

# St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

January 2015

Happy New Year!

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

**Nassau Extension Plant Clinics (10am): Jan 12, Feb. 2** (Monday), Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.) Bring your sick plants in a bag for diagnosis.

**Wed. Jan. 7 – 10-11:30am** – “*Cold Hardy Citrus*”, Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd., Yulee)

**Thurs. Jan. 15 – 10am-noon** – “*Pruning*”, Citrus Demonstration Garden, 86026 Pages Dairy Rd., Yulee.

**Fri. Jan. 16 – 10am-noon** – “*Pruning*”, Demonstration Garden, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee. (note different address.)

**Tues. Jan. 13, 7 pm**, Wild **Amelia Wild Nite** — “*Manatees A to Z*”, Peck Center, 516 S. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Fernandina Beach.

## **Garden to-dos for January**

Plant flowers such as carnations, pansies, petunias, snapdragons, dianthus, foxglove, delphinium, and larkspur. Vegetables - peas, beets, broccoli, potatoes, cabbage, carrots, radishes, turnips, and cauliflower can be planted, as well as fennel, garlic, borage, lavender, parsley, rosemary, and thyme. Don't fertilize anything this month. Outdoor plants need less water in winter, but if a hard freeze is predicted watering 24-48 hours in advance will help protect your at risk plants, especially citrus. Don't do any major pruning, especially on flowering trees, but you can prune dead limbs, suckers, and crisscrossing branches. You can also transplant dormant plants, but be sure to water. If you had a real Christmas tree, consider using it in the garden. Sink the trunk into the ground (you may need to stake it to have it stand up straight). The birds will enjoy using it for cover and in the spring you can use it as a support for vines such as morning glory, moonflower, and cypress vine. Or peas and cucumbers.

## **The Garden Maven's Advice to the “Floralorn”**

***Dear Garden Maven,***

I have a bougainvillea in the shade and it won't bloom. What can I do to get some flowers on it?

***Wishin' for Tahiti and gettin' Pittsburgh...***

***Dear Wishin',***

Bougainvilleas need full sun and acid soil to get blooms. You can move the plant (cut it back when you move it) to a sunny area and make sure to give it an acid fertilizer if your soil is alkaline. If it gets too much water after it is established that will also keep it from blooming. Trim it regularly to shape it and help focus its energy on giving you your Tahiti landscape.

***The Maven***

***Dear Garden Maven,***

I have several camellias, with several problems. One has grayish spots on the leaves, another one has white stuff under the leaves, and another one has flowers that turn brown and fall off soon after. What can I do to improve their health?

***Camellia Lover***

***Dear Camellia,***

The spots are probably green scurf, which is caused by wet weather. It is not a serious problem, but you could spray with a fungicide to treat it. The white stuff is tea scale, not a good thing, as you know. You can wipe off as much as possible with a wet paper towel, then use ultra fine horticultural oil and use a soil drench of imidacloprid around the root area. Flowers can turn brown and fall off from cold or wind or from “flower blight”, a fungus. You can tell the difference from looking at the petals. Flower blight will turn the vein areas of the petals darker than the surrounding area, whereas if the cold or wind did it, the petals will be browner at the outer edges. You can treat flower blight with a soil drench for fungus, and by removing the diseased flowers from the plant and cleaning up under the plant, including removal and replacement of the mulch. Good luck with your camellias, hopefully 2015 will be their year to shine!

***The Maven***

**Plant Hero of the Month:** My Gerbera daisies have been putting out new blooms for over a month. And of course, it is Camellia season.

***(Contact Judy Molnar at [cjmolnar@tds.net](mailto:cjmolnar@tds.net) or 882-8887 with newsletter items or questions for the Maven.)***