

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

February 2018

Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Nassau Extension Plant Clinics (10am-2pm): Feb. 5, Feb. 26 (Monday), Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.) Bring your sick plants in a bag for diagnosis.

Weds., Feb. 7, 10am-11:30 – “*Roses*”, Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.)

Tues. Feb. 13, 7 pm, Wild Amelia Wild Nite — “*Pelican Survey of Jacksonville*”, Peck Center, 516 S. 10th St., Fernandina Beach.

Sat. Feb. 10, Feb. 17 – 8 am - 12 – “*Crash Course in Florida Gardening*”, Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd., Yulee). **Registration deadline Feb. 2.** \$50/person (costs more after that). Phone 904-530-6350 (or 6351) ask for Rebecca Jordi. (Email rljordi@ufl.edu) More information is on Nassau County extension website.

Weds. Feb. 21, 10am-11am- “*Pruning Trees*”, Demonstration Garden, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee.

Sat. Feb. 24, 9:30am-2:30pm – *A Day of Gardening*, Duval County Extension, 1010 McDuff Ave., Jacksonville. \$20. Call 904-255-7450 for information or go to Duval County Extension website.

Garden to-dos for February

Resist the temptation to cut back dead 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 like cannas or ginger lilies 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. Clean out dead annuals. Prune out water sprouts, suckers, and rubbing branches from citrus. Plant baby’s breath, calendula, dianthus, dusty miller, marguerites, pansies, petunias, and snapdragons. Plant vegetables like beets, broccoli, cabbage, lettuce, parsley, turnips. Compost leaves and grass clippings. Keep those sheets handy for covering plants when temperatures below 35 degrees are forecast.

The Garden Maven’s Advice to the “Floralorn”

Dear Garden Maven,

My jade plant’s leaves are turning yellow and dropping off. What is wrong with it and how can I help? I feel so

Jaded and Faded

Dear Faded,

Yellow leaves on a jade plant (*Crassula ovata*) can be caused by several things, but the main cause is overwatering. The soil should be allowed to completely dry out before watering again. It should never sit in a saucer of water. If the leaves are plump but turning yellow, reduce the frequency and amount of water. During the fall and winter water once a month. Leaves will be wrinkled and not shiny if the problem is underwatering. They recover quickly from this after being watered. Too much fertilizer can also cause the leaves to turn yellow and drop. Fertilize every 2 -3 months with succulent fertilizer at a reduced strength, or houseplant fertilizer at quarter strength once a month. Don’t fertilize in fall or winter. If all leaves are pale and yellow they may need some micronutrients and bonemeal. The soil in the pot may be totally depleted, so repot in spring with half cactus mix, half perlite. Clay pots are best, since they don’t hold a lot of water. When repotting just go up one size. Too much dirt will encourage holding moisture and could rot the roots. Not enough light can cause yellowing. It can also cause lengthened downturned leaves and weak growth. They like sunlight for a half day or more. However, they can sunburn, so take care to accustom them to sun gradually. Metallic looking blotches on the leaves indicate sunburn. This can also be from cold damage. If the plant was moved recently, a change in light may account for the yellow leaves. Cold will also cause a pockmarked appearance on the leaves. On the brighter side, if the large older leaves at the base of the stem are turning yellow and dropping off, they are just following their natural process for this time of year and shedding older leaves before winter dormancy. One interesting fact – jade plants are short day bloomers and will bloom if conditions are right. So try putting it in an area where lights are not turned on at night and see if they reward you with blooms!

Plant Hero of the Month: Pansies, camellias, and Oxalis are about it! Everyone else is fried!