,
Sat 7AM-7PM, and Sun 7AM-6PM
[https://www.facebook.com/
officialwestwegoshrimplot](https://www.facebook.com/officialwestwegoshrimplot)

Harahan Farmer's Market

501 Oak Ave., Zeringue Park, Harahan
Sundays, 9AM-1PM
<https://www.facebook.com/HarahanMarket>

The Market at Kenner City Park

3800 Loyola Drive, Kenner, LA
Thursdays 1PM-6PM
2nd & 4th Saturdays 10AM-2PM
[https://www.facebook.com/
RivertownFarmersMarket](https://www.facebook.com/RivertownFarmersMarket)

Local Independent Garden Centers

Jefferson

Perino's Garden Center	3100 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Metairie, LA 70002	(504) 834-7888
Rose Garden Center	4005 Westbank Expressway, Marrero, LA 70072	(504) 341-5664
Rose Garden & Pet Store	5420 Lapalco Blvd., Marrero, LA 70072	(504) 347-8777
Banting's Nursery	3425 River Rd., Bridge City, LA 70094	(504) 436-4343
Jefferson Feed	4421 Jefferson Hwy., Jefferson, LA 70121	(504) 733-8572
Nine Mile Point Plant Nursery	2141 River Rd., Westwego, LA 70094	(504) 436-4915
Palm Garden Depot	351 Hickory Ave., Harahan, LA 70123	(504) 305-6170
Double M Feed Harahan	8400 Jefferson Hwy., Harahan, LA 70123	(504) 738-5007
Double M Feed Metairie	3212 W. Esplanade Ave., Metairie, LA 70002	(504) 835-9800
Double M Feed Terrytown	543 Holmes Blvd., Terrytown, LA 70056	(504) 361-4405
Sunrise Trading Co. Inc.	42 3 rd St., Kenner, LA 70062	(504) 469-0077
Laughing Buddha Garden Center	4516 Clearview Pkwy., Metairie, LA 70006	(504) 887-4336
Creative Gardens & Landscape	2309 Manhattan Blvd., Harvey, LA 70058	(504) 367-9099
Plumeria Insanity Nursery	https://www.facebook.com/Plumeria-Insanity-Nursery-102123651930419	
Garden Specialties, Inc.	3601 Florida Ave., Kenner, LA 70065	(504) 468-2300
Clearview Plant and Garden	4511 Clearview Pkwy, Metairie, LA 70006	(504) 888-7700

Soil Vendors

Schmelly's Dirt Farm	8301 Olive St., New Orleans, LA 70118	(504) 535-GROW
Laughing Buddha Garden Center	4516 Clearview Pkwy., Metairie, LA 70006	(504) 887-433
Reliable Soil	725 Reverand Richard Wilson Dr., Kenner, LA 70062	(504) 467-1078
Renaissance Gardens	9123 W. Judge Perez Dr., Chalmette, LA 70043	(504) 682-9911
Rock n' Soil NOLA	9119 Airline Hwy., New Orleans, LA 70118	(504) 488-0908
Grow Wiser Garden Supply	2109 Decatur St., New Orleans, LA 70116	(504) 644-4713

If you would like your licensed retail nursery listed, please email gnogardening@agcenter.lsu.edu

Local Independent Garden Centers

Orleans

Harold's Plants	1135 Press St., New Orleans, LA 70117	(504) 947-7554
We Bite Rare and Unusual Plants	1225 Mandeville St., New Orleans, LA 70117	(504) 380-4628
Hot Plants	1715 Feliciana St., New Orleans, LA 70117	www.hotplantsnursery.com
Pelican Greenhouse Sales	2 Celebration Dr., New Orleans, LA 70124	(504) 483-9437
Grow Wiser Garden Supply	2109 Decatur St., New Orleans, LA 70116	(504) 644-4713
Jefferson Feed Mid-City	309 N. Carrollton Ave., New Orleans, LA 70119	(504) 488-8118
Jefferson Feed Uptown	6047 Magazine St., New Orleans, LA 70118	(504) 218-4220
Ninth Ward Nursery	2641 Deslonde St., New Orleans, LA 70117	(504) 296-8398
Crazy Plant Bae	800 N. Claiborne Ave., New Orleans LA 70119	(504) 327-7008
Canopy Plant Company	6030 St. Claude, New Orleans, LA 70117	(504) 381-4033
Too Tall Nursery	2817 N. Roman, New Orleans, LA 70117	tootallfarm@gmail.com
Plantery NOLA	Pop Up Locations	www.planterynola.com
Canopy Plant Co.	Pop Up and Online Sales	www.canopyplantco.com
New Orleans Succulent Boutique	Online Sales	https://sites.google.com/view/nolasucculentshop/home
Root Life Mobile Plant Nursery	Pop Up Locations	https://rootlifeplantnursery.com/
New Orleans Green LLC	Online Sales	www.neworleans-green.com

Plaquemines

Southern Gateway Garden Center	107 Timber Ridge St., Belle Chasse, LA 70037	(504) 393-9300
Belle Danse Orchids	14079 Belle Chasse Hwy., Belle Chasse, LA 70037	(504) 419-5416

St. Charles

Plant & Palm Tropical Outlet	10018 River Rd., St. Rose, LA 70087	(504) 468-7256
Martin's Nursery & Landscape	320 3 rd St., Luling, LA 70070	(985) 785-6165

