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# SWFLA Today

## 'Florida snow' is back again

Small, white wildflower dusting lawns in parts of state amid US deep freeze

Rachael L Thomas FLORIDA TODAY  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

While most of the U.S. is dealing with a brutal deep freeze, with parts of the northeast expecting record-breaking cold and over a foot of snow by mid-week, Central, South and Southwest Florida residents are seeing a different kind of "snow" popping up on their lawns.

Fall in the land of eternal summer brings no freezing temperatures, but "Florida snow," a species of small, white wildflower, appears as a sign of the sea-

son. And the festive little blossoms are back again this year, right on time.

"Florida snow" is a perennial flower, or if you ask many frustrated lawn enthusiasts, a weed. Its tightly grouped and low-lying white and pinkish or pale lilac flowers resemble a dusting of snow over the grass, hence the nickname. Officially, it goes by the decidedly less charming name largeflower pusley. You might also hear it called "Florida pusley" or "Mexican clover," though it's neither a species of clover nor native to Mexico.

See 'FLORIDA SNOW', Page 5A



"Florida snow" blankets the ground in Satellite Beach. HILLARD GROSSMAN/USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA



Prepared desserts sit on a sill as the Immokalee community waits to receive a Thanksgiving meal donated by St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church and the Guadalupe Center at Airport Park on Nov. 23, 2017 in Immokalee.

NICOLE RAUCHEISEN/NAPLES DAILY NEWS

## Have an extra turkey? Donate it to feed the needy

Generosity of food donations needed to help others before the big day

Liz Freeman Naples Daily News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Don't forget the needy at Thanksgiving.

Churches and social service agencies in Southwest Florida are prepping to provide a Thanksgiving meal to the less fortunate.

It cannot be done without the generosity of food donations and volunteers before the big day Nov. 28. Here are a few ways to help:

### Turkey drop

In Collier County, St. Matthew's House homeless shelter is asking the public to take part in "turkey drop" from Nov. 18 to 21 for donations of turkeys and canned goods. Donations will be accepted at 2601 Airport Road South

from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

On Monday, Nov. 18, the parking lot at St. Matthew's House will be the site where dozens of volunteers will receive, assemble and load into refrigerated trucks more than 2,000 turkeys, just as many pumpkin pies and other meal fixings.

The shelter will be preparing meals to distribute during the holiday season to low-income families, senior citizens and people with disabilities.

St. Matthew's House also serves a full Thanksgiving dinner at the shelter on Thanksgiving Day.

The turkey drop project is spearheaded by Capital Wealth Advisors in partnership with Egglund's Best, Publix and others to make sure the needy enjoy Thanksgiving. For more information, call St. Matthew's House at 239-774-0500.

### Thanksgiving in the Park

The annual Thanksgiving in the Park in Immokalee is where an estimated 2,000 people will be fed through St. John the Evangelist Church in North Naples and its volunteers.

The Thanksgiving Day meal in Immokalee is a longstanding tradition, in its 39th year, to give thanks to the region's farmworkers. It is held in Immokalee's Airport Park.

Because Thanksgiving is late this year, more migrant workers will be back before the start of the harvest season, and the church expects 2,000 for the meal, said Jean-Paul Boucher, business manager for the church.

Members of the church and anyone else in the community who wants to make a donation can bring fully pre-cooked and frozen turkeys from a Publix deli or other store to the church Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 23 and Nov. 24.

The church cannot accept uncooked or home-cooked turkeys this year due to health code regulations. The church also needs store-bought pies. The aim is to get 150 turkeys and 200 pies, he said.

About 60 volunteers are needed to help with turkey shredding the day before Thanksgiving, he said. Another 80 to 100 volunteers are needed in Immokalee to serve the meal in the park.

See TURKEYS, Page 5A

## See next year calendar for Collier schools

Rachel Fradette Naples Daily News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

It's never too early to start scheduling trips or bracing for when kids will be home next school year. The Collier County school district's academic calendar is already official.

Students start their 180 school days on Aug. 12 while teachers start their 196 contract days one week earlier. New teachers work two more days ahead of veteran teachers' return to school.

School's out for students on June 2.

### Significant dates for the 2020-21 school year

- First day of school — Aug. 12
- Last day of school — June 2
- Winter break — Dec. 21-Jan. 4
- Spring break — March 15-22

For families scheduling spring break trips, delay plans next year by one week compared to this year. Collier's second-longest break is March 15-22.

The school district approved next year's calendar in early February. Collier's school district generally approve school calendars in early spring or late winter.

Chad Oliver, a district spokesman, wrote in a email that the board will discuss and approve the academic calendar for 2021-22 in the coming months.

Five teacher planning, or professional, days are scheduled for the 2020-21 school year — Sept. 18, Oct. 16, Jan. 4, March 22 and June 3.

Only teachers are required to come to school on these days, not students.

Over the holiday season, students and teachers have their longest break from Dec. 21- Jan. 4.

As for hurricane make-up days, Collier is sticking to Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week on Nov. 23-24.

Teachers and students will get a full week off for Thanksgiving break from Nov. 23-27, pending no storms force schools to close and have to make up days.

Students and faculty get a few days off for Easter weekend on Friday, April 2, and Monday, April 5.

Collier's class of 2021 will graduate on Friday, May 28, during Memorial Day weekend unlike this year.

Graduation day is one of six early dismissal days for students. Next year's half days fall on Oct. 28, Feb. 25, April 21, May 28 and June 3.

Collier's school board voted Tuesday to approve next year's calendar dates for board meetings, which will start a half hour earlier at 4 p.m.

The dates are planned through December 2020.