



June 2018

Caladiums for Color in the Shade (or even sun)

With magnificent Southern magnolias and majestic live oaks being so prominent in the landscape of the Greater New Orleans area, there are plenty of areas with shade to partial shade where color is not always easy to find. But caladiums are a wonderful way to bring vibrancy to a partial shade/partial sun area with their large multicolored foliage.

Growing caladiums (*Caladium x hortulanum*) successfully is one of the easier tasks a new or experienced gardener can undertake. Caladiums are native to tropical South America. They thrive in the long sweltering southern summers and are relatively pest-free. Caladiums need well-drained soil and can grow in partial shade (2-4 hours of direct morning sun) to partial sun (2-4 hours of afternoon sun) to full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight) depending on the variety you choose. The large (6" to 12") heart-shaped leaves come in shades of white, pink, rose, red, burgundy, chartreuse or green most often in combination on the same leaf. The large brightly colored foliage lights up our landscape from May through October/November when the shorter cooler days trigger the tubers to go dormant. The vegetative reproduction part of the caladium is a tuber (specialized underground stem) though they are often called caladi-

um bulbs. They can be purchased online or in garden centers as the individual tubers or as pre-grown plants in 4" to 12" pots. The unsprouted tubers are the least expensive and easiest method but you get quick-

er results from nursery grown plants. 95% of caladium tubers sold worldwide are grown in Florida.

There are over 60 cultivars of caladium available; they come in two different leaf types ("lance" and "fancy"); On lance leaf-type caladiums, the petiole connects at the top of the



Celebration caladiums under study at the Hammond Research Station.

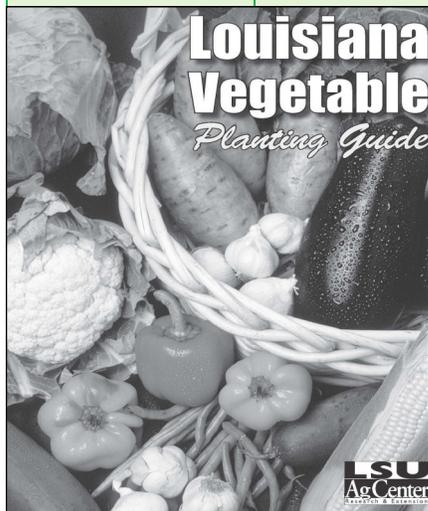
leaf. With fancy leaf-type caladiums, the petiole connects in the middle of the leaf. Lance leaf varieties are more sun tolerant and can be used in sunnier locations of your landscape. In general, if caladiums are grown with more sun they produce shorter plants with smaller more brightly colored foliage. Caladium tubers are sold in various size grades based on bulb diameter:

- No. 4: to ¾" (2.0 cm)
- No. 3: ¾ to 1" (2.0 – 2.5 cm)
- No. 2: 1" to 1 ½" (2.5 – 4.0 cm)
- No. 1: 1 ½" to 2 ½" (4.0 – 6.5 cm)
- Jumbo: 2 ½" to 3 ½" (6.5 – 9.0 cm)
- Mammoth: 3 ½" to 4 ½" (9.0 – 11.5 cm)
- Super Mammoth: 4 ½" Up (11.5 cm)

(Continued)

June Vegetable Planting Guide

Crop	Recommended Variety	Planting Depth	Spacing Inches	Days Until Harvest * from transplant date
Cantaloupe	Ambrosia, Aphrodite, Athena, Primo, Vienna	¼ inch	18-24	80-85
Collards	Champion, Flash, Georgia, Top Bunch, Yates	⅜ inch	6-12	75
Cucuzza	None Given	½ inch	24	65
Eggplant	Dusky, Night Shadow, Epic, Santana, Calliope	⅜ inch	18-24	80-85
Hot Peppers (transplant)	Grande, Tula, Mariachi, Mitla,	-	--	140
Luffa Gourd	None Given	½ inch	48	90
Okra	Annie Oakley, Cajun Delight, Clemson Spineless	½ inch	12	60
Peanuts	None Given	1 inch	6	130
Pumpkins	Atlantic Giant, Baby Bear, Prankster, Sorcerer	½ inch	36-60	90-120
Southern Peas	Queen Anne, California #5, Quickpick, Colusus	½ inch	4-6	70-80
Sweet Potato	Beauregard, Evangeline, Hernandez, Jewel	Special	12	90-120
Swiss Chard	None Given	¼ inch	6-8	45-55
Watermelon	Seedless: Cooperstown, Gypsy, Matrix, Millennium Seeded: Mickey Lee, Sugar Baby, Amarillo	¼ inch	48	90-110



