Friday’s Feature  
By  
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Gifts for the gardener  

The holidays are the perfect time to show your favorite gardener how much you care. There are many thoughtful gardening gifts for every price range, from just a few dollars to many hundreds. And there’s something for every taste.

Books make great gifts. When choosing a book for your Florida gardener, ensure that it addresses the unique plants, insects or diseases encountered in the southeast.

*Florida Butterfly Encounters* is a series of booklets designed to enlighten both the beginner and the experienced butterfly enthusiast. You will find information on how to attract, observe, identify, and keep track of the wonderful butterfly species found in Florida. The four booklets included are:

- **50 Common Butterflies of Florida**: A basic introduction to some of our most commonly encountered Florida butterflies. Each species is pictured in color with an easy-to-follow guide to useful field marks and other helpful identification tips.
- **Butterfly Watching Basics**: Learn how to observe and identify butterflies in the field, record your observations, and discover some of the many resources available to enhance your skills and increase your enjoyment.
- **Florida Butterfly Gardening**: Turning your property into a haven for butterflies doesn’t require a large investment of time or money. This guide walks readers through the basics and provides simple guidelines to help develop a successful butterfly garden.
- **Checklist of Florida Butterflies**: Use this checklist to help enjoy Florida’s rich butterfly life and record your observations of common species, rare endemics, and even the occasional tropical vagrant.

For the gardener who is a palm enthusiast, consider giving them a handy reference on palm disorders. *Disorders and Diseases of Ornamental Palms* is a card deck that helps the user identify nutritional deficiencies, physiological disorders and common diseases of ornamental palms. Cards are laminated and ring bound, with photographs and description of symptoms side by side for easy use. Cards are cross-referenced for

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comparison among symptoms caused by the same problem, and for comparison between similar symptoms with different causes. The reference is great for landscape professionals and backyard hobbyists.

For the gardener interested in orchids, give them *Orchids to Know and Grow* by Thomas J. Sheehan and Robert J. Black. This informative, user-friendly guide will transform even the most casual orchid fan from admirer to collector and cultivator.

Orchids have been collected and grown for commercial purposes for more than 150 years, but while these spectacular plants are ever more available to casual gardeners and hobbyists, many still regard selecting and caring for orchids beyond their abilities. This book has easy-to-read, clearly defined chapters on identifying, classifying, and cultivating orchids. Also included are descriptions and illustrations of more than 150 of the more commonly grown orchid genera. The descriptions in tabular, readable outlines make it easy to select plants by appearance as well as a variety of criteria, including genus, particular light or temperature requirements, native habitat, and flowering time.

The authors also provide valuable tips on selecting good specimens to buy and on caring for them under a variety of conditions found in either home or greenhouse. For enthusiasts, they provide advice on preparing plants for exhibition as well as chapters on uses of orchids, diseases, insects, physiological problems, and special growing arrangements such as greenhouses and shade structures. Especially valuable is a complete illustrated glossary of orchid terminology.

All of these great gardening references are available at the University of Florida/IFAS bookstore. Call 800-226-1764 or go online at [http://ifasbooks.ufl.edu/](http://ifasbooks.ufl.edu/).

Theresa Friday is the Residential Horticulture Extension Agent for Santa Rosa County. The use of trade names, if used in this article, is solely for the purpose of providing specific information. It is not a guarantee, warranty, or endorsement of the product name(s) and does not signify that they are approved to the exclusion of others.

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