

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

July 2018

Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Nassau Extension Plant Clinic—Monday, July 2, July 16, 10am -- Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.) Bring your sick plants in a plastic bag.

Weds., July 11, 10-11am – *“Living with Alligators”*, Yulee Satellite Office (86026 Pages Dairy Rd).

Potluck lunch— Tuesday, July 10 at 11:30 am at the fellowship hall at First Presbyterian. Bring a dish to share. Theme for the flower arranging competition is *“America the Beautiful”*. We hope to get lots of people making arrangements this year. Everyone can vote for their favorite arrangements, and there will be prizes for the top three. Door prizes, good food, good company.

Announcements

Plant Sale – Keep potting those plants for the plant sale in October. Lots of plants can be started from cuttings just by sticking them in a pot of dirt and keeping it watered in the shade. If you have unusual volunteer plants in your yard, pot them up or call Karen W.

Garden to-dos for July

Keep flowers watered, deadheaded, and clipped back or pinched back when they need it. If you can reach them, clip off the seed heads on your crape myrtles to encourage bloom through September. Make sure your plants are mulched to keep the soil temperature cooler. Water containers every day if there is no rain.

Plant annuals such as celosia, coleus, crossandra, impatiens, kalanchoe, nicotiana, ornamental peppers, portulaca, torenia, salvia. Also plant lima beans, eggplant, okra, Southern peas, peppers, and watermelon.

The Garden Maven’s Advice to the “Floralorn”

Dear Garden Maven,

Two bug families have recently showed up on my tomatoes. One looks like it is wearing a suit of armor, with a triangular helmet. The other one looks like a big butterscotch colored ant with longer legs. What are they and how do I get rid of them?

Befuddled and Bebuggled

Dear “B”,

The guys in the armor are Leaf Footed Bugs, which are related to Stink Bugs. Both have long piercing mouths (be glad they are small or they would be pretty scary even if they were only the size of a squirrel) that pierce the fruit, stems, and leaves to suck out the juices. In other words, a vegetarian Chupacabra! If they hit seeds, they inject the plant or fruit with an enzyme to dissolve them so they can suck them out. On large fruit they will not do much damage, and you can probably eat it, but they can keep young fruit from developing at all. The butterscotch colored ants are the nymphs of the leaf footed bugs. Because most insecticides will kill insect good guys, it is best to get rid of both adults and nymphs by handpicking and shaking them into a bucket of soapy water. You can also spray your plants with insecticidal soap. Probably the cheaper version (a few drops of cheap lemon dish soap – don’t use the newfangled ultra kind—with a half tsp. of bleach to a gallon of water) will take care of these invaders.

The Maven

Plant Hero of the Month: Everything seems to be blooming with all the rain, and the hummingbirds and butterflies are having a wonderful time!.