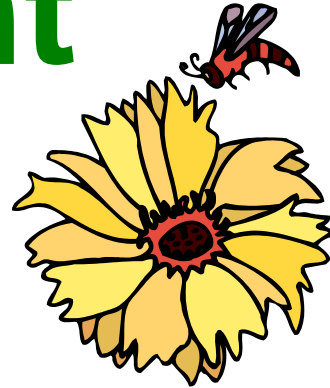




# Landscaping Best Management Practices



**John Pfeiffer**

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# About Me

- Installed first yard at 8 years old
- Owner of full-service lawn/landscape company; certificate in turfgrass management from University of Georgia
- Pest Control Operator's license
- Inspector and BMP instructor for Pinellas County and State
- Grew up learning golf course maintenance

How we care for our grass makes  
all the difference



# Only rain down the drain!

*Handout*



One storm drain

# Thousands of storm drains



Source: time.com

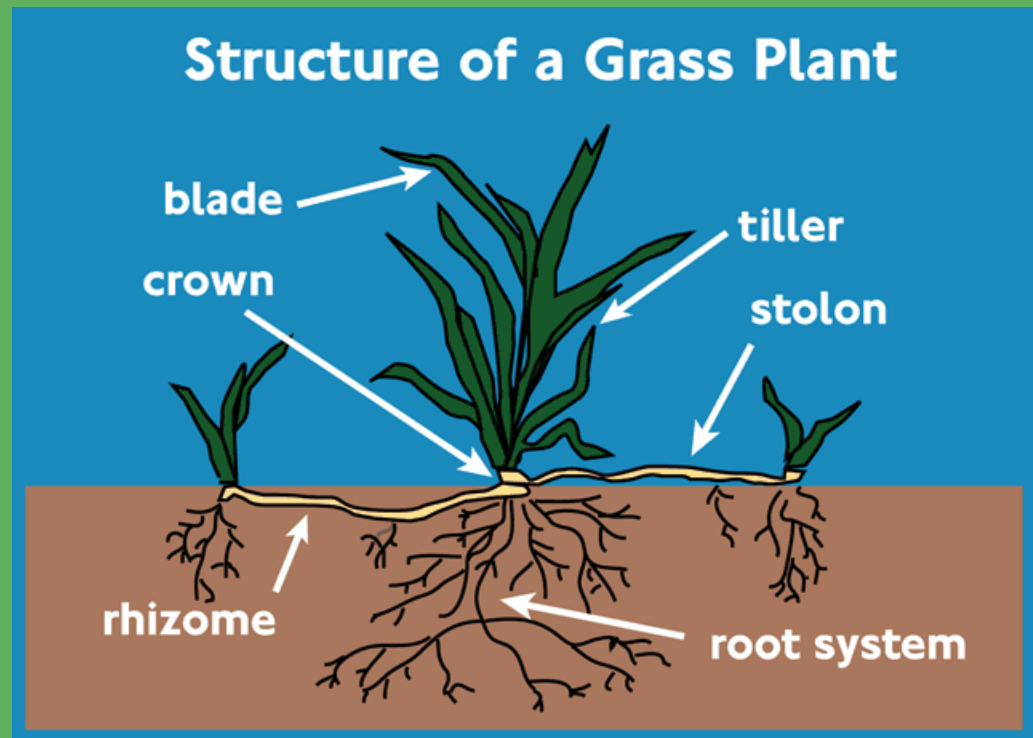


Source: secure.health



Source:healthebay.org

# Grass is a plant



Your lawn is composed of LOTS of individual plants



# Types of Grass



## **St. Augustine**

Most common lawn grass: Shade-tolerant varieties; Needs extra water; prone to pests (chinch bugs), thatch



## **Zoysia**

Less nitrogen needed; does well in heat, but very slow growing; not shade tolerant; can get brown patch



## **Bahia Grass**

Most water-thrifty, needs less fertilizer, but difficult to mow; can get weedy, prone to mole crickets



