



FYN TOPIC: 2013 Prologue

Greetings and thank you for your many and varied questions for this column, The high volume of questions our Horticulture Help Desk staff and Master Gardener volunteers respond to helps getting answers to as many of you as possible. In the end, 18,300 words were used for the column to give readers a snapshot of what's being asked. In total, we received and responded to 4,700 gardening questions, 80 of which made it into this garden column in 2012.

After reviewing columns of 2012, a strong theme emerges asking gardeners to plant more and a greater diversity of trees to improve our surroundings and the environment. The past year's columns recommended over 53 different trees, many of which are Florida-Friendly and/or SWFL native including: slash pine, live oak, sea grape, gumbo limbo and wax myrtle.

Another theme running through these questions surprised even me... the use of the color 'black.' Black appears more frequently in nature than given credit. For example, black described the color of pods on the Scrambled Egg tree and the edible pulp inside the fruit of the Black Sapote tree. Black also describes the spots on a frequently seen pest, the Sri Lanka weevil as a dominant color variation for a pest known as palm weevil. And finally, black was the key color describing several swallowtails, lichens and even the two-stripped walking stick.

"People can have the Model T in any color - so long as it's black." -- Henry Ford

For 2013, wishing all a peaceful New Year! Tom Becker

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 239-533-7504 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>

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