[Click on the above image to link to the LSU AgCenter Louisiana Vegetable Guide for more information.](#)

Warm Season Bedding Plants

Blue Daze	Lantana	Zinnia	Salvia
Celosia	Marigold	Pentas	Scaevola
Coleus	Melampodium	Periwinkle	Torenia (pictured below)
Gaillardia	Narrow-Leaf	Purslane	



Caladiums for Color in the Shade (or even sun)

(Continued)

The larger the tuber, the larger the plant and the more foliage you will get. Additionally, the size of the starting tuber will dictate plant spacing. Plant your caladium tubers to a depth where they are covered by 1 ½" to 2" of soil. The smooth side of the tuber is the bottom. Adding a little bone meal at planting is a plus. Jumbo tubers should be planted 12" to 18" apart and smaller bulbs 6" to 8" apart. Another measure would be to plant 4 each #2 bulbs, or 2 each #1 bulbs or 1 each Jumbo bulb per square foot of space. Generally, plant your bulbs when the soil temperatures warm to 65°F-70°F. Once again, good drainage is a must for caladiums. You can increase the drainage in subpar areas by mounding the planting bed. Water immediately after planting and when the plant emerges and is a couple inches tall, mulch with 2 inches of your favorite mulch to maintain moisture and reduce weeds. Once planted, keep your caladiums well watered – they don't like wet feet but require moisture to be readily available. Adding a little balanced fertilizer once a month will keep your caladiums healthy and growing throughout the season. Incidentally, caladiums are a fantastic choice for containers.



Caladium bulb with terminal buds removed.

Grower's note: Terminal bud removal or de-eyeing, is the most reliable way to produce a plant without several larger leaves crowding out over the rest. Individual varieties respond differently to this procedure, with some showing no appreciable affect from the procedure. Any variety can be de-eyed. To de-eye, cut out the terminal/dominant buds or sprout(s) (eyes) using a small knife or tool. Staying within the diameter of the eye, remove the entire eye by cutting about 1/8" - 1/4" deep into the bulb. Remember, it is critical to stay within the diameter of the eye to eliminate damage to the small eyes (axillary or lateral buds) that surround the perimeter of the main

eye. [Click here to link to a video on removing the eyes from caladium bulbs.](#)

If you start your caladium garden by purchasing nursery grown plants, be extra attentive to the sun conditions. These plants have usually been grown in low light conditions and if exposed to the bright southern sun with no acclimation period they may get sunburned. The plants will recover but will look worse for wear for a period of time.

In the Deep South (south of the I-10 corridor) heavy mulching (3"-6") will usually allow the bulbs to survive the winter. When the temps go below 60° and stay there (say the onset of fall/winter) caladiums go dormant. If the bed is well-drained and will not be disturbed, you can leave your caladiums inground for the winter or you can harvest the bulbs & leaves and store till next spring. This is the most reliable way of making sure they grow another year. Dig caladiums when the leaves begin to turn yellow and most of the foliage begins to look spent. Use a shovel or a garden fork to dig the tubers, being careful not to damage them. Shake off most of the soil from the tubers and lay them out in a single layer in a dry sheltered location. After the foliage becomes tan and papery in appearance, pull it from the tubers and store the tubers in paper bags indoors where temperatures stay around 70 degrees through winter.

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Caladiums for Color in the Shade (or even sun)

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To help in your caladium selection, the following is a list of the top ten caladium performers at the Hammond Research Station. These survived consistently and were good repeaters.

1: Fire Chief caladiums are fancy leaf and have mostly red leaves with some green splotches. Fire Chief caladium tubers produce medium size plants with medium stems and leaves. Fire Chief is a mostly shade-loving caladium.

2: Carolyn Whorton caladiums are fancy leaf that display large bright pink leaves with red veins and dark green edges. Carolyn Whorton caladium tubers produce large plants with tall stems and large leaves. Carolyn Whorton is a sun tolerant caladium.

3: 'White Cap' is a white fancy-leaved introduction with a distinct white veined center. White Cap is intermediate to tall in height and upright in habit. White Cap prefers partial-sun to shady locations.

4: Celebration Caladiums, introduced in 2013, will show its colors all season long, deep crimson main veins with white splotches over lively green leaf. Fancy leaf type suitable for full shade, but also performs very satisfactorily with a constant, TINY bit of drip irrigation in a full-sun garden.

5: Heart's Delight was created to tolerate sunlight but you can plant in partial shade. It is a lance leaf type whose leaves tend to go to a darker red center as they mature.



Fire Chief



Carolyn Whorton



Heart's Delight



White Cap caladiums. The plant on the left was grown with out removing the terminal buds from the bulb while they were removed from the plant on the right.

