

## Mulching

Apply wood mulches around shrubs, planted beds and covering bare ground can improve the soil fertility, keeps moisture near the plant roots, inhibit weed growth and reduce “weed whacker” damage.

## Control Yard Pests

Identify the insect to determine if it is harmful (eating your plant) or helpful (eating harmful insects). If no helpful insects are present try a stream of strong water to knock them off or insecticidal soaps or horticultural oils.

## To Learn More

To locate GreenThumb Certified nurseries, go to: [www.KeysGreenThumb.net](http://www.KeysGreenThumb.net)

UF/IFAS/Monroe County Extension  
305-292-4501  
<http://Monroe.ifas.ufl.edu>

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## Keys Landscaping Tips

FLORIDA  
YARDS &  
NEIGHBORHOODS



The Nature  
Conservancy   
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

# How does your garden grow?

## Almost Paradise?

Although the Florida Keys is known as a tropical paradise to many people, it's a pretty harsh climate for plants. Coral rock soils, seasonal rains, salt water intrusion and hot summers can spell disaster for many ornamentals plants.

## What is a "GreenThumb Certified" Nursery

"GreenThumb Certified" Nurseries educate their clientele about the "Keys Friendly" landscaping principles that will help you create a Keys landscape that will bloom and grow.

## Right Plant, Right Place

Select plants that can take Florida Keys growing conditions of limited available water, salty winds, salt intrusion into the root zone, high pH soils, and year-round pest problems.

## Remove Invasive, Non-native Plants

Invasive, non-native plants grow like weeds in the landscape. They are prolific seed producers or shade-out natural habitats. Remove plants that are taking over your landscape such as Florida Holly, lead tree and Australian Pine.

## Attract Wildlife

Plant a variety of native trees, shrubs and ground covers provides more cover and feeding opportunities for birds, butterflies and caterpillars.

## Fertilize Appropriately

Choose a slow-release granular fertilizer that is formulated for the Keys alkaline soils and apply enough to feed the plants but not pollute our nearshore waters. Your fertilizing goals are to feed your plants to grow more or larger blooms, faster growth, greener leaves or more fruit.

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