

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

May 2017

Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Nassau Extension Plant Clinics (Mondays, all at 10am): May 8, May 22, -- Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.) Bring your sick plants in a plastic bag.

Weds., May 3, 10-11am – “Hardy Tropicals”, Yulee Satellite Office (86026 Pages Dairy Rd).

Tues., May 9, 7pm, Wild Amelia Wild Nites, “Rediscover La Florida, Land of Flowers”, Peck Ctr. Auditorium, 516 S. 10th St., Fernandina.

Weds, May 17, 10-11am – “Palm Trees”, Demonstration Garden, Yulee Govt. Complex, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee.

Sat., May 13, 9am-noon, Master Gardener Plant Sale, Demo Garden, Yulee Govt. Complex, 96135 Nassau Place.

Thursday, May 25, 1 pm – Flower Arranging Lesson, Presbyterian Fellowship Hall. Sign up at May meeting.

Announcements

Christmas in July – Bring your items to any 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.

Garden to-dos for May

If your plants are growing too slowly and have yellow leaves, feed them. If they have too much growth and a lack of flowers, skip a feeding. Fertilize palms. Plant heat loving plants like celosia, coleus, impatiens, kalanchoe, marigolds, salvia, pentas, verbena, zinnias, coreopsis, crossandra, exacum, gaillardia, gazania, hollyhocks, nicotiana, eggplant, okra, Southern peas, herbs. You have missed the boat for tomatoes (unless you buy a big one), wait till August to plant them. Stake flowers as needed, keep them deadheaded and trimmed. Watch for pests. Keep watching for late emerging plants like gingers and caladiums. Be ruthless with things that have taken over (like ferns, assorted wandering jews, spiderwort, chenille plant, cosmos). If you haven't cut back your plumbago or roses yet, it is time to do it. If the azaleas have bloomed, prune now until the middle of July.

The Garden Maven's Advice to the “Floralorn”

Dear Garden Maven,

My liriopie is looking a little ragged, and some of my house plants that wintered on the porch or in the yard have some browned and beat up looking leaves. What should I do with them to spiff them up for spring? Also, my African violet has gotten kind of lopsided and too big for the pot. Should I divide it and how do I do that?

Garden Perfectionist

Dear Perfectionist,

Evergreen plants trick us into a false sense of security. We expect them to stay looking the same beautiful green way always, but unless they are silk plants, this is not going to happen. Liriopie should be cut back ideally every early spring, realistically (we are only human) every 2-3 years in this climate. You are probably too late to just whack the whole thing now, if the new center growth has started. You can go at it with scissors and cut the beat up old leaves off, leaving the new centers untouched, and next year cut back the whole thing earlier (like February). Or just wait till next year and try not to look at it closely. Trim off the beat up leaves on the house plants. They will look a lot better and will grow some new leaves. Cutting back unsightly stuff, including “cowlick” branches that look out of place will make the whole garden look better. One rule of thumb to use is “Does it add or detract from the appearance of the plant?” If it detracts, whack it off. African violets should be divided gently. Remove the plant from the pot, gently knock as much soil as possible from it, and identify how many crowns (leaves growing around a center) there are to be divided. Gently pull them apart and pot each crown in a separate pot. (How many times did

I use the word “gently”?) Water and fertilize. If you can place the pot in a dishpan and water (and fertilize) it from the top and let it sit in the water that ran through it for about an hour, your violet will love you for it.

The Maven

Plant Hero of the Month: The whole town smells like jasmine!