6: Scarlet Flame is a lance leaf caladium variety with a great pot habit. Scarlet Flame is useful as a border plant and will tolerate full sun. Blazing red and pink leaves with green highlights.

7: Lance Whorton caladium is a lance leaf type that features distinctive crimson main veins and leaf body with a pronounced green border with some splashes of white. Tolerates the sun very well.

8: The Cherry Tart Caladium is a lance leaf type whose leaves are rosy pink with a green border. This compact dwarf is great for container planting or in the garden as a border.

9: White Wonder has frilly white lance type leaves with distinctive green borders. This variety grows well in sun to partial shade. White Wonder makes an outstanding border plant for garden or landscape.

10: Gingerland caladiums have creamy white lance type leaves with delicate raspberry specs and a contrasting green margin. This dwarf caladium's color contrasts and compliments most red varieties. Does well in the sun or partial shade. This is a particularly nice caladium for hanging baskets or patio pots. Great for borders in front of taller plants.



The preceding article draws on information from a presentation given by Dr. Yan Chen, LSU professor, Hammond Research Station.

~Dr. Joe Willis



Louisiana Master Gardeners gave Dutch Alley a perennial boost, just in time for French Quarter Fest. In an effort to bring cultural and native plantings back to the French Quarter, Master Gardeners have been planting and talking about natives wherever and whenever possible. When the French Market Association got wind of Master Gardeners planting natives at the



National Parks Services in the French Quarter, Lafitte Welcome Center, Jazz Museum, and at the New Orleans Jazz History Museum, they called on LSU AgCenter Extension Agents Dr. Joe Willis and Anna Timmerman, along with



Master Gardener Nell Howard for planting ideas for Dutch Alley.

Dutch Alley was lined with 11 extra-large containers of Sago Palms and asparagus ferns, probably once beautiful and green, but looking the worse for wear. Four smaller containers were on the other side of Dumaine. Then the freezes hit, and there they sat, pitiful and sad – making the pedestrian mall behind the French Market shops on Decatur Street very dreary indeed.

The Magnolia Skinneriana (banana bush) was the first choice as a lightly banana-scented evergreen ‘thriller’. Color was oh so important.

Trying to stick to perennial flowers closely related to the original natives, Coreopsis, the Uptick series of reds, golds, ambers and creams, and Stella D’Oro Daylilies for their profuse and long blooming season, cheery yellow color, and evergreen leaves served as the ‘filler’. Finally, the ‘spiller’ choice was Verbena, the Endurascap series in bright red. This is a very public place, and the plants needed to be resilient, evergreen, and perennial.



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The installation took place in the first week of April. Master Gardeners Glen LaBorde, Joan Doyle, Linda Wegmann, Anne Abbot, Gwen Benefiel, Sheilah Hurstell, Ann Butcher, Melissa Toler, and Nell Howard all chatted up visitors with the names of the plants and the reason for planting them. The greatest help realizing this dream was from the French Market Association’s KC Guidry, who managed logistics, watering teams, heavy lifting, had the containers emptied of the sad sagos and filled with fresh soil for easy planting.



By the time French Quarter Fest kicks off, the fireworks will have a hard time competing with the natives blooming in Dutch Alley.

~Nell Howard

A Brief Guide to Summer Vegetable Pests

Summer brings a veritable Pandora's Box of pests to our vegetable gardens. Turn your back for a few days and things can quickly get out of control. Here's a list (by no means complete) of some of the more common pests that may be attacking vegetable crops in June and July.

Tomato Hornworm (and other caterpillars)

Big, green and somewhat scary looking with barbs on the tail end, tomato hornworm can wreak havoc on tomato foliage and fruits overnight. If you notice parts (or all) of the tomato plant defoliated, leaving just the midrib and other veins, start looking for a hornworm. Large, pelletized poops may also be visible underneath the plant, giving yet another clue to the hornworm's whereabouts. Caterpillars can also munch into the tomatoes themselves, eating a hole into the fruit and leaving an open wound for the entry of fungi. Control caterpillar pests on all vegetable crops by utilizing products that contain either Spinosad or Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*). There is no withdrawal period for these products so the produce is safe to harvest immediately.



Photo by Chris Dunaway

Tomato hornworm with its unique droppings.

Aphids

I've been fighting a losing battle with aphids on a number of vegetable crops, including Swiss chard, kale, and green beans. Typically I notice them on the undersides of the leaves or at the tender tips of the plants. As sucking/piercing insects, controlling them needs to be done sooner rather than later, populations can explode to very destructive levels in a short time period. Natural predators such as ladybeetles and lacewings will chow down on aphids, lending you a helping hand. Some gardeners in the GNO area are experimenting with releasing ladybeetles in their gardens that were obtained via the internet or mail order. Both organic and synthetic insecticide sprays are effective, however if you are interested in protecting beneficial insects, lean towards the organic options. Whichever product you



Photo by Chris Dunaway

Aphids feeding on underside of okra plant. The tan balls are aphids that have been parasitized by tiny beneficial wasps.



