

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

December 2016

Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Not many extension events in December, but enough holiday events to keep you in the Christmas spirit all month!

Fri. Dec. 2, Sat. Dec. 3 – Candlelight tours of Hofwyl Plantation (Brunswick, near exit 42), **6-9pm**, Adults \$10, Youth \$5. Call 912-264-7333 for more information. Note: involves a long walk on the road to the plantation.

Sat., Dec. 3 – 12-8 pm – Christmas in the Park, Gilman Park. Fun for the kids!

Sat. Dec. 3, 9 am – 2pm– Cassina Garden Club Bake sale and Cabin tours at Hamilton Plantation Slave Cabins, Gascoigne Bluff, St Simons. Free.

Dec. 1-23, Mon-Sat -- Brunch and mansion tours, RJ Reynolds Mansion State Park, Sapelo Island. \$15 ferry, \$35 brunch/tour. Call 912-485-2299 for information and reservations.

Sat. Dec. 10 – St. Marys Christmas Tour of homes, **5:30pm-9pm**. Advance \$15, day of, \$20. Call 912-882-4000 for more information or get tickets at Welcome Center across from 1st Presbyterian.

Tues. Dec. 13 – Live Nativity at Orange Hall, **6-8pm**.

Announcements

Our Garden Club Christmas lunch is Tuesday, December 13 at the Jekyll Island Club. If you have signed up, meet at K mart at **10:15** to carpool (at the end of the parking lot near the garden center). We will leave promptly at 10:30. Lunch begins at 11:30.

Garden to-dos for December

Late December is the time to transplant plants if the weather has turned cold. Keep them well watered for the next few months. If it is still warm, wait till they go dormant before moving them. Annuals for winter are carnations, digitalis, pansies, petunias, dianthus, and snapdragons. Plant vegetables such as broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, green peas, onions, and radishes. Water plants during dry spells, especially if it is cold and windy. Purchase frost blankets or round up the old sheets and be prepared to mulch and cover tender plants for winter protection. After the holidays, plant poinsettias outside, but protect from freezing.

The Garden Maven's Advice to the "Floralorn"

Dear Garden Maven,

I inherited "Roscoe", a tall, spindly dracaena, from a neighbor who didn't have room for him any more. He spends most of the time beside my garage door, and winters inside the garage. He has grown so much that he is getting taller than the roof line, and I'd like to cut him back. What is the best way to do this, and can I start new plants from the cuttings? Also, I have some crotons that are getting huge. How do I prune these, and can I start new plants from the cuttings?

Green thumbed lady

Dear Green thumb,

Cut Roscoe back to a foot on the tallest stems. Water the day before you do the cutting. Don't cut all the stems at once, since it may stress him -- it is always best to remove only 1/3 of a plant when cutting it back, and let it recover before removing another 1/3. Cut the removed stem into 6-12" sections and dip the bottom in rooting hormone. (Make sure you know which end is the bottom, since it won't grow if you plant it upside down.) Plant in potting soil and water well. The cuttings will also root in water. In a few weeks the original stem will start sprouting new growth. Crotons can be propagated the same way. Cut stems with 3 sets of leaves and remove the bottom leaves. You can also air layer both dracaena and crotons, but it is a lot more involved than starting cuttings. Crotons need a little more shaping than dracaena. Cut back dead leaves and branches to their point of origin, and cut back overgrown stems to just above a leaflet where you want them to branch out.

The Maven

Plant Hero of the Month: The Turk's Cap (or Sleeping Hibiscus) is putting out lots of bright red "Santa hats" that are perfect for the holiday season.