



Newsletter January 2023

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Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Camden Co. UGA Extension Lunch and Learn Zoom Series. To get the registration link go to uge3039@uga.edu. Thurs. Jan. 5, Lawn Diseases, Thurs. Feb. 2, Creating Edible Landscapes. Noon-1pm.

Wild Amelia Wild Nite – Tues., Jan. 10, 7pm. Edible Amelia. Peck Center, Fernandina.

Nassau extension – Online programs. Register at UF/IFAS extension Nassau Eventbrite. **Weds Jan 11, 10-11am.**

WoodWichWeb. Weds. Jan 25 3:30-5pm. Crash Course in Florida landscape. Weds. Feb 8, 10-11 online or in person (85831 Miner Rd), **Zoe's Gardens** (butterfly gardens). **Jan 12, 19, 26, Feb 16, 23, 10-10:30 online invasive plant series.** Register on Nassau extension facebook page for the last one.

Announcements

Tues. Jan. 17, 1pm. – Orange Hall Cleanup. Get the vines and weeds off the azaleas so their blooms can show up in March. Bring clippers, loppers, rakes, old sheets to carry things on, something to sit or kneel on, water, bug spray. Be there or be square!

Sad News – Mr. Donini passed away on December 28. He will be missed.

Garden to-dos for January

Plant flowers such as carnations, pansies, petunias, snapdragons, dianthus, foxglove. Vegetables - peas, beets, broccoli, potatoes, cabbage, carrots, radishes, turnips, and cauliflower can be planted, as well as fennel, garlic, borage, lavender, parsley, rosemary, and thyme. Don't fertilize flowers this month. Plants need less water in winter, but if a hard freeze is predicted watering 24-48 hours in advance will help protect your at risk plants, especially citrus. Don't do any major pruning, especially on flowering trees, but you can prune dead limbs, suckers, and crisscrossing branches. You can also transplant dormant plants, but be sure to water.

If you had a real Christmas tree, use it in the garden. Sink the trunk into the ground (you may need to stake it to have it stand up straight). The birds will enjoy using it for cover and in the spring you can use it as a support for vines such as morning glory, moonflower, and cypress vine. Or peas and cucumbers. Protect plants that are marginally hardy with mulch, sheets, or even cardboard stapled around the trunks of grafted trees to prevent dieback. Even just putting them on the porch will help. Spanish moss is a great (and free) insulator. You can use Christmas lights under a cover to help keep very delicate plants warm.

The Garden Maven's Advice to the "Floralorn"

Dear Garden Maven,

I came back from spending Christmas up north to find my yard looking like it suffered through a nuclear winter. What a mess! Do I need to look at this devastation until the middle of March or can I cut some things back?

Heartbroken

Dear Heartbroken,

I feel your pain. I got back from sunny Cleveland to find my yard in the same condition. My first impulse was to grab the clippers and clean it up. But then I counted to 10 and my cooler head prevailed. The dead foliage will act as a blanket to protect the plant from future frosts. If I cut them back, the warm temperatures we have now will encourage them to sprout new growth. If, in this season of wacky weather, we get another hard freeze, it will kill off the brand new growth and set the plant back. So best to hide the clippers from yourself until the Ides of March. Until then, make sure the plants get enough water. Don't fertilize until spring. In the spring you can scrape the branches with a fingernail to see how far they have died back and prune accordingly. Until then, talk yourself out of pruning or cutting back anything.

Happy New Year from the Maven!

Plant Hero of the Month:

Well, as a consolation prize for the carnage in the yard, I arrived home to find my corn plant in bloom for the first time!

(Contact **Judy Molnar** at jmolnar@tds.net or 882-8887 with newsletter items or questions for the Maven.)