



## In This Issue

- Rejuvenation Pruning
- Team Member Spot Light
- Chinch Bugs
- Plant Profile

## Rejuvenation

We hope everyone had a blessed Easter. To many, this time is a symbol of hope, renewal and new life. We are inspired for the new year as spring awakens nature and the hue of the landscape transforms from dull to vibrant as plants flush with new leaves and flowers. Any dead twigs have been or will soon be removed from those that were nipped by Jack Frost over the winter during our regular pruning cycle. Shrubs that have become “leggy” with most of their leaves concentrated at the outer portion of the plant, too large for the space they occupy, or have accumulate unsightly dead wood need a more aggressive approach to stimulate fresh new growth. *Rejuvenation pruning* (hard cut-backs) is underway or will soon begin on many properties we maintain. Continued on page 3.

## Weather forecast for the week ahead...

There was a chill in the air this morning with temperatures dipping into the low to mid 50s and lower 60s throughout Central and South Florida overnight. Expect this trend to continue throughout the week with high daytime temperatures climbing from lower 80s today into the upper 80s throughout the rest of the week.

There will be sunshine and clear skies today through Friday with a 50% chance of afternoon thunderstorms over the weekend. Humidity is extremely low - only 20 to 30% during the heat of the afternoon and the Fire Danger Index from the Florida Forest Service is “very high to extreme”. Landscape plants and turf are sure to signal the low humidity and no rainfall at this time. Read on to page 4 to find out what to expect...



## TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

By Paul Richau, Regional Operations Manager

### Luis Angel Ortiz

**Position:** Mow Crew Leader— North Port

**Time with Mainscape:** 2.5 years

Luis Angel Ortiz, has been a dedicated member of the Mainscape family for the past 2 ½ years. Luis was hired with a couple years landscape experience and has worked his way up to leading our mow crew in North Port, FL. Through his constant pursuit of excellence Luis demonstrates every positive asset it takes to be successful. He is dependable, hard working, friendly, and leads responsibly.

In the relatively short time he has been with Mainscape, Luis has earned the respect of senior Team Members and Managers. If anyone is having a bad day, glance over at Luis and his brilliant smile with upbeat enthusiasm will have you smiling in no time.

When asked what he likes about his job, Luis says, “I enjoy making the landscape beautiful and building my team.” He expresses gratitude for the opportunity to grow with Mainscape and appreciates the company’s ‘people first’ culture of respect.

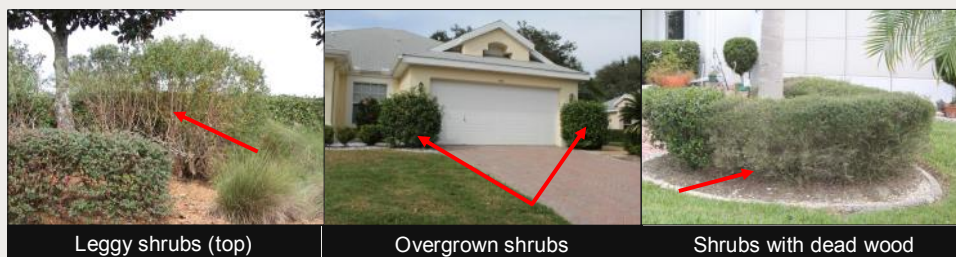
Luis and his wife recently purchased a new home in North Port. He loves spending time with his family at the beach, grilling on the BBQ, and is a sports enthusiast. He is gracious and contributes his time to the church helping others grow in their faith.

We are happy to have Luis as part of the Mainscape family and look forward to seeing what the future holds for him. It goes without saying that the culture, and success of the North Port branch looks bright with him out front leading the charge.



# Rejuvenation Pruning

Continued from page 1...



Rejuvenation pruning reduces plant size by 30 to 50 percent exposing latent buds along the lower portion of stems to sunlight so they will grow new shoots and leaves, resulting in a healthier, fuller and more attractive shrub. The amount of reduction will depend on plant species, health and desired height.

## What to expect after rejuvenation pruning

For the shrubs shown above to look their best it requires an “ugly stage”. Most plants have very few leaves after rejuvenation pruning, and have a bare appearance for a few weeks. Dramatically removing this many leaves may be alarming at first, but soon you will see tiny new leaves forming all along the remaining stems.



Removing some flowers during rejuvenation pruning may be unavoidable, however plants that produce flower buds on new growth will produce even more flowers on all the new growth to come. Examples are Hibiscus (shown to the left), Bougainvillea, Ixora, Oleander, Plumbago, Crepe Myrtle, Roses, Allamanda, Thryallis, Duranta and Firebush.

The rejuvenation process can add years to the life of plants that need it. Aging or weak shrubs may not recover from severe pruning, however that is usually an indicator that they would not have survived long term anyway.

## When can rejuvenation pruning be done?

Rejuvenation pruning can begin in early Spring and continue throughout the Summer. Mainscape typically completes hard cut backs by the onset of summer so homeowners can enjoy their rejuvenated shrubs after they have flushed out for the better part of the growing season. It is Mainscape's practice to perform selective rejuvenation pruning only on plants that need it. All others are trimmed to keep neat and maintain shape as usual.



