



Newsletter
February 2023



Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Tues. Feb. 14, 7 pm, Wild Amelia Wild Nite — “Off Shore Artificial Reefs”. Peck Auditorium, 516 S. 10th St, Fernandina.

Thurs. Feb. 2, 12-1pm. Jessica Warren zoom lunch and learn – “Creating an Edible Landscape”. **Thurs. Mar. 2, 12-1pm.** “Spring Gardening”. Register online on Camden County Extension website/agriculture tab.

March 3-May 5, Fridays from 9am-3pm. Master Naturalist Course. \$300, register in person at extension office in Woodbine. For more information call 912-578-3219.

Nassau County Extension presentations. Register at bit.ly/NassauHorticulture. (or Nassau Extension facebook page)

Weds. Feb. 8, 10-11 am, “Zoe’s Gardens (butterflies)”. Online or at 85831 Miner Rd.

Sat. Feb 11, 9 am, “Lawn Workshop for new homeowners”. \$25. 85831 Miner Rd., Yulee.

For more information call 904-530-6353.

Fri., Feb. 17, 2pm. St. Marys Arbor Day Celebration at First Presbyterian. We will be planting a tree in memory of our departed member Frances Smith. Sponsored by our club and the Tree Board.

Garden to-dos for February

Resist the temptation to cut back dead looking perennials until March 15. The dead foliage will help protect them from cold damage and if new growth is stimulated it can be killed by a late frost. The exception is dead foliage on hard to kill plants like cannas or gingers that have died completely back to the ground and can be removed without cutting anything green. Prune roses by Feb. 14. Fertilize after pruning. Apply organic fertilizer around each plant – 1 cup Black Kow, 1 cup fish meal (or use some fish emulsion instead) and ½ cup Epsom salts. Cut ornamental grass back to 6-12 inches and fertilize. Cut back liriopoe before it starts to sprout new leaves. Clean out dead annuals. Prune out water sprouts, suckers, and rubbing branches from citrus. Plant calendula, dianthus, dusty miller, marguerites, pansies, petunias, and snapdragons. Plant vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, lettuce, parsley, turnips. Keep those sheets handy for covering plants when temperatures below 35 degrees are forecast. Late February is a great time to prune crape myrtles (But no Crape Murder!).

The Garden Maven’s Advice to the “Floralorn”

Dear Garden maven,

I have just moved here from the Midwest and am wondering what kinds of plants will do well here.

Recent Transplant

Dear Transplant,

For shade, holly fern is evergreen, attractive, fairly carefree, and drought tolerant once established. It can function as a foundation plant without getting too big or woody. **Gingers, shrimp plant, cast iron, oak leaf hydrangeas, caladiums, ferns,** and of course **azaleas** and **camellias** are well suited to our area and grow with little or no care. **For sun, Mexican petunia** and **firecracker plant** are somewhat invasive, but colorful and carefree. **Jasmine, plumbago, duranta, esperanza, landscape roses (especially drifts), lantana, firespike, angel trumpet, bottlebrush, amaryllis, cannas, China roses** and the **cupheas** do well here. And of course, the old faithful **crinum lily**, which needs to be dug up and put through a wood chipper twice to kill it.

Forget hostas, astilbes, lily of the valley, sweet woodruff, lilacs, most **Japanese maples,** and a good many of the tried and true northern perennials, **daffodils, tulips** and **peonies.** Likewise, **apples** and **peaches** unless they are low chill varieties. **Asiatic and oriental lilies, pachysandra, German Iris, Alchemilla, potentilla, and delphinium.** And have you ever seen a **buddleia** actually blooming in St Marys?

Fortunately, we have so many things that do grow well here that you can usually find a replacement for your former favorites. **Farfugium** (leopard plant) has a growth habit something like a hosta, as does **cardamom.** **Cast iron** plant can also give a similar effect. **Chaste trees** look like a low rent lilac, but make up for it by being a hummingbird magnet.

There are a few daffodil varieties that are reported to grow without spending time in your refrigerator (like “Carlton”), but I haven’t tried them yet.

The Maven

Plant Hero of the Month: Lots of plants look like they need a blindfold and a cigarette, but keep the faith, they may come back from the ground! (*Contact Judy Molnar at cjmolnar@tds.net or 882-8887 with newsletter items or questions for the Maven.*)