Photo by Chris Dunaway

Leaf footed bug nymphs feeding on tomatoes.

choose, be sure to cover the tops and undersides of the plants, especially the back-

sides of the leaves, since that's where aphids love to hang out. Repeated applications will likely be necessary. Organic options include neem oil, pyrethrum, and insecticidal soaps. Synthetic options would include products with the active ingredients permethrin or bifenthrin. Both of these products have a post-harvest interval listed on the label, be sure to follow all instructions as the label is the law.

Stinkbugs & Leaf-footed Bugs

Stinkbugs and leaf-footed bugs are some of the most difficult pests to control. Their hard outer exoskeleton protects them from sprays

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A Brief Guide to Summer Vegetable Pests

(Continued)

Photo by Chris Dunaway



Mottled appearance to tomatoes caused by stink-bug feeding.

and they can fly and are highly mobile. They spread yeasts and viruses as they feed, causing a whole lot of issues in a vegetable garden. Squishing them by hand or dropping them in some soapy water daily can be an easy control option, but may not be practical if you have a lot of them around. They feed on a wide range of produce, including tomatoes, beans, okra, eggplant, and more. All varieties of stink bug and leaf-footed bug overwinter in leaf litter or weedy areas, so removing these areas from your landscape can be a good step in the right direction. Birds and spiders will eat these guys, however usually other control options are needed. Damaged produce can still be eaten, however their texture or taste may be impacted, as well as their cosmetic appeal. Very few organic options have any impact on stink bugs and leaf-footed bugs. One strategy is to use a food-safe clay product called kaolin, marketed

as Surround WP. This is a clay composed of fine particles that can be mixed with water and sprayed, making a white film, deterring pests. The film is washed off easily. Pyrethroids can work, however they must be sprayed every week or two to remain effective. Synthetics would include permethrin or cyfluthrin. Give the kaolin or the hand picking a try, after a few weeks of attention the population problem and subsequent damage may diminish to acceptable levels.

Whiteflies

White in coloration and about the size of a gnat, whiteflies become active in the heat of the summer, sucking sap from plants. When plants are lightly brushed or shaken, clouds of whitefly will appear from where they have been feeding on the undersides of the leaves. Whitefly will feed on a wide range of vegetable crops, including tomatoes, eggplant, okra, and sweet potatoes. Controlling them can be tricky, especially in hot weather. Neem and light horticultural oil can be sprayed, however be sure to spray on cloudy days to avoid scorching the leaves if possible. Oil can concentrate the sun's energy and burn the leaf tissue. Spray carefully (trying to not disturb the whiteflies) underneath the leaves.

Birds & Rodents

Birds and rodents love to feed on tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and many other veggies. Mockingbirds in particular seem to enjoy pecking holes in tomatoes just as they are turning ripe. Picking your tomatoes green and allowing them to ripen on the countertop is one good solution. Bird netting can be pricy and hard to work around, but can protect crops that seem to be attracting unwanted bird activity. Rodents also gnaw into fruiting crops, baits and traps can help to control them tremendously. Be sure to put bait out where pets and children will not have access to it.



Rats can hollow out a watermelon.

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A Brief Guide to Summer Vegetable Pests

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Spider Mites

If the upper leaf surface of your vegetable plants looks sort of brassy and rusty, this is likely an early indication of spider mite damage. There is no “magic bullet” solution available to home gardeners, however neem, insecticidal soap, and light horticultural oil can help to keep them under control. Spray the undersides of the leaves. A strong jet of water from the hose can also knock them off plants. Usually these treatments are marginally effective, at best. Older, established plants will likely recover once the outbreak has run its course. Spider mites are rarely fatal.

Snails and Slugs

If your plants look chewed up and you can't find the culprit in the light of day, you likely have a snail and/or slug issue. Since they are nocturnal, spotting them in the daylight hours usually requires looking underneath mulch, containers, and ground covers. Luckily lots of bait products are available to home gardeners. Diatomaceous earth (DE) sprinkled around the problem areas also works by desiccating the snails and slugs as they attempt to move



Snails and slugs will hide during the day. Look under rocks, pots, and other items in the garden.



