



## Newsletter August 2023



### Dates and Events

**Camden County Extension – Th. Aug. 24, 12-1pm.** Virtual lunch and earn “**Fall Gardening**”. Register on website.

**Nassau County Extension – Weds. Aug. 9, 10am-11am.** “**Hurricanes and Landscape Preparedness**”. Zoom or in person at 85831 Miner Rd., Yulee. Register at <https://bit.ly/NassauHorticulture>

**Coastal Wildscapes – Thurs. Aug. 10, 6-8pm.** Ritz Theatre, Brunswick. Film and Cocktails “**Urban and Suburban Meadows**”. Register on website, cost information will be available on registration.

### Announcements

**SMGC Plant Sale – Saturday, Sept. 9, 9-11:30 am** at First Presbyterian, 100 Conyers St, Saint Marys . Members get your plants ready to sell. **Noon** Lunch and learn in Fellowship Hall, light lunch and refreshments. Speaker: Angel Bernier, “Hummingbirds in your Yard”. Public is invited.

### Garden to-dos for August

Plant coleus, blue daze, salvia, asters, begonias, melampodium, moon vine, pentas, porterweed, tithonia, verbena, black eyed susan vine, cat’s whiskers. Bulbs like agapanthus, amaryllis, cannas, crinum, gladiolus, society garlic, and rain lilies can be divided and planted. Plant herbs like Mexican tarragon, mint, parsley, oregano, rosemary, and thyme. Plant tomatoes, beans, summer squash and other warm season crops early in the month so they will have time to mature. Later in the month plant cool season vegetables like broccoli, collards, bunching onions, turnips. Fertilize heavy blooming flowers. Save seeds from flowers. Let pods dry on the plant, harvest when pods begin to open. Dry inside for a few days, then put in a plastic bag or jar and store. Fertilize fig trees after harvesting. Prune dead branches on trees.

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

**No questions this month, so an update on the ailing rosebushes at Orange Hall, hopefully an uplifting story of redemption....** Well, back at the beginning of July, I was beside myself ready to turn to voodoo after trying all sorts of fertilizer and consulting with the extension folks. The roses kept blooming, but were basically bare leafless stems. Where were the beautiful leaves that they had when they arrived? So, before I went out of town for a couple of weeks, I dug one up, cut it back a bit, and replanted it with a bucket of Black Kow. When I got home, it had leaves at last! So, I gave all the others the same treatment. Fingers crossed that they also have leaves in a couple of weeks.

The compost added when they were planted was obviously not enough. I did not find even one worm in the dirt when I dug them up. Also, the dirt compacted itself around the bushes, it was not loose. And the dirt was so bad that it hardly had any weeds growing! Why did I not hear and see the dirt was crying out to be revived?!?

Well, my crack research team has come up with the following ways to improve “dead” soil:

**Add organic matter.** Compost, leaf mold, aged animal manure, whatever is available. **Work it into the soil.** I plan to use my trusty Garden Weasel to break up the soil a bit and mix it in a little bit. **Add any amendments available.** Alfalfa meal, worm castings, bone meal, etc. Maybe a couple of handfuls of milorganite. **Mulch with an organic mulch.** Leaves, pine straw, hay, etc. Keeping it well mulched will help the dirt to loosen itself up. You can also plant a green manure cover crop, but this seems a bit much. Here’s to success with our rosebushes!

**Plant Hero of the Month:** Gingers of all sorts are blooming. White butterfly ginger perfuming the air, hidden ginger with its pink tropical looking flowers, corkscrew ginger with its little orange knob, peacock ginger with its variegated leaves and lavender flowers, and pine cone ginger coming out of the ground. Blue ginger yet to come!