## **Bermuda Grass**

Good in full sun; drought and salt tolerant; prone to pests and disease

# Mowing Heights

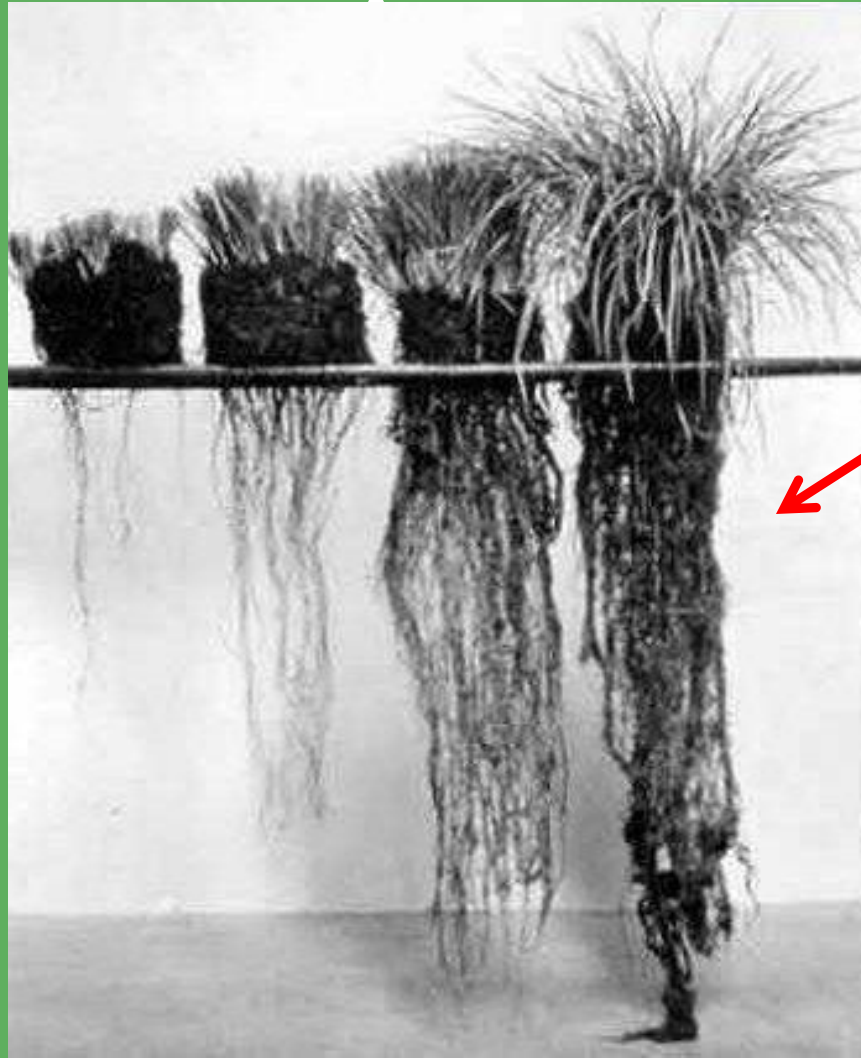
Bahia	3 - 4"
Standard St. Augustine	3.5 - 4"
Dwarf St. Augustine	2 - 2.5"
Zoysia	1.5 - 2.5"
Bermuda	2"

**Mowing below recommended heights is the main cause of turf death!**





Grass mowed higher has stronger, deeper roots  
It is more drought tolerant  
and pest resistant



# Benefits of A Healthy Lawn...

- Prevents erosion
- Healthy, dense grass absorbs rainfall and reduces stormwater runoff
- 50' x 50' plot can provide oxygen family of four
- Filters and removes contaminants
- Supports worms, grubs that are food for birds and other wildlife



# However...

- Grass is difficult to maintain in Florida's humid, pest-friendly climate
- Grass is the most heavily irrigated "crop" in the United States
  - Floridians use 1 billion gallons of water every day just to water lawns
- Overuse of fertilizer causes algae blooms in our waterways
  - *Urban fertilizer is responsible for at least 20% of the harmful nitrogen entering Tampa Bay in stormwater runoff*



# Florida –Friendly Landscaping™ and Lawns

- Use grass only where you need it (play or entertainment areas) and where it can be easily maintained
- Do not overwater!! Overwatering is the main cause of lawns pests and diseases
- Fertilize sparingly and only when needed
- Provide for wildlife- enhance biodiversity!



# Good Use of Turf



# Poor Use of Turf



Grass always in pool



Wasting Water

Both are inappropriate places for grass

Think Florida friendly plants

*What's wrong with these pictures?*

# Protect The Waterfront



Recommended  
“no-mow’ zone is 6 feet  
away from water  
(keeps clippings out  
of water)

This includes Seawalls  
and Wetlands!