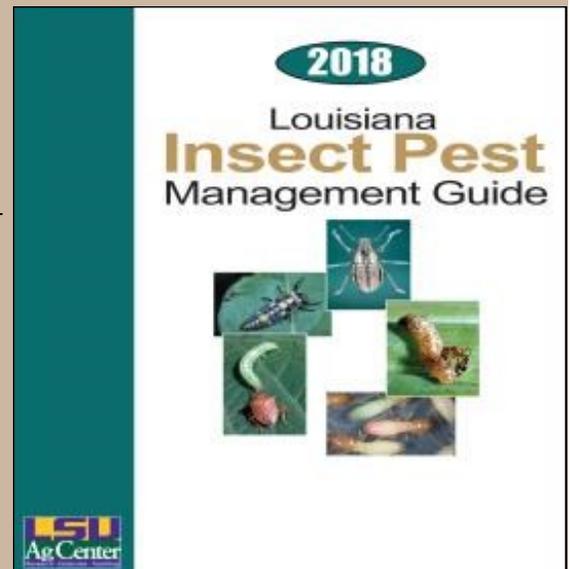
Squash vine borers.

through it. DE needs to be reapplied after heavy rains, however, to remain effective. Beer is irresistible to snails and slugs and offers a fun control solution. Small saucers or tuna fish cans of beer work by drowning snails and slugs, they need to be dumped out and refilled periodically.

Squash Vine Borers

Attacking cucurbits (squashes, cucumbers, melons, etc.), squash vine borers dig into the stem of the vines, creating a sawdust-like powder as they eat through the tissue. Planting early can help, by pushing the harvest period earlier towards the spring end of the season, vine borers won't have a chance to attack before the good harvest interval. Usually around late May and early June the vine borers begin to make their appearance. The larvae overwinter in the soil. By practicing tillage and crop rotation some reduction in their numbers can be obtained. Insecticidal sprays can be a useful tool as well, spray them on the stems of the vines, not the leaves. Be sure to follow label instructions and observe any harvest waiting periods. Products containing permethrin, bifenthrin and carbaryl work. Organic products that can be effective include those that are composed of neem and Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*). Another solution that I have tried with good results is to inject Spinosad or Bt directly into the stems a few inches above the area where the borers are feeding. This sort of controls them from the inside out.

~Anna Timmerman



For more information on pest control in the home vegetable garden click the image to link to the Louisiana Insect Pest Management Guide.

Lawn Mower Maintenance



I have spent plenty of "quality time" with my old mower.

Just like your car, a lawn mower needs occasional maintenance to keep it running smoothly. Two of the most important items that need to be replaced occasionally are the engine oil and the air filter. The engine oil helps keep the engine cool and lubricated. Over time the oil can get very dirty and some even gets burned up in the combustion process. You should check the oil level every time you use the lawn mower and add oil as needed. Consult your owners manual for instructions and interval periods for changing oil. Low oil is the number one cause of severe engine damage. The air filter is also very important in engine performance.

Combustion engines need fuel and air to run. The filter is designed to remove dust and debris from the air that the en-

gine uses in the combustion process. Clogged filters will reduce the flow of air to the engine causing it to run poorly. Furthermore, dust and debris entering the engine can also cause major damage. Again you should consult your owners manual for the manufacturers maintenance schedule. I like to check the air filter on my mower every time I use it. By lightly tapping it I find that I can remove a lot of the larger particles of dirt and plant material that were trapped by the filter.

The other major component of a lawn mower that needs to be inspected regularly is the blade. The blade and its function is the prime purpose. It is important that the blade be sharp and balanced. We recommend that the blade be removed and sharpened annually. Eventually normal use will wear down the blade necessitating its replacement. Recently I purchased a complete tune-up kit containing a new blade, air filter, spark plug, and engine oil. In less than 30 minutes I had all the parts installed and was mowing away...And Boy what a difference.

~Chris Dunaway



Tune-up kit with blade, air filter, spark plug, and fresh oil.



The old blade and air filter from my lawn mower compared to the new replacement parts.

Chilli Thrips – What’s Bugging You?

If you’ve seen this guy in your garden, then you have superhuman vision or carry a magnifying lens around with you regularly. This little critter that causes big damage is the chilli thrips (*Scirtothrips dorsalis*). This Southeast Asia native became established in Florida in 2005 and is now widespread throughout the southeastern U.S. including Louisiana. Chilli thrips are very small, only 0.016 to 0.024 inch in length which is about ¼ the size of the western flower thrips (which itself is very small). Eggs are laid in plant tissue near floral structures, leaf veins and terminal parts. Larvae emerge from eggs in 6-8 days when temperatures are optimal.