St. Bernard

Plant Pricks	Pop Up Locations	https://plantpricks.com/
Nice Plants, Good Pots	6720 St. Claude Ave., Arabie, LA	Etsy.com/shop/NicePlantsGoodPots

St. Tammany

The Boho Being	1184 Front St., Slidell, LA 70458	(985)707-1623
Banting's Nursery-Northshore	26300 Hwy 190, Lacombe, LA 70445	(985)882-5550

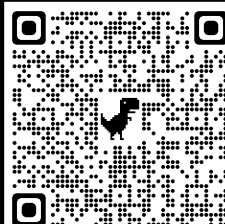
Help Support Horticulture programs in the Greater New Orleans Area

Funding helps the LSU AgCenter agents provide help for:

- School and Community Gardens
- Seed Libraries
- Demonstration Gardens
- Educational Scholarships
- Local Research



Dr. Ferguson leads a demonstration on pruning blueberry bushes.



Look for
Greater New
Orleans
Horticulture
Support Fund

Scan the QR code above or click the link below to go to the LSU Foundation donation webpage.

Click here or go to: <https://bit.ly/3UQRS7H>

August Checklist/Garden Tips

Small, yellow aphids on your butterfly weed or milkweed will not damage the plants or affect the feeding of adult and larval monarch butterflies. Do not use pesticides.

Spider mites and white flies are abundant now and many gardeners are experiencing heavy outbreaks. Make several applications of Year Round Oil or All Seasons Oil before they get too out of hand. Spray the underside of the leaves for best control, and spray in the early morning when it is cooler.

Begin to order spring flowering bulbs from catalogs for delivery in October.

Remove flowers on coleus, and pinch back vegetative growth to prolong new foliage production.

Prune ever blooming roses back about one third their height in late August or early September. Also remove any dead canes and weak spindly growth. This pruning prepares the roses for the outstanding blooming season in October and November. Do not cut back once blooming roses that only bloom in spring and early summer and stop, as you will reduce flowering next year.

After a summer of vigorous growth outside, some containerized plants may be pot bound. Check and repot into larger containers if necessary. Also, plants in pots sitting on a brick surface or soil may grow roots out of the drainage holes into the ground. Prevent this by lifting the pots occasionally or boost them up on pot feet or pieces of brick.

Fine, silvery webbing on the bark of area trees is being caused by tiny insects called psocids or bark lice. These scavengers are completely harmless to the trees and no control is needed.

If your spring planted eggplant and pepper plants are still in good condition, they can be generally be relied on to produce a fall crop. Control pests and keep the plants well watered and fertilized as needed. They will begin to set more fruit as the temperatures become cooler.

Transplant fall tomato plants into your garden by mid-August. Be prepared to spray with insecticides and fungicides since insect and disease pressure is usually greater in the fall than in the spring. The cultivars that have produced satisfactorily in the fall are Mountain Pride, Mountain Delight, Hawaiian Hybrid, Pelican, Bingo, Whirlaway, Floradel, Celebrity, Pacific and Solar Set.

If you need to, dig and divide Louisiana irises, Easter lilies and calla lilies this month.

Many bedding plants that will continue to bloom through fall were planted months ago and may be somewhat leggy and overgrown by this time. Cut them back by about 1/3 to 1/2 to produce stockier, fuller plants for the fall blooming period. Fertilize after you cut them back to stimulate new growth. This is often done to bedding plants such as impatiens, begonia, lantana, blue daze, verbena, pentas, salvia and periwinkle.

As your flowers and vegetables grow, they deplete the soil of organic material. Be sure to add plenty of compost to your garden plots before planting your Fall crop. You should also take a soil test and add fertilizer and amendments according to the test results

Many banana trees in the area have fruit this year. Wait until the fruit reach full size, cut off the whole stalk and hang it up somewhere convenient. Pick the fruit from the stalk as it turns yellow.

Lawn Care Do's & Don't's

Do's:

1. You may fertilize at this time if you have not already done so. Look on page 5 of the [Louisiana Lawns Best Management Practices Guide](#) for information on the correct timing and application rates.
2. Continue to scout for fungal damage and control with fungicides if necessary. The most prevalent is called Large Patch of Warm-Season Turfgrass. [Click here to find information about large patch disease from the LSU AgCenter.](#)
3. Irrigate as necessary to moisten the soil to a depth of 4-6 inches. The best time to water is in the morning. It is safest, from a disease standpoint, not to keep a grass wet all night long. Watering established sod during midday is discouraged because of extra loss from evaporation.
4. Now is a good time to core Aerate the soil to alleviate compaction.
5. Topdress the lawn by spreading a mixture of course sand and finely sifted compost over the lawn to add organic material and smooth out the lawn. Do not add more than 2 inches over actively growing grass.
6. Dethatch the lawn if necessary.
7. Keep an eye open for insect pests. This is the season for chinch bugs and sod webworms.
8. Set your mower to the correct height for your turfgrass type.
9. This is the last month to lay sod Bermudagrass.

Don't's

1. Do not apply selective herbicides to the lawn due to high heat.
2. Do not cut more than 1/3 of the height at a single time.
3. Do not try to grow grass in deep shade.

Your Local Extension Office is Here to Help



Follow us on Facebook at GNO Gardening

For more information visit LSUAgCenter.com

Have Questions? Contact the LSU AgCenter Extension Agent in your Parish.

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