

Solutions For Your Life

**FERNS AND FLORA**

By Dana Venrick, Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent  
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**FOLIAGE FORUM**

Tuesday, July 11, 2006

Pierson Lions Club

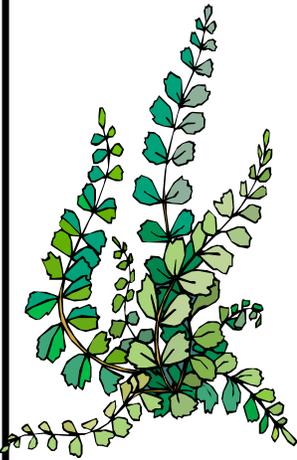
9:00 a.m – 11:00 a.m.

9 – 10 a.m. **Florida Fern Caterpillar**, Dr. Gary Leibee, Mid-Florida Research and education Center 1.0 Category CEU

10 – 11 a.m. **Environmental (IPM) Pesticide Concerns and Integrated Pest Management**, Dana Venrick, Volusia County Extension 1.0 Core CEU

11 a.m. **Tri County Foliage Advisory Committee** – Your attendance and input will help the industry!

2 –4 p.m. **Train the Trainer**



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PLANT TALK



Hot weather is here again. If you haven't already done your soil testing, go ahead and do it now.

Before the summer is over, be sure to do your leaf tissue analysis as well. Give me a call and I will help you with the forms and submission of samples to

UF/IFAS Soil testing Laboratory. The cost is nominal for soil testing and I can submit a leaf tissue sample for analysis at no cost to you.

Remember to maintain optimum fertility during the summer months. Yes, lower nitrogen inputs but maintain inputs of potassium, calcium (if needed), magnesium, some phosphorus (if soil test indicate that levels are below optimum)

and micronutrients, **if they are deficient..** There are good liquid supplements on the market that will quickly correct deficiencies and give your crop a great boost. Be ready to supplement immediately if testing indicates the need. Keeping nutrients at optimum levels (this includes micronutrients) will result in a better, quicker maturing crop that will make you more money

Sincerely,



Dana Venrick

Extension Agent II – Commercial Horticulture

# Fulvic Acid Enhances Growth

?? Helps to balance pH of soil.

Most growers are unaware of the enormous benefits that

Fulvic Acid can give to a fertility program. Crop production can be significantly enhanced by supplementing conventional fertilizers with liquid supplements containing Fulvic acid.



## ? What is Fulvic Acid?

Fulvic acids and humic acids are the main active ingredients of humates that result when organic matter decays. Humic acids are found in deposits known as Leonardite. Fulvic acid is separated from humates found in Leonardite deposits.

## ? How Does Fulvic Acid React in the Soil?

Fulvic acid dissolves minerals and metals when in the soil solution. This “chelates” metallic minerals and turns them into a readily absorbable bio-available form. Fulvic acid can transport many times its weight in dissolved minerals. Fulvic acid stimulates metabolism and growth, increases oxygen availability, and helps plants resist disease.

## ? What are Benefits of Fulvic Acid?

- ?? Increases water holding capacity of soil.
- ?? Holds applied water soluble nutrients until the crop needs them.
- ?? Reduces nutrient wastage and leaching.
- ?? Stimulates germination and plant vigor.
- ?? Reduces need for applied fertilizers.
- ?? Enables plants to use soil nutrient reserves.
- ?? Increases soil aeration.
- ?? In hydroponics will reduce unused nutrient wastage.
- ?? Increases effectiveness with foliar applied nutrients.
- ?? Improves drainage.
- ?? Increased protein and trace element content of plants.
- ?? Feeds micro-organisms in soil.
- ?? Increases all round health of crops.
- ?? Increases nutrient holding capacity (CEC) of sandy and poor soils.
- ?? Reduces nutrient locked up in soils.
- ?? Helps remove undesirable chemical pollution from soil.
- ?? Increases available nitrogen from soil reserves.

## ? How stable is Fulvic Acid in the Soil?

Humic materials are relatively stable. Fulvic acid is more resistant to microbial attack than most freshly applied crop residues. The half life of Fulvic Acid may be from 10-50 years. The half-life of humic acid is measured in centuries. Fulvic acid is far more beneficial to crops than humic acid.

## ? How Big is the Fulvic Acid Molecule?

Fulvic acid is extremely small in size and low in molecular weight allowing it to easily penetrate plant and animal tissues. It contains amino acid peptides and nucleic acids, collectors, you might say, of minerals. Therefore, Fulvic acid improves mineral absorption.

## ? What Products Contain Fulvic Acid?

Ask your supplier what products contain Fulvic acid and in what amount. Remember, to base your fertilizer inputs on test results and use Fulvic acid as an occasional supplement in the growing season.

## GROWERS ASK



## ? Where is the best place to buy supplies for my fernery or nursery?

? There are many great suppliers of many fine products. Each company has their own product mix that best fits the needs of customers that they have targeted. Depending on what you are growing and your water, soil and leaf tissue results, you might find the best product(s) at one of several places.