Chilli Thrips - By Lyle Buss UFL

The two larval instars take about 2-4 days and 3-6 days to complete. This is the feeding stage of the thrips; they have piercing-sucking mouthparts. The pupal stage lasts 2-3 days and is spent on the plant or in the soil near the base of the plant. Females oviposit from 60 to 200 eggs during their life. Left uncontrolled, chilli thrips population can increase from 40 chilli thrips to 419 quadrillion in a single season. Plant damage is caused by eggs being laid inside plant tissue, by the nymphs hatching and emerging from the plant cells, and by nymphs feeding on the plants. The pupae are found on leaves, in leaf litter, in axils of leaves, or under calyces of flowers and fruit. In contrast to most other thrips species, chilli thrips

complete their entire life cycle on the plant. It can complete a life cycle in 14 - 20 days and is capable of reproducing both sexually and asexually (parthenogenesis) and typically has 4 - 8 generations per year. Thrips can overwinter as adults in leaf litter or weeds. Oh yes, adults can be winged and easily fly or be carried by a breeze to new hosts.

Chilli thrips prefer to feed on young tender plant tissue; therefore, they are most active during times when new plant tissue is developing in the landscape – typically early spring, but also following pruning of plants which encourages new shoot and flower development. Chilli thrips have been reported to feed on over 150 plant species over a broad range of plant families. These include all citrus, camellias, roses, fruit trees, grapes, vegetables (bean, corn, eggplant, peanut, pepper, tomato, et al.), Indian hawthorn, Ligustrum, Plumbago, Viburnum, snap dragon, coleus, zinnia, begonia, coreopsis, verbena, etc. Damage on flowers can show as bronzing on buds, brittleness, browning, and early bud or flower drop. On fruits damage may appear as bronzing. Symptoms on leaves may show as young distorted leaves curled upwards appearing bronze or silver, leaves can be dried along edges or completely, with occasional defoliation in some hosts.

There may be rapid stem/bud development as the plant tries to grow out of the damage. Hatching eggs cause lesions and distorted plant development. As you can see by the list of symptoms, chilli thrips damage can easily be mistaken for many other conditions including herbicide damage. Chilli thrips can also be vectors for groundnut chlorotic fan-spot virus, groundnut yellow spot virus, tomato spotted wilt virus, and tobacco streak virus (there may be others) It is very important to identify thrips early and treat to prevent widespread damage. One quick method is to hold a white piece of paper under a symptomatic plant



Chilli thrip damage on knock out rose. - Yan Chen

Chili Thrips – What’s Bugging You?

(Continued)

part and tap the plant part. This will dislodge thrips that will fall to the paper and can be examined with a hand lens to determine their presence.

Once you know you have chilli thrips, you need to apply control measures right away to prevent a massive outbreak. Cut off all damaged parts of the plants. Bag and dispose of damaged plant material to reduce breeding populations. Do not compost infected plant material.

Since 2013, a team of horticulturists and entomologists from the LSU AgCenter and the University of Florida has worked on management options to keep the chilli thrips at bay in both production nurseries and landscapes. The team started with monitoring this pest in gardens and nurseries and evaluated critical questions such as at what pest level insecticides are needed to prevent the thrips from causing crop damage and what biorational pesticides that are “soft” on beneficial arthropods can be used to reduce the use of conventional insecticides.

The use of pyrethroids, organophosphates or

other broad-spectrum insecticides is not recommended for controlling chilli thrips in landscape plants because of their potential effects on beneficial species, including minute pirate bugs (*Orius* spp.), lacewings and predatory mites or spiders that help prevent outbreaks of chilli thrips as well as other pests. However,

natural enemies alone may not provide satisfactory control on plants preferred by chilli thrips.

AgCenter research showed that a rotation between spinosad and the biological control fungi *Metarhizium brunneum* (Met52) and *Beauveria bassiana* (BotaniGard 22WP), or insect growth regulator (azadirachtin, Molt-X), and horticultural oils (such as the

ultra-fine oil or SuffOil-X) reduced chilli thrips populations by 88 percent to 95 percent. These products are considered “soft” on beneficial arthropods and are available to commercial landscape professionals. For home gardeners, insecticides containing spinosad, such as Conserve, can be rotated with ultra-fine oil or soapy water to treat infested plants during thrips active seasons.

~Dr. Joe Willis



Chili Thrip vs Western Flower Thrip

CITY PARK PLANT SALES



NEW ORLEANS CITY PARK
**BOTANICAL
GARDEN**

June 9

Pelican Greenhouse

9am - Noon

July 14

Pelican Greenhouse

9am - Noon

August 11

Pelican Greenhouse

9am - Noon

September 8

Pelican Greenhouse

9am - Noon

Fall Garden Festival

October 6, 10am - 5pm

October 7, 10am - 4pm

For additional information, call 504/483-9464, visit our website at www.neworleanscitypark.com, or e-mail to plants@nocp.org

Citrus Blossom and Fruit Drop

Citrus trees can cause homeowners a lot of unnecessary worry when the ground seems to be littered with shed blossoms or dropped, immature fruit. Fruit and blossom drop can be caused by several factors, most of which are not very serious or can be prevented. While appearing catastrophic, blossom and fruit drop can be a normal coping mechanism when it comes to balancing what the trees can handle.

