

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

June 2015

Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Nassau Extension Plant Clinics (Mondays, all at 10am): June 1, June 15 -- Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.) Bring your sick plants in a plastic bag.

Thursday, June 4, 10-11am – *“Troubleshooting Lawn Problems”*, Yulee Satellite Office (86026 Pages Dairy Rd)

Weds., July 1, 10-11:30 am – *“Bats”*, Yulee Satellite Office (86026 Pages Dairy Rd).

Announcements

Christmas in July – Bring your items to the June meeting and give them to Joan. Suggested items include: body wash, shampoo, bath soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, talcum powder, hand cream, face cream, deodorant, combs and brushes, nail polish/remover, cotton balls, tissues, either purse size or regular size, mouthwash, lip balm. This is a wonderful project that helps people in our own community.

Earth Angels are looking for classroom helpers or people to assist the Go Green Club in the coming school year.

Garden to-dos for June

Plant melampodium, pentas, portulaca, purslane, salvia, zinnia, lantana, buddleia, daylily, verbena, coneflower, plumbago, sun coleus. Plant bulbs like agapanthus, blackberry lily, clivia, achimenes, crinum, iris. Watch for pests like grasshoppers or slugs who chew holes in the plants, aphids, other pests. If ants are running wild on your trees or shrubs, they may be farming aphids. Malathion will take care of both the farmers and the livestock. Some things like gingers, clerodendrum, and caladiums have still not come back. Keep watching for the latecomers. Deadhead, deadhead, deadhead.

The Garden Maven’s Advice to the “Floralorn”

Dear Garden Maven,

Some of my azaleas bloomed this year, and within just a few days the flowers turned brown and just dried up and clung to the bush. I have some other azaleas that have not bloomed at all. When should I prune my azaleas, and how should I do it?

My Azaleas have become Bitter Clingers....

Dear Clinger,

Spring was fairly wet this year, and azaleas are susceptible to a fungus disease called Azalea petal blight. Next year apply a fungicide (make sure it is one that treats APB) just as the petals are starting to show their color. If you do this at the right time the blossoms should last for 2 or 3 weeks and fall off the bush by themselves. The azaleas that don’t bloom may be due to one of two common causes. First, they may be in shade that is too deep. They prefer filtered shade. Or they could have been fertilized too much. Too much nitrogen, especially in early summer, can give them lots of leaves and few blooms. Azaleas can do without any fertilizer at all. At most they should get it in spring or fall, but probably not both.

Pruning azaleas should be done after flowering in late spring or early summer, and no later than mid July. You can prune dead branches at any time. Never shear them. It will eventually kill them. They should be hand pruned. Remove individual branches back to the spot where it joins a larger branch. They don’t need much pruning. You can trim them to be smaller on the top, larger on the bottom so they get more light. Big old azaleas can be rejuvenated by cutting way back. Avoid planting large azaleas in the wrong place, like under windows. A big Formosa wants to be 5-6 feet tall and wide. Let it be itself and you will both be happier.

The Maven

Plant Hero of the Month: *The stone planters on the median strip are looking wonderful! Thanks Mike and Kay!*