



## FYN Garden Q & A Series

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### FYN Topic: Community Storm Water Pond

**Question:** What can we do to solve short and long-term problems with our communities' storm water pond? Our pond recently had an algal bloom and I was told an aquatics company came in and managed it using herbicides and algaecides. Will our pond now stay healthy? JP

**Answer:** The proverbial 'we' in your question makes all the difference in caring for your lake. Without further servicing by a contractor, expect seasonal lake water changes needing to be addressed. First and foremost, do test and trial plantings of native plants along the water's edge. Even better, plant native plants AND start monitoring the lake's water quality with sample tests on a monthly, or at least, seasonal basis.



**Pickerelweed**

In the meantime, talk with several experts about possible long-term solutions. Volunteer with a local community 'watch' program like PondWatch or CanalWatch to gain further incite for action. At any time of year, install new native plants on the water's edge by planting them in wide (8-15') bands or in small compact groupings. Over time, nature will create an attractive and natural-looking border.

Unlike lawn grasses growing right along the water, these recommended littoral natives require minimal maintenance like mowing, weeding and pest control. Avoid having lawn grasses growing right up to the water's edge. A plant buffer of 6 feet or more keeps significant lawn clippings from getting deposited in the water. Littoral natives include Bulrush, Soft Rush, Pickerelweed and Duck Potato. To stabilize the bank, consider tree species like Bald cypress or Pond cypress, Pond Apple, Wax Myrtle, Green Buttonwood, Pop ash, Swamp bay, Elderberry, Winged elm. Finish off your native plant border with pine straw mulch.



**Duck Potato**

### Useful Links

- <http://www.floridayards.org>
- <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>
- <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>
- <http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu>

Thomas Becker is an extension agent for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program at the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the Horticulture Help Desk at 239-533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. or by emailing [Extgardener@leegov.com](mailto:Extgardener@leegov.com). Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

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