All types of citrus trees naturally produce more blossoms than they could possibly hope to develop into fruit. Up to 98% of blossoms can drop under normal conditions, with the remaining 2% forming a heavy, bountiful crop. The surviving 2% of blossoms can be impacted by a number of factors that may significantly damage the future fruit yield. Late frosty or unseasonably cold weather can bring about a blossom drop, as can high wind conditions. Irregular watering can also trigger blossom drop. A fungi called *Colletrichum acutatum* can cause a disorder known as Postbloom Fruit Drop (PFD). This can be a serious problem in humid areas, including the GNO area. Picking the old crop in a timely manner and trimming the “buttons” of the tree (woody, rounded twig ends where the stem met the fruit) can help to control this pathogen. Practice good orchard sanitation, removing old, rotting fruit that may have dropped as well as rake up leaves, twigs, or other debris. Some trees, especially mandarin-family citrus, may skip a year of blooms or produce fewer fruits. This condition is called “alternate bearing” and is perfectly normal. Trees take a break for a year and then come back heavy the following year under ideal conditions.



Aborted immature fruit.



Persistent calyxes or buttons caused by PFD infection of flowers and the abortion of fruitlets from the calyxes.

Fruit drop can be alarming, especially when young trees shed most of the fruit that had set earlier in the season. Young trees and newly planted citrus trees do not have the support systems in place to maintain a good crop of fruit. By shedding fruit, the tree rids itself of a burden so that it can divert limited resources to continued growth into a mature, healthy tree. Typically this drop occurs in late May or early June, depending on weather conditions. High temperatures and low humidity may trigger this shedding of fruits from pea up through walnut size. Because irregular moisture can also trigger fruit drop, soil moisture should remain constant through irrigation or supplemental watering as needed. A drop at this time is

considered normal and unavoidable.

Fertilizing trees properly can also help to insure a good crop of citrus won't just drop to the ground. Follow the recommended rates and timings found in the LSU AgCenter's Home Citrus Production publication (<http://www.lsuagcenter.com/NR/rdonlyres/98F62871-B43E-4732-9A58-6E95F362B560/81678/pub1234lahomecitruslowres.pdf>).

~Anna Timmerman

Coming Events

Date	Event	Cost	For More Info
June 1	New Orleans Orchid Society's 66th Annual Orchid Show and Sale @ Lakeside Mall	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/191149674843583/
June 1	Eat Local Challenge Kick Off Party @ Roux Carre	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/1541835052606167/
June 2	Eat Local Challenge NOLA Farm Bike Ride	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/2057235157880344/
June 2	Growing Gardeners @ New Orleans Botanical Garden	\$14-17	https://www.facebook.com/events/604429346583107/
June 7	Beekeeping @ SPROUT NOLA	TBA	https://www.facebook.com/events/133268707531560/
June 9	June Plant Sale @ Pelican Greenhouse	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/1765031200237135/
June 9	Parkway Partners 2nd Saturday: Organic Edible Gardening 101 + Garden Tour	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/585523478479746/
June 9	Advanced Composting Class	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/175103916657398/
June 9-10	Creole Tomato Festival (Lecture by AgCenter Agents Sat AM @ 11 am	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/1254757481323875/
June 14	Growing an Herbal Garden @ SPROUT NOLA	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/1277247992377961/
June 16	Garden Fest @ LSU Botanic Gardens, Baton Rouge, LA	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/217886768796530/
June 19	Old Metairie Garden Club Farmers Market	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/204823040327546/
June 20	Little Acorns @ New Orleans Botanic Garden	\$3/child	https://www.facebook.com/events/938163279641486/
June 21	The Science & Art of Urban Homesteading: Soil Biology	\$30 drop ins	https://www.facebook.com/events/1081492958655560/
June 21	Raising Urban Chickens @ SPROUT NOLA	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/2020678621527005/
June 21	Market Ready Producer Training-LSU AgCenter June 21 in Hammond. Sept. 7 in New Orleans	Free	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2018-hammond-marketready-training-tickets-44162804136
June 23	Florists to the Field Book Signing @ New Orleans Botanical Garden	\$21.83	https://www.facebook.com/events/2080963098585121/
June 24	Pollinator Festival @ Audubon Zoo	TBA	TBA
June 28	Survival Herbalism @ Sangoma House LLC	Free	https://www.facebook.com/events/436332620142089/
June 30	Creating Bonsai From Garden Center Stock	\$35	https://www.facebook.com/events/365123977310798/
June 30	Made for the Shade @ Longue Vue House and Gardens	\$5-7	https://www.facebook.com/events/184679525683607/