# Install a Buffer-Zone Garden







Keep a 6 foot no mow zone around water bodies or else

# After Mowing

Blow or sweep clippings back onto the lawn



# Keep fertilizers out of the water

Sec. 58-478. - Fertilizer-free zones.

Fertilizer shall not be applied within ten feet from the top of bank of any surface water, landward edge of the top of a seawall, designated wetland or wetland as defined by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection



Grass clippings that get into waterways add nutrients that contribute to algae blooms



Mulching mowers return nutrients back into the lawn



# How to Tell When Your Lawn Is Thirsty



- The grass has a dull, bluish-gray color
- Footprints remain in the grass
- Leaf blades are folded in half

*Apply water when about 50% of your grass shows wilt*

# What are Signs of over watering

- Sedges
- Dollar weed
- Bluegrass
- Alligatorweed
- Goosegrass
- Diseases like fungus



# Watering your yard

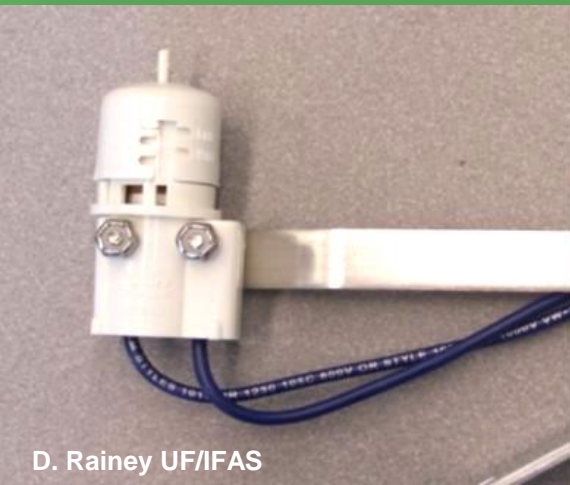


About  $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch a week in the summer; less in the winter

Best time to water is early morning

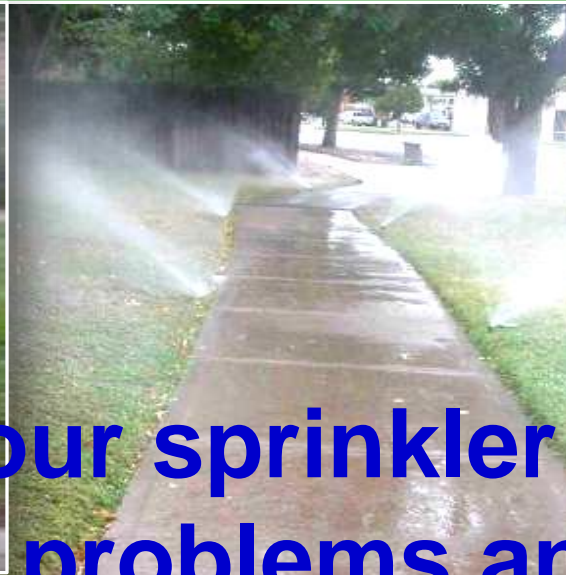
Use a rain gauge so you know how much rainfall your yard has received then subtract this amount from the next irrigation.

- Make sure you have a working rain sensor: Florida law requires it!





# Plants do not waste water, people do!!



**Inspect your sprinkler system, repair any problems and adjust spray heads and nozzles so you're not watering hard surfaces**



# Native Plants Provide Habitat for Wildlife



- **Beautyberry**
- *Callicarpa americana*
- Perennial
- Partial shade to sun
- Drought tolerant  
tolerates poor soil
- Birds feed on berries
- **Does not require  
fertilizer**

# Plant for Wildlife!!!



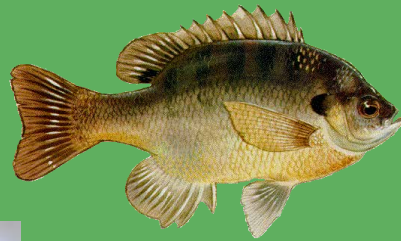
Little Blue Heron



Tricolored Heron



Green Heron



Bluegill



Largemouth Bass



Swallowtail Butterfly



Redear Sunfish



Monarch Butterfly

# Thank you

## Questions?



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