**St Marys Garden Club Newsletter**

**February 2014**

***Dates and Events*** (events are free unless noted)

**Mon, Feb. 3** – Plant Clinic, 10 am – 2 pm, Yulee Satellite Office, 86026 Pages Dairy Rd., Yulee (attached to fire station). Drop in from 10-2 with your sick plant in a plastic bag for a prognosis and advice on its care.

**Tuesday, Feb. 11**, 7 pm – Wild Amelia, “Jacksonville’s Urban Dolphins”, Peck Ctr. Auditorium, 516 S. 10th St., Fernandina.

**Friday, Feb. 21** – Arbor Day

**Mon., March 3**—Plant Clinic, drop in with your ailing plant from 10am-2pm, Yulee Satellite Office 86026 Pages Dairy Rd., Yulee.

**Sat., March 8**, 9-11 am, “Invasive Plants”, Fernandina Beach Rec. Center, 2500 Atlantic Ave., register by March 6, call

904-879-1019. Breakfast provided, $5 registration fee. Guided nature hike 11-11:30.

***Farther away***

Day of Gardening – Sat, Feb. 22, 8:30am-2:30pm, Duval Co. Extension, $15. Preregistration required, deadline Feb 18. Call 904-255-7450 for information.

***Announcements***

Barbara C., Karen, and Angel are asking us to save the following for their project with the schools: seeds, yogurt cups, toilet paper and paper towel rolls, bread sleeves, magazines, yarn leftovers, milk carton caps, Styrofoam meat trays, other items that might have crafty uses.

***Garden to-dos for February***

Prune roses. Transplant shrubs and keep well watered. Fertilize fruit trees, shrubs, and ornamental trees (but not spring blooming shrubs like azaleas) in mid-February. Check irrigation system and make repairs if needed. Clean up dead annuals, cut back dead bulb foliage, prune & feed ornamental grass. Leave dead perennial trimming until March. Plant vegetables: beets, broccoli, carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, collards, endive, escarole, lettuce, mustard, bunching onions, parsley, peas, potatoes, radishes, turnips. Plant annuals such as baby’s breath, calendula, carnations, dianthus, dusty miller, pansies, petunias, snapdragons.

***Nassau County Extension Website*** --lots of good information, plus lots of gardening programs (see dates above). The master gardeners have a page with information on the care of a lot of the plants that we actually can grow here. There is also a page highlighting a local garden each month, with photos of the gardens. An extensive list of things to do in the garden each month, and much much more…. Nassau.ifas.ufl.edu (or google “Nassau county fl extension office”). It comes up with a U of F heading; scroll down to the “lawn and garden” headings and click on something that appeals to you. I’ll keep you up to date on the Master Gardener plant sales, can’t wait to check those out!

**The Garden Maven’s Advice to the “Floralorn”**

***Dear Garden Maven,***

When should I prune my fruit trees?

***Wondering in St. Marys***

*Dear Wondering*,

The best time to prune fruit trees is after harvest, before they flower again, and after the threat of frost but before the spring growth flush. March-April. ***Figs*** should be thinned to 3-5 trunks coming out of the ground and pruned by cutting out the center to let in more light and make it easier to protect from birds. In early to mid summer (before Aug 1) pinch off the tip of each branch down to 6 leaves, to encourage more fruit. ***Citrus*** need very little pruning, except for cutting out dead wood. If they are too big, prune out the tallest branches and shape before the spring growth flush. Prune suckers growing out from the ground. Wait a couple of years to trim or prune new trees, and never prune in a drought. And fertilize after pruning, since pruning stimulates growth.

**Plant Hero of the Month:** Gotta love those camellias. And the plucky little girl hummingbird who has been around all winter.

***The newsletter is planned to come out around the first of each month. Send your announcements of work days, garden parties, events of interest, or questions for the Garden Maven to Judy M. (You can also find homes for plants you are evicting or extra plants.)***