June Checklist/Garden Tips

Chinch bugs, which are most damaging during hot dry weather, often begin to show up in June. Look for irregular dead areas that enlarge fairly rapidly. The grass will have a dry, straw-like appearance. Treat with acephate, permethrin, cyfluthrin or other labeled insecticides to prevent extensive damage. Follow label directions carefully.

During dry weather don't forget to keep your compost pile evenly moist. Dry organic matter will not decompose. Do not, however, keep the pile saturated as that can cause bad odors.

Powdery mildew continues to be a problem on many ornamentals (crape myrtles, euonymus, roses) and vegetables (squash, cucumbers). Treat with chlorothalonil or other labeled fungicides.

You may fertilize Your lawn in June if desired.

Prune climbing roses and ramblers that bloom on one year old growth now if needed to shape and train them.

Apply paint or shade cloth to greenhouses to prevent heat buildup. Fans should run just about constantly.

Remove any flowers that appear on caladiums or coleus to promote continued production of colorful foliage.

Prepare trees for hurricane season by pruning our all weak, rotting or dead branches. Remove dead or rotten trees that might blow over in high winds.

Trim dead flowers from chrysanthemums that bloomed earlier if you have not done so already. Cut plants back about half way and fertilize to encourage vigorous growth. Pinch vigorous shoots over the next six weeks to create a bushier, fuller plant. Do not pinch or cut back after late July.

When a gladiolus finishes blooming, prune off the faded flower spike but leave the foliage intact. The foliage will produce food that is stored in the newly developing corm ensuring a large, healthy corm that will bloom well next year.

Dig and store gladiolus corms after the foliage turns brown. The largest corms are the ones that will flower next year.

Plant a row or two of peanuts in the home garden now as early summer crops are pulled up. Shell raw peanuts and plant about three to four seeds per foot of row. Water once a day until the seeds come up. Peanuts also make an excellent green manure crop. Just as the plants come into flower turn them under. They will enrich the soil with nitrogen and organic matter. Allow the bed to sit for a few weeks while the organic matter decomposes, and you will be ready to plant a fall crop.

Remove any flowers that appear on caladiums or coleus to promote continued production of colorful foliage.

Watch the rainfall you receive carefully, as it varies widely around the area. Cut back on irrigation whenever your garden receives one half inch or more of rain. Over watering is entirely possible if you are not careful, and that can lead to fungus problems such as stem, crown and root rot.

High temperatures and high humidity create a high heat index here in the summer. Adjust your gardening schedule to take advantage of cooler times of the day. Remember to drink plenty of water.

June Checklist/Garden Tips

Avoid using weed killers or herbicides on your lawn now. High temperatures increase the chance of discoloring or damaging the grass. Spot treat areas of weeds rather than the entire lawn.

Spray peach tree trunks with permethrin to prevent the peach tree borer from getting into the trunk and causing damage.

Cut back early summer flowering perennials in the garden when they finish flowering to keep the plants looking attractive and, in the case of some perennials, encourage more flowering.

Keep caladiums well watered during hot, dry weather to keep the foliage in good shape through the summer. Fertilize occasionally to encourage vigorous growth. Break off any flowers that form.

Despite the heat and dry weather, you can continue to plant colorful bedding plants to brighten summer flower beds. Keep newly planted bedding plants well watered during the first few weeks while they get established and be sure to mulch beds to conserve soil moisture. When the bed is first planted and the plants are still small, take the opportunity to run a soaker hose through the bed and cover it with mulch. It will make watering the bed much easier and efficient later on.

Ornamental grasses are an excellent choice for gardeners trying to introduce more drought tolerant pest resistant plants into their landscapes. There are many types suitable for virtually any landscape situation.

Plant palms during the summer through August as they establish best when planted into warm soil. Select hardier palms such as cabbage palm, windmill palm, Mediterranean fan palm, Canary Island date palm, palmetto and needle palm. Keep them well watered during their establishment period.

When parsley sends up its flower stalks, or bolts, its productive season is over. However, the tiny flowers provide food for and attract parasitic wasps to the garden. So consider leaving your blooming parsley in place until flowering is over before removing it.

Your Local Extension Office is Here to Help

[E-mail us at: GNOGardening@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:GNOGardening@agcenter.lsu.edu)



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