Q: There is webbing on my branches and tiny insects underneath. What should I do?  
A: These silken webs are created by Psocids, bark lice, *Archipsocus nomas*. From July through October, their colonies increase in size and number and are more frequently observed. Psocids secrete this protective silken covering on trunks and larger limbs while they are “cleaning” the bark of dead insect and plant debris, but mostly fungi and lichens. They most often appear on rough bark trees such as oaks, silver trumpet trees and sea grape, but they have been observed on hollies and citrus as well. These insects are not harmful so no pesticide is recommended.

Q: There is a parasite on my tree trunk that is killing my tree.  
A: Lichens are often mistaken for the culprit that is causing a plant’s decline. However, lichens usually appear on plants that have exposed branches – they only need a structure to support them. A thinning canopy allows light to provide the right environment for lichens to proliferate.

Lichens appear in varying shades of gray-green and can be flat or raised, even lacy looking. They are both an algae and fungus. The algae supplies the fungus with carbohydrates through photosynthesis and the fungus protects the algae from drying out. They were placed there by wind or rain.

Their presence does not always indicate the plant is stressed. They often appear on crape myrtles in the winter after the plants have lost their leaves. If a plant is stressed, it’s important to find out the real reason – it’s not the lichens.

**PLANTING GUIDE**

**Vegetables** (seeds at end of month) & **Herbs** (plants): Basil, broccoli, celery, collards, corn, eggplant, lemon balm, marjoram, Mexican tarragon, mint, okra, onions, oregano, pole beans, pumpkin, rosemary, southern peas, summer squash, thyme, and watermelon.  
**Annuals:** Begonia, Celosia, Coleus, Cosmos, Dahlia, dusty miller, marigold, Portulaca, periwinkle, Salvia, and Zinnia.  
**Perennials:** African iris, beach buttercup, blackberry lily, Caladium, Coreopsis, firespike, Gaillardia, Gaura, Iris, Jacobinia, Kalanchoe, milkweed, Pentas, Salvia, society garlic, and Verbena.  
**Blooming plants:** Cordia, crape myrtle, gingers, gloriosa lily, goldenrod, Ixora, Lantana, Magnolia, Oleander, orange jasmine, yellow Poinciana, red and yellow shrimp plants, rouge plant, Plumbago, Thryallis, Tibouchina and Thunbergia.  
**Fruits in Season:** Avocado, banana, Barbados cherry, blueberry, carambola, citrus (calamondin, lemon, and lime), cocoplum, fig, guava, jaboticaba, kumquat, longan, mango, Monstera, muscadine grape, papaya, passionfruit, pineapple, and sea grape.

**Upcoming educational classes:**  
Call 861-9900 to register for the following classes.  
- Composting Made Easy, Twin Lakes Park, 10:00 a.m. August 4
- Household Pests, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. August 4
- Butterfly Gardening, Gulf Gate Library, 2:00 p.m. August 6
- Butterfly Predators, Twin Lakes Park, 10:00 a.m. August 10
- Butterfly Gardening is Fun, Twin Lakes Park, 10:00 a.m. August 11
- Is that Spider Dangerous? Shamrock Park, 2:00 p.m. August 12
- Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Nine Principles, Longwood Park, 10:30 a.m. August 14
- Termites in the Home, Twin Lakes Park, 10:00 a.m. August 18
- Rain Barrel Workshop, Twin Lakes Park, 10:00 a.m. August 21
- Invasive Insects, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. August 25
- Irrigation 101, Twin Lakes Park, 4:00 p.m. August 25
- Seasonal Landscape Problems, Twin Lakes Park, 10:00 a.m. September 1
- Green Pest Management, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. September 1
- Trees in the Landscape, Gulf Gate Library, 2:00 p.m. September 3

**For information**
The Master Gardener Help Desk now has an email address: mghelpdesk@scgov.net to answer questions. It is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m.-Noon and 1:00-4:00 p.m. You can call (941-861-9807) or visit our office at Twin Lakes Park on Clark Road east of I-75 with landscape questions. We also have weekly satellite help desks at the four south county libraries and every Monday at Gulf Gate Library.

(Patricia Porchey is an Urban Horticulture Agent with University of Florida/IFAS Sarasota County Extension. Website: [http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu](http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu))