



## Newsletter April 2024



### **Dates and Events** -- free unless noted.

**Sat. April 6, 9 am-noon.** Nassau Extension program on *Shrubs and Trees*. \$25. Register on Nassau County Extension website.

**Wild Amelia Wild Nite – Tues. Apr. 9, 7pm.** “*Marine Mammals*”. Peck Center, 516 S. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Fernandina.

**Sat. Apr. 13, 9am –1 pm.** Coastal Wildscapes. *Spring Native Plant Sale*. Ashantilly Center, Darien. More information on website.

**Sat., April 27, 9 am - 3pm** --Cassina Garden Club is having its *Tabby and Tillandsia Garden Tour* of 6 private gardens on St. Simons. They also have a plant sale, Art sale, and tours of the historic slave cabins. Garden party is 3-5 pm. Tickets (\$35 in advance, \$40 day of) are available online at Cassina Garden Club website or at St. Simons Ace. 1195 Arthur J. Moore Drive, St. Simons.

### **Garden to-dos for April**

Deadhead cool season annuals. Pick up old camellia and azalea blooms and discard them to prevent blight. Clean up cold damaged plants, ginger can be cut back to the ground. Cut back those deciduous vines that have held onto their leaves all winter so they can put out some new growth. Plant bulbs like agapanthus, caladiums, amaryllis, begonias, crinum, rain lilies. Reshape perennials. Fertilize citrus. Plant single (not double) zinnias to feed monarchs. Prune azaleas after they bloom. Pot up volunteer plants for the plant sale.

### **Announcements**

Our plant sale is Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at Orange Hall, 9 am to noon.

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

#### ***Dear Garden Maven:***

I want to go all out to get lots of hummingbirds this year. I have a feeder and a couple of firecracker bushes they seem to like. What else can I do to increase the number of visitors?

***Love those Squeaky little guys***

#### ***Dear Love ‘em,***

Hummingbirds like 4 basic things: Flowers, perches, insects, and water. They like red or orange tubular flowers best: firecracker, firebush, cardinal flower, crossvine, trumpet vine, coral bean, cigar plant, beebalm, scarlet sage, standing cypress, turks cap, and bottlebrush. They also like lantana, yucca, butterfly weed, carolina jessamine, rose mallow, flame azalea, and false indigo bush. Natives are especially good, so check out some of them at the Coastal Wildscapes Native Plant Sale. Perches are something we usually don’t think about for attracting hummingbirds, but it is important to leave twigs and small branches to perch on, especially within easy flying distance of a feeder. We don’t normally think of hummingbirds eating anything but nectar, but they eat lots of insects and sometimes build their nests with spiderwebs. The Audubon Society suggests hanging a basket of banana peels or overripe fruit close to the feeder to attract fruit flies for their dining pleasure.... I think I’ll skip this one and encourage them to develop a taste for sand gnats! Most importantly, stay away from pesticides. Finally, they need water, even droplets on leaves. People with misters or dripping fountains report that the hummingbirds love them. Likewise, sprinklers attract them. Feeders can be left up all year in our area, as some hummingbirds stay all winter. During the summer, change the nectar (4 parts water to 1 part sugar, boil and cool) twice a week. More often if it looks cloudy. Clean with water and vinegar once a week, rinse 3 times after cleaning. Hang it in the shade to keep it from fermenting. The nice part of making your yard attractive to hummingbirds is that it will also be more attractive to butterflies and other birds. Enjoy!

***The Maven***

**Plant Hero of the Month:** Some of the camellias are still going strong, azaleas are almost done for the year.