



FYN Garden Q & A Series

Thomas Becker
Extension Agent, Florida
Yards & Neighborhoods



FYN Topic: ISA-Certified Arborists

Question: We have a tree in our backyard that is HUGE (not a live oak variety) and has now invaded the house and lanai area. We would like to trim it down away from the house or remove it completely. When we first moved in 20 years ago someone told us it was a protected species. Does it need trimmed down now because it is out of control! I have looked on the ID databases but cannot seem to identify it. I do have photos I can email you. —Nancy L., Cape Coral--

Answer: Your tree invasion probably needed to be addressed 20 years ago or at planting.. Large tree species often need to be removed early because they were planted too close to homes. Called a hazard tree with overhanging branches, removal may be your best option. Many different types of large trees are still being incorrectly planted too close to residences. Trees I've seen planted too close to newly built homes include Mahogany, Southern Magnolia, Bismarck and Royal Palms, Live Oak, Laurel Oak and Gumbo Limbo.

Seek advice from Extension or ISA-Certified arborists about hazard trees. No large tree species should be planted closer than 20 feet. Prune out overhanging branches over several years. A better solution is to remove and replace with a smaller tree species like the Geiger Tree, Willow Busic, Wax myrtle, Fiddlewood, Florida Privet, Jatropha, Weeping Yaupon Holly and many others. The Extension Office can help identify your tree. Send an email with two or three photos of your tree and its parts. Or, bring samples to the Extension office. The address and hours are posted at: <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/HorticultureHelpDesk.shtml>

Useful Links

<http://www.floridayards.org>
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>
<http://gardeningsolutions.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 533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by emailing Extgardener@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A. & M. 9/08/2012.