## ? Who are some of the suppliers close to the Pierson fern growing area?

? We are blessed to have two great suppliers of horticultural products, both located in Pierson – Central Florida Fern Co-op at 567 S. Volusia Ave. (phone 386-749-4911 or on-line at <http://www.fernco-op.com/>) and Pierson Supply Company at 407 S. Center Street (phone 386-749-2655 or 888-749-2655 or online at <http://www.piersonsupply.com/>)

? **Can you tell me something about the two companies?**

? **Pierson Supply Company** has been in business for more than 75 years. They offer products (including dry and liquid fertilizers and chemicals) by leading manufacturers and provide experienced technical support for field, farm nursery, greenhouse turf and landscape growers, as well as irrigation and shade structure contractors, pest control applicators, groundskeepers, landscapers, ranchers and homeowners. They also have products and services for recreational facilities such as athletic fields and golf courses.

? **The Central Florida Fern Co-op** has been in business since 1980. They offer dry, bagged fertilizers, bulk liquid fertilizers (custom and store blends), chemicals (fungicides, insecticides, herbicides, miticides and rodenticides), all types of building materials, packaging needs (waxed and dry corrugated boxes), liners, export bag, sleeves, ice bags, staples/staple guns, stretch film, markers and rubber bands), irrigation supplies and all types of miscellaneous equipment. Central Florida Fern Co-op offers a 10% discount for members (\$100 membership fee) along with membership benefits.

These are some of the suppliers available to the horticultural industry and does not imply any endorsement by the University of Florida, IFAS or the Volusia County Extension Service.

## **HELICONIAS** **AS A CUT FLOWER**

Heliconias bear spectacular and brightly colored flowers and are widely grown for the florist industry. They are often called “lobster claws” because of their striking resemblance to large lobster claws.

Heliconias are grown outdoors in south Florida but have to be grown in freeze protected structures in north Central Florida. Heliconias are heavy feeders. Use a high quality controlled release fertilizer with micronutrients. Liquid organic supplements may be beneficial, if used occasionally.

Once a stalk flowers, it will die back. It can be cut back close to the ground after the inflorescence is cut.

Some of the medium size varieties growing to 4 to 6 feet tall are:

??*H. hirsute* ‘Peru’ – has small, reddish-orange flowers.

??*H. lingulata* ‘Fan’ – bears bright orange-yellow flowers that spiral. It will bloom on stalks that are less than one-year old.

??*H. pendula* ‘Frosty’ – has flowers with pinkish-red bracts and white flowers. The cultivar ‘Red Waxy’ has red flowers.

??*H. rostrata* – is widely grown in Florida and has pendant flowers with bright red bracts and a yellow lip.

??*H. schiedeana* – can be grown outdoors in northern Florida but usually will not flower because freezes kill it back most winters. It has yellow flowers with red bracts.

There are several easily grown varieties that grow to 10 feet tall.

??*H. latispatha* – commonly grown. ‘Yellow Gyro’ has bright yellow bracts. ‘Orange Gyro’ has bright orange bracts. ‘Red-Yellow Gyro’ has red bracts with a yellow base.

??*H. collinsiana* – has a pendant inflorescence with red bracts and yellow flowers. The stems and leaf bottoms have a pretty, silvery, waxy coating.

??*H. x pabstii* ‘Brazilian Bomber’ is a hybrid. The flowers are deep red. Inflorescences are upright at first, but later they become pendant.



**HELICONIA BIHAI AUREA**

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## Dates To Remember



- July**  
11 **Foliage Forum** 9:00 a.m. Pierson Lions Club, Pierson – See front page for details  
11 **Foliage Advisory Committee Meeting** – 11:00 a.m. Pierson Lions Club, Pierson  
11 **Train the Trainer** – 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Pierson Lions Club, Pierson
- August**  
30 **Review for the Ornamental/Turf & Private Applicators Agricultural Exams** – 8:30 a.m. Tavares,  
Contact Juanita Popenoe
- September**  
28-30 **Florida Nursery & Allied Trade Show (FNATS)** Orlando, FL 407-295-7994  
[www.fn gla.org/info@fn gla.org](http://www.fn gla.org/info@fn gla.org)
- October**  
17-19 **Agricultural Exposition** Moultrie, GA 229-985-1698 [www.sunbeltexpo.com.info@sunbeltexpo.com](http://www.sunbeltexpo.com.info@sunbeltexpo.com)  
24 **Limited Pesticide Certification Training and Testing (Limited Commercial Landscape Maintenance (LLM) or Limited Lawn & Ornamental (L&O)** Volusia County Extension Service Auditorium. Call Dana Venrick or Jeanne Blanchard for a registration form 386-822-5778.

If you would like more information on upcoming programs or want to receive publications please call, fax, or e-mail me. All Extension Service programs and information are free and open to the public regardless of race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, or national origin.