



Newsletter December 2023



Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Thurs. Dec. 7, noon-1pm – Virtual Lunch and learn, “Understanding Alligators”. Register on Camden County Extension website.

Tues. Dec. 12, 7pm, Peck Center, 516 S. 10th St., Fernandina. Wild Nite – **“NE Fla. Wildlife Rehabilitation”**

Sat. Dec. 9 – Lots going on downtown:

Waterfront park, 5:45-6:30pm. *Lighted boat parade.*

Waterfront park, 6:30 pm. *Lighting of the Tinsel trail trees.* Benefits Camden House. Our tree is among them!

Christmas tour of homes – 5:30-9pm. Tickets at St. Marys Welcome Center. \$20 advance, \$25 day of.

Thurs. Dec 7, 4-7pm, Fri. Dec 8, 10am-4pm, and Sat. Dec. 9, 10am-4pm, and 5:30-9pm. *Nativities around the World.* Huge collection of nativities, well worth a visit. First Presbyterian Church (where we meet). Free, but donations appreciated.
Tues., Dec. 12, 7-8pm. Live Nativity at Orange Hall.

Announcements

Tues. Dec. 5, 11:30am. Presbyterian Fellowship Hall. Assemble decorations for Tinsel Trail tree.

Weds. Dec. 6, 10 am (rain date Dec. 7). Tree trimming at waterfront park.

Tuesday, Dec. 12— SMGC Christmas lunch, 1 pm at the fellowship hall. **Bring items for the Fig Leaf collection to benefit Camden House and Helping Hands Food pantry.** Personal care items (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, things not covered by food stamps), nonperishable food, disposable diapers.

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. Start seeds indoors for spring planting. 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. Spanish moss makes a good protective mulch for plants. After the holidays, plant poinsettias outside, but protect from freezing.

The Garden Maven’s Advice to the “Floralorn”

Dear Garden Maven,

What kinds of vegetables can I plant in December?

Garden Elf

Dear Elf,

Most cool weather vegetables are happier being transplanted than direct seeded at this time of year, but radishes and bok choy are said to grow easily from seeds sown now and should be ready to eat in about a month. Garlic cloves can also be planted now. Plants that like to be planted as seedlings are kale, mustard greens, lettuce (especially romaine), asparagus, celery, cauliflower, cabbage, carrots, and herbs like parsley, thyme, sage, dill, fennel, and cilantro. Whatever you plant, it needs 8 hours of sun to thrive. Seeds for many cool weather crops (like broccoli) can be planted in the ground in midsummer to start harvesting in the fall. And now is the time to start sowing seeds indoors to plant outside in March.

The Maven

Plant Heroes of the Month:

My sleeping hibiscus is in full bloom like bright red Santa hats just in time for the holidays. The sasanquas are starting to bloom. Start sniffing around for those shy tea olives. Cut a few fragrant clippings to stick in your holiday greens. The fatsia and leopard plant and some of the camellia japonicas are blooming a little early this year.