

Useful Websites!

<http://brevard.ifas.ufl.edu/>

This site has information on the Brevard County Extension office. All program areas have information posted along with a program calendar, bulletins and other general information.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>

This site has all of the bulletins written by specialists from the University of Florida. There is a search window in the upper left hand corner that your plant or topic can be typed in and then just click on "find key word".

<http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/>

This site is the Entomology and Nematology Departments site so this has information on insects, spiders, etc. Pictures are included.

<http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/>

This site is the Wildlife and Ecology Conservation Departments site. Information on wildlife, both the desired and undesirable, can be found here.

<http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/>

This site is Dr. Ed Gilman's and has everything you need to know about trees and some things on palms.

Other Useful Services!

Unknown Plant! Bring stems with leaves, and flowers and fruit too if possible and we will send it to the Univ. of FL Herbarium.

Unknown Bug! Bring a sample to the Cocoa office and if we don't know what it is we will send it to the Entomology ID Lab.

Master Gardener Clinics

Bring your questions, pictures, plant samples and even bug samples and find some answers! Some close down during the summer and around Christmas – please call to confirm.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>
Central Brev. Libr (633-1792)	Sunday	1-3 pm
Pt. St. John Libr (633-1867)	Mon.	1-3 pm
Merritt Isl. Libr. (455-1369)	Tues.	1-3 pm
North Brev. Libr. (264-5026)	Tues.	10 - Noon
Palm Bay Ext. (952-4536)	Tues.	9 am-Noon
Satellite Bch Libr. (779-4004)	Mon.	10 am-Noon
S. Mainland Libr. (664-4066)	Wed.	Noon-2 pm
Melb. Libr. Fee Ave (674-5700)	Thurs.	10 am-Noon
Palm Bay Ext. (952-4536)	Thurs.	1-3 pm
Patrick AFB BX lobby (799-1300 ext. 124)	Friday	10 am-Noon
Cocoa Bch Libr (868-1104)	Friday	10am -1pm
Eau Gallie Libr. (255-4304)	Friday	2-4 pm

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UF/IFAS Extension Brevard County



Pruning Palms - Do It Right And Your Palms Will Love You For It!

Office Location:
3695 Lake Drive
Cocoa, FL 32926
(321) 633-1702

Help! Yes, we could really use everyone's help on getting this message out. It is still evident that the massacre of sabal palms (*Sabal palmetto*) is still going on. It's easy to identify an over-pruned sabal palm from long distance because the head of the palm should be round and yet you will see a lot of palms with only two or three fronds up top. They end up having the look of a pineapple top!



Over-pruned Sabal Palm

The tragic truth is that this practice of removing green and even yellow fronds is now being carried out on all types of palms. When a green frond is removed from a palm it will not be able to produce carbohydrates for the palm. Remove a bunch of green fronds and that is a lot of potential "food" that is being removed from the plant. That is not beneficial for the palm, and if done repeatedly over a long period of time, could potentially harm it!

Here are some of the reasons for removing only brown fronds from a palm!

*The removal of healthy green fronds is not recommended because those are the leaves that carry on photosynthesis which produces the carbohydrates for the palm to use to grow and protect themselves from insects and disease.

*Palms don't naturally shed green fronds. They need them for their survival. When sabal palms are left untouched, their crown naturally attains a round silhouette.

*The over-trimming, and reduction in food manufacturing efficiency of a palm, can also result in a reduction of the palm trunk's width. Palms normally grow by first thickening their trunk and then elongating it. If a lot of green fronds are removed when the crown diameter is trying to increase, then it will stop due to a lack of energy. When pruning, never remove fronds up past the 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. position.

*If a palm is deficient in nutrients like potassium or magnesium, the trimming of older, yellow leaves will "push" the deficiency conditions further up the canopy. These nutrients are mobile and if there is a deficiency then the new growth receives these nutrients from the older growth. That's why a magnesium and potassium deficiency shows up as yellowing of the older fronds.

*There is also evidence that over-trimming sabal palms decreases their cold tolerance.

*A "hurricane cut" is a practice that is done when a sabal palm is being transplanted to a site with NO irrigation. All of the fronds are removed prior to transplanting.

Research has shown that the sabal will establish faster if all of the fronds are removed. This should not be done as a regular maintenance practice on any palm!

*Unpruned sabal or cabbage palms (*Sabal palmetto*) are a favorite spot for our native INSECT EATING bats to roost. Their favorite insects are mosquitoes!

*Don't prune off any palm fronds in **April, May, and June** because baby bats and squirrels could be living there!

*When a palm sheds its fronds they will go from green to yellow to brown quickly, in a matter of a few days. If yellow or discolored leaves are hanging onto the palm for months then that is a sign of a nutritional deficiency.

*If a potassium deficiency exists, do not remove anything but totally dead fronds!

*Care should be taken when pruning Queen and Mexican fan palms, since there is a newly identified fungus that kills them. The Fusarium wilt kills the palms quickly and could be spread by contaminated pruning tools.



Natural looking Sabal Palm