July Gardening Guide 2010
By Patricia Porchey

What is causing the spots on my Laurel oak leaves? They are concave on the underside of the leaf and bumpy on the top.
This is a fungus called Oak Leaf Blister (*Taphrina caerulescens*) which commonly attacks young leaves of laurel, live and water oaks. It doesn’t normally cause any significant damage other than cosmetic. As the leaf spots coalesce and curl, they become more noticeable. The recommendation is to leave the tree alone and let the disease run its course. Rake up the fallen leaves so there will be less incidence of the disease next year.

Another problem seen on oaks that is also a cosmetic problem is galls. They may appear as bumps or raised spheres on the leaves or branches. Galls are formed when small wasps or gnats lay their eggs on newly emerging leaves. The insects develop inside the tissue so it’s not practical to apply a pesticide. Galls do not usually cause significant damage, but can be unattractive. The leaves can be raked up or branches pruned to curtail the effect.

There is webbing on my branches and tiny insects underneath. What should I do?
These silken webs are created by Psocids, bark lice, *Archipsocus nomas* Gurney. The Psocids are “cleaning” the bark of debris, mold and lichens. They appear mostly on rough bark trees such as oaks. These insects are not harmful so no pesticide is recommended.

Lichens are often mistaken for the culprit that is killing a plant. However, lichens usually appear on stressed plants that have exposed branches. They are grayish green and can be flat or raised, even lacy looking. They are a fungi, but not parasitic and were placed there by wind or rain. They are not harmful and may be a cosmetic problem for some.

Timely reminder:
Every time a palm is “hurricane cut,” it is actually more vulnerable to wind damage. This drastic method of over-pruning weakens the palm and makes it more susceptible to attacks by disease and insects. Only remove the brown fronds when pruning palms; even discolored fronds are still providing energy back to the plant.

PLANTING GUIDE
Vegetables & Herbs (plant herbs from transplants and vegetables from seeds): Basil, bay laurel, ginger, horehound, lemon balm, marjoram, mint, oregano, rosemary, thyme, okra, and southern peas.
Annuals: Begonia Celosia, Coleus, Cosmos, Crossandra, Dahlberg daisy, Gomphrena, marigold, Melampodium, Nicotiana, periwinkle, Portulaca, Salvia, Torenia, and Zinnia.
Perennials: Beach buttercup, beach sunflower, blue daze, Coreopsis, daylily, Gaillardia, Gaura, Mexican heather, Pentas, Rudbeckia, Salvia, shrimp plant, society garlic, and Verbena.
Blooming plants: Allamanda, beautyberry, bird of paradise, blackberry lily, Canna, crape myrtle, Crinum lily, crossvine, dwarf Poinciana, fiddlewood, firespike, frangipani, gloriosa lily, golden dewdrop, horsemint, Jacquemontia, Loropetalum, Magnolia, Natal plum, rain lily, Vitex, and yellow Poinciana.
**Fruits in season:** Avocado, banana, citrus (calamondin, key lime, lemon and lime), fig, guava, kumquat, longan, lychee, macadamia, mango, papaya, passion vine, pineapple, pomegranate, sapodilla, and sea grape.

**Upcoming educational classes:**
Call 861-9900 to register for the following classes.
- Butterfly Gardening, Twin Lakes Park, 10:00 a.m. July 7
- Partnering with Pollinators, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. July 7
- Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Creating your Florida Yard, Longwood Park, 10:30 a.m. July 10
- Good Bugs in the Garden, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. July 13
- Rodent & Mole Management, Shamrock Park, 2:00 p.m. July 15
- Rain Barrel Workshop, Twin Lakes Park, 10:00 a.m. July 17
- Is that Spider Dangerous? Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. July 22
- Ladybugs in your Neighborhood, Twin Lakes Park, 1:00 p.m. July 27
- Grow your own Bouquets, Twin Lakes Park, 10:00 a.m. July 28
- 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

**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)

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