

# St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

May 2018

**Dates and Events** (events are free unless noted)

**Nassau Extension Plant Clinics, Monday, May 7, 10am--** Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.) Bring your sick plants in a plastic bag.

**Weds., May 2, 10-11am – “Hummingbirds”,** Yulee Satellite Office (86026 Pages Dairy Rd).

**Weds, May 16, 10-11am – “Palm Trees”,** Demonstration Garden, Yulee Govt. Complex, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee.

**Sat., May 19, 9am-noon, Master Gardener Plant Sale,** Demo Garden, Yulee Govt. Complex, 96135 Nassau Place.

**Plant Clinic** will also be held at the sale.

**Tues., May 8, 7pm,** Wild Amelia Wild Nites, “N. Fla. Historical Use of Natural Resources”, Peck Ctr. Auditorium, 516 S. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Fernandina.

**Coastal Wildscapes events:** Go to Coastal Wildscapes website, click on “Events”, then click “register” for the particular event.

**Thurs, May 24, 11am-1pm – Lunch and Learn – “Resilient Coastal Native Plants”,** Ashantilly Center, Darien, \$25.

**Tues, June 12, 8am-2:30pm – field trip to Sapelo Island.** \$30.

## **Announcements**

**Christmas in July** – Bring your items to any meeting and give them to Joan. Suggested items include: body wash, shampoo, bath soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, talcum powder, hand cream, face cream, deodorant, combs and brushes, nail polish/remover, cotton balls, tissues, either purse size or regular size, mouthwash, lip balm. This is a wonderful project that helps people in our own community.

## **Garden to-dos for May**

If your plants are growing too slowly and have yellow leaves, feed them. If they have too much growth and a lack of flowers, skip a feeding. Fertilize palms. Plant heat loving plants like celosia, coleus, impatiens, kalanchoe, marigolds, salvia, pentas, verbena, zinnias, coreopsis, crossandra, exacum, gaillardia, gazania, hollyhocks, nicotiana, eggplant, okra, Southern peas, herbs. You have missed the boat for tomatoes (unless you buy a big one), wait till August to plant them. Stake flowers as needed, keep them deadheaded and trimmed. Watch for pests. Keep watching for late emerging plants like gingers and caladiums. Be ruthless with things that have taken over (like ferns, assorted wandering jews, spiderwort, chenille plant, cosmos). If you haven't cut back your plumbago or roses yet, it is time to do it. Prune azaleas until the middle of July.

## **The Garden Maven's Advice to the “Floralorn”**

**Dear Garden Maven,**

How do I tell a “wildflower” from a “weed”?

**Garden Philosopher**

**Dear Phil,**

Whether weed or wildflower is totally a matter of attitude. Most gardeners would agree that the **Carolina wild petunia** (*ruellia caroliniensis*) is welcome. It is well mannered, showing its charming soft blue flowers here and there in shady gardens. People have mixed feelings **cypress vine** (*ipomoea quamoclit*). It is a native of central America and attracts hummingbirds and butterflies with its little red morning glory type flowers. Some people treat it as a weed, but it can stay within reasonable bounds in the garden, so I say, Thumbs up! **Yellow Canna** is a common native volunteer in our yards. It is useful for bog gardens and is a host plant for skipper butterfly caterpillars. **Crossvine** (*bignonia capreolata*) is a native evergreen vine whose trumpet shaped flowers are a good nectar source for pollinators. Contrast it with “Gangsta Vine” **Trumpet Vine** (*Campsis radicans*), a native that wants to smother everything within reach even though hummingbirds love it. **Spiderwort**, (*tradescantia ohioensis*) is also a native, and attracts butterflies, but left unchecked, it will quickly fill your yard with 2-3 foot tall plants that need to be dug out. I like to leave a (very) few in a small area to give that gorgeous blue color, but you need constant vigilance to keep them from taking over. **Oxalis** is another volunteer beloved by butterflies but out for world conquest. Welcome to your yard with caution. So choose wisely and don't be afraid to set limits on your wildflowers.

**Plant Hero of the Month:** Strawberry begonias actually made it through the winter in the ground and are blooming.