## Palm Nutritional Deficiencies

The beginning of the growing season is often a time when palm nutrient deficiencies show up. Palms start growing quickly this time of year depleting nutrient reserves in the soil from the last nutrient application.

The agronomy team is currently in process of making nutrient applications to all shrubs and palms, and is applying a heavier feeding to those showing signs of deficiencies.

The IPM (integrated pest management) team is also on the lookout for deficiencies and will supplement on an individual basis as needed.

If wide-spread palm nutrient deficiencies are observed on any property that we have maintained for over a year, we will inform the property manager and submit a proposal for an additional application to all palms throughout the property.



Pygmy date palm with correctable manganese deficiency





## Challenges of hot, dry weather

Over the past couple weeks the landscape's demand for water has increased by approximately 20% due to increased temperatures and lack of regular rainfall and low humidity.

Irrigation team members are making proactive adjustments to irrigation systems where possible to keep plants and turf looking their best. Nevertheless, we still expect the following challenges:

Properties where water restrictions allow irrigation once or twice a week WILL experience less than desirable performance of some turf and shrubs during weeks without rain events.

Planting new landscape plants or turf will significantly increase water consumption during this dry period. Providing enough water for successful establishment will be challenging due to watering restrictions or limited irrigation system capacity. Therefore we recommend waiting until rainy season begins in mid to late June to install new plants.

Hot spots on properties doesn't mean that irrigation inspections haven't been performed. Irrigation issues become noticeable and problematic in a matter of hours during dry conditions. Please report any sudden hot spots to our Customer Service Center at 1-800-481-0096 or [www.mainscape.com](http://www.mainscape.com).

# Chinch Bugs

Chinch bugs are the most destructive pest of St. Augustine lawns. These tiny insects are most active in spring, summer and fall, but may also be found in warmer-than-average winters. They may occasionally be found feeding on other grass species, but rarely in numbers high enough to cause significant damage.

## Description

Adult chinch bugs are approximately 3/16th-inch long. Adults are black with white wings that fold flat across their backs and have a black triangular patch on the middle of each side. Immature chinch bugs (nymphs) are smaller, reddish-orange and have a white stripe across their backs. There can be up to 10 generations of chinch bugs per year.



All stages of chinch bugs from nymph to adult.

## Chinch Bug Damage



Orange-brown area of lawn caused by chinch bug feeding.

Chinch bugs extract plant fluids from the bases of plants, stems and runners with their needle-like mouthparts. They feed in numbers on individual grass plants then move in groups to surrounding grass. Symptoms start as small areas of yellowing grass blades that shrivel and turn brown, then expand into orange-brown patches.

Water stress, disease or other insect pests may also cause yellow or brown areas in the lawn. The presence of chinch bugs can be confirmed by parting leaf blades in multiple areas towards the outer edge of symptomatic turf and looking in the thatch for the insects pictured above.

A preventive treatment for chinch bugs will be starting soon as part of our St. Augustine program that effectively suppresses these insects for several months. Outbreaks that occur before the application is completed should be treated as soon as possible to avoid significant damage to turf.

If chinch bugs are identified, please contact our Customer Care Center at 1-800-481-0096 or [www.mainscape.com](http://www.mainscape.com), and an Agronomy Specialist will confirm the diagnosis and apply a curative treatment.

# Plant Profile

## Geiger Tree

*Cordia spp.*



The Geiger is a small to medium accent tree that grows from 15 to 25 feet in height. It's showy white, yellow or orange-red flowers are produced throughout most of the year, attract hummingbirds and butterflies and add great curb appeal. This is an evergreen tree, but may drop leaves if temperatures drop below 40 degrees. The white Geiger is a little more cold tolerant than the yellow and orange (and grows a bit smaller). These trees are adapted to cold hardiness zone 10 and warmer (see page 6) and don't tolerate freeze.

The Geiger makes a good street tree in urban developments because it doesn't grow too large and the roots aren't problematic for pushing up sidewalks like large hardwood trees. This tree is not very temperamental and grows well in poor soils where other trees may decline. It is drought tolerant once established, but also tolerates periodic soil saturation. It is also withstands salt spray, therefore is a good choice for coastal areas.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/st182>



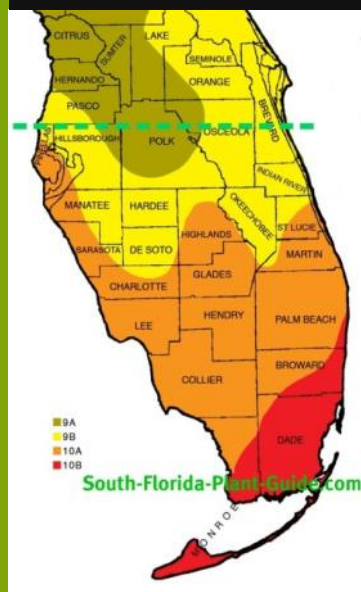
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[www.mainscape.com](http://www.mainscape.com)

### Plant Cold Hardiness Zones



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