

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

August 2017

Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Nassau Extension Plant Clinics (10am): August 7 and August 21 (Mondays), Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.) Bring your sick plants in a bag for diagnosis.

Weds., August 2, 10-11:30am – “Amphibians”, Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd, Yulee)

Weds., August 16, 10-11am, “Vegetables”, Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd., Yulee)

Announcements

The **Earth Angels** are looking for classroom helpers on an occasional basis. Contact Barbara C., Karen W. or Angel.

Plant Sale – Keep getting your plants ready and growing for the October sale.

Pressed Flowers – Please try to press some flat flowers, interesting leaves, small vines, etc. for our January workshop. Press upside down in a phone book, then put at least a foot of heavy books on top for a month or so.

Glenna’s Pot Party – (for the Plant Sale, that is.....) **Tuesday, August 29, 9 am** at Geri’s house. We will pot up the little clothespin planters, cement hands, and more! Bring gloves, small trowel, spare pots, especially 8” and bigger, and any small plants (under 3 or 4 inches), especially succulents.

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”

Dear Garden Maven,

My variegated shell ginger is not doing well. It is right in front of the sprinkler and I think it is getting too much water. Where should I move it to and what can I do to bring it to maximum happiness?

Seeking Cosmic Harmony for my Ginger

Dear Seeking,

Fortunately, this ginger is tough and not too picky. It can take part sun, but likes afternoon shade. Filtered shade under a tree canopy is the preferred location. It likes water, but being so close to the sprinkler may have been why it is not happy. When transplanting, have the new hole ready before digging up, so the roots and rhizomes aren’t exposed to the air for very long. It likes to be in moist, but well drained soil. Plant 4 feet from other shrubs, 3 feet from the house, and 5 feet from driveways or sidewalks.

The rhizomes will tend to move to the surface over time. You can divide if it gets too big or floppy. Fertilize three times during the growing season with a balanced fertilizer. New canes will bloom the second year if they have not been killed back by frost. Canes will bloom only once, then they die, and you will need to remove the canes (only the ones that bloomed) after they have bloomed, or plant will stop making new canes. Plants will come back if they are killed back to the ground by frost. Prune after winter dieback or after blooming. After a frost, if only leaves have been damaged, remove just the leaf. The canes will make new leaves. If the cane is mushy and dead, remove it to the ground. After blooming, cut out the canes that bloomed, weak canes or any that are turning yellow. Use a steeply angled cut so water doesn’t sit on top of the cane. To get a shorter plant, remove the tallest canes down to the ground. One other good thing about this beautiful and tough plant – deer do not like it!

The Maven

Plant Hero of the Month: With all the rain, everything is gigantic. My night blooming jasmine has lots and lots of flowers and doesn’t show any signs of quitting. And it smells great!