

a major concern at all golf courses, except those fortunate enough to have unrestricted irrigation sources. Although with each passing month, there have been incremental increases in the amount of water available for irrigation, which has naturally helped.

As a result of timely winter rainfall, on April 18, the South Florida Water Management District returned to Phase II (30 percent reduction) restriction from the earlier Phase III (45 percent reduction). Yet, Turf Advisory Service visits have been made to several courses where a lack of sufficient water has already caused significant problems and a pronounced deterioration in turf health and quality.

With mild to warm temperatures throughout the winter, there has been no real slowdown in plant parasitic nematode activity. This has exacerbated drought stress problems and caused additional turf loss. With fairways and roughs, recovery from drought stress and nematode damage will be extremely difficult without regular and adequate rainfall. The start of the summer rainy season cannot come soon enough.

Most courses in Central and South Florida are implementing routine summer cultural management such as core aeration and aggressive verticutting of putting greens, tees, fairways, and roughs. These practices will always be unpopular with golfers because of the inconveniences caused, but accomplishing them on a timely basis is critical for promoting the resumption of active turf growth and recovering from the cumulative negative impacts of the winter season.

There are inevitably requests and demands that cultural management programs be delayed because during May, the start of reciprocal play and annual summer membership programs can help increase play and, in turn, revenues. The importance of timely initiation of cultural management programs cannot be over emphasized and the adage, “pay me now or pay me later” certainly applies in this situation. Furthermore, with reduced availability and/or increasing costs of pesticides, fertilizers, and other materials, there is

2008 PLANTS OF THE YEAR

The program promotes the use of superior Florida plants. Chosen for their unique blend of versatility, consumer appeal, ease of maintenance, pest and disease resistance, geographic use, ease of propagation and plant availability, these plants are standouts for Florida landscapes. Here are two Florida Friendly landscape plant suggestions for your course and grounds.

BLUE GINGER

Scientific name: *Dichorisandra thrysiflora*

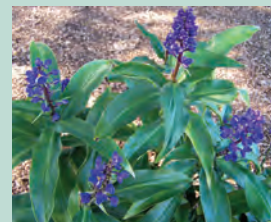
Zones: South, Central and warmer areas of North Florida

Mature Height and Spread: 4-5 ft. tall and 3 ft. wide; can reach 8 ft. tall

Classification: Perennial

Landscape Use: Deep purplish-blue blooms grow on 6-10 in. spikes in summer and fall. Tropical glossy green foliage with succulent stems spread slowly underground, creating a dense mass with a tremendous show of blooms. While commonly referred to as blue ginger, “ginger” is a misnomer, as the *Dichorisandra* is actually related to the plant commonly known as the “wandering jew.” It grows well in part to full shade with moist, well-drained soil. Mealy bug is the only significant pest issue. This is a great addition to almost any Florida landscape.

Propagation: By cuttings.



MIMOSA

Scientific name: *Mimosa strigillosa*

Zones: North, Central & South

Mature Height and Spread: Typically 6 - 9-in. tall x 3 - 5-ft. wide

Classification: Mass planting, ground cover

Landscape Use: Specimen and butterfly attractor

Characteristics: This reliable and vigorous low-grower is a Florida native and drought tolerant, growing in moist and dry soils. It produces pink, ball-shaped flowers in the warmer seasons which attract butterflies. The foliage is delicate looking with small, compound leaves which draw back when touched and fold up at night, yet are durable enough to walk on, park on, drive on and even mow. The leaves also provide butterfly larva with food. In sun or shade, it grows best when well watered. With virtually no major insect or disease problem, this ground cover is a winner.

Propagation: Easily by cuttings or by seed

The Florida Plants of the Year program is administered by FNGLA: 800-375-3642; www.fngla.org



even greater importance and need for agronomically-sound, basic practices and programs to maintain a healthy turf and good quality conditioning the majority of the time.

Bayer Names Wright Southwest Florida Rep

Adam Wright joins Bayer Environmental Science as field sales representative for the golf market in southwest Florida.

Prior to joining Bayer, Wright was the director of golf course operations for Laurel Oak Country Club in

Sarasota. He also served as a superintendent at Greystone Golf & Country Club in Birmingham, Ala.

A graduate of Tennessee Technological University, Wright holds a bachelor's degree in agriculture, agronomy and crop sciences. He is currently enrolled in the University of South Florida to earn his master's degree in business.

