

Plant Clinic and Home Show provide advice on lawns

Coming out of a cold, wet winter may result in many homeowners being dissatisfied with their lawns this spring. Before you make costly mistakes in your lawn this spring, consider attending a plant clinic and/or lawn seminar to get sound lawn care advice.

The first plant clinic of 2010 will be held Wednesday, March 24 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Fort Walton Beach at the Okaloosa County Extension Service building, 127 W. Hollywood Blvd.

The plant clinic can assist you in identifying those weeds that seem to be taking over your lawn. Correct identification of a weed is the first step in control of that weed. Most weeds that are dominant in our lawns now are winter annuals. They stand out in late winter and early spring. Most have flowers now. It may appear that these weeds suddenly came from nowhere. But in fact they started their lives back in late fall or early winter.

The plant clinic is designed to provide a place and time for people to bring in samples of plants for diagnosis, including weeds for identification.

To participate, bring a sample of the weed, plant, insect, etc., to the clinic. Bring a fresh sample. This may include a plant stem with several leaves, a 4-inch square of grass with roots attached, etc.

Then, on Saturday, March 27 from 4 to 5 p.m., I'll provide a seminar titled How to Renovate a Florida Lawn at this year's Home Show. Plus, Master Gardeners will be available at the Home Show to help answer your gardening questions.

Florida lawns don't last forever. Many people find themselves in the position of having to redo sections of their lawn. In some cases it may be necessary to completely start over. This seminar will cover why Florida lawns decline, help you decide if it's time to renovate your lawn, show you the steps involved in renovating a lawn and provide information on how to correctly maintain a Florida lawn.

The Home Show, sponsored by the Building Industry Association of Okaloosa & Walton Counties, will be held at the Emerald Coast Conference Center on Okaloosa Island March 27 and 28. The show will feature around 100 indoor exhibits of products and services for the home and the homeowner. Tickets for the event will be on sale March 1st at all Eglin Federal Credit Union Branch Locations.

Larry Williams, UF/IFAS Extension Agent, Okaloosa County, March 17, 2010