

Good Day,

April 16, 2010

Spring has finally arrived in Southwest Florida and our landscapes are responding to the longer and warmer days. We have just come out of a very unusual wet and cold winter season. This has kept us from the beach and golf course many days as well as challenging our landscapes. I would like to touch upon several common items which may help answer many of the common questions presented to Greenscapes.

The January freeze damaged many of our tropical plants such as Ixora, Croton, Jatropha, Tropical Palms, Hibiscus and Bougainvillea. The Hibiscus and Bougainvillea are the first to recover. They have put out new leaves and are starting to bloom. Jatropha have put out many new flower buds and are colorful now. Greenscapes will be reducing these plants over the summer to promote full and healthy plants that will be allowed to flower the coming fall and winter. Ixoras and Crotons have been much slower to recover. Almost all are still alive and are beginning to develop new buds. This summer the Ixora and Crotons will put out new leaves. Tropical Palms that were damaged by the freeze will need many months to re-grow a new canopy of new undamaged leaves. Greenscapes recommends leaving any fronds that are partially green on the tree as they are photosynthesizing and feeding the tree.

In some areas this winter and spring there have been brown areas in the sod. These are mostly areas of dormant carpet grass. The carpet grass seasonally goes dormant in late fall when night time temperatures drop into the 40s. These areas annually green up in early summer with the warmer temperatures. There are no chemicals that can be legally used to treat for carpet grass. The only solution is to kill off the areas with non-selective herbicide, wait for the carpet grass to die (usually 14 days) and re-sod the area. It is imperative to provide frequent consistent irrigation during the establishment of the sod. Greenscapes strongly recommends re-sodding during the rainy season (June-September) for the optimum sod establishment.

The cold wet winter weather has resulted in increased broadleaf weed growth especially dollarweed. Dollarweed thrives in cool wet conditions. During the winter and early spring it was so abnormally cold that the herbicides applied to the broadleaf weeds were not translocated (moved through out the plants vascular system) in the weeds and therefore did not work to their full potential. The recent fertilizations and warmer temperatures have expedited growth on other broadleaf weed. The broadleaf weed herbicide application applied the week of April 5th, 2010 is showing positive signs of control. This week the weeds were turning yellow.

For those of you leaving for the summer season, safe travels. For the year round residents, continue to enjoy our pleasant spring climate here in Southwest Florida. Greenscapes continues to promote your landscape's full potential.

Have a great Greenscapes Day!

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