

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

April 2018

Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Nassau Extension Plant Clinics- April 2, April 16 (10am-2pm): (Mon.), Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.)

Weds. April 4, 10am-11am, “Bluebirds”, Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.), must register at rljordi@ufl.edu. Call 904-530-6353 or 530-6350 for information.

Sat., April 7, 9am-1pm, Spring Native Plant Sale, Coastal Wildscapes, Ashantilly Center, 1712 Bond Rd., Darien.

Fri., April 13, Sat. April 14, 10am-4pm. NOGS Tour of Hidden Gardens, Savannah. \$45

Weds. April 18, 10-11:00 am, “Honeybees”. Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.)

Weds., May 2, 10-11:00 am, “Hummingbirds” Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.)

Tues. April 10, 7 pm, Wild Amelia Wild Nite — “Jacksonville Zoo News”, Peck Center, 516 S. 10th St., Fernandina.

Sat. April 21, 8am-noon?. St. Marys River (and land) Cleanup. Bring rakes or grabbers if you have them.

Sat. April 28, 10am-4pm—Tabby & Tillandsia Garden Tour, St. Simons, \$25. Tickets on Cassina Garden Club website or at Ace St. Simons.

Sat. April 28, 10am-4pm—Rose Festival, Savannah Botanical Garden, 1388 Eisenhower Dr., Savannah.

Garden to-dos for April Deadhead cool season annuals. Pick up old camellia and azalea blooms and discard to prevent blight. Clean up cold damaged plants, gingers can be cut back to the ground. Plant bulbs like agapanthus, caladiums, amaryllis, begonias, crinum, rain lilies. Reshape perennials. Fertilize citrus.

Announcements Christmas in July – Give your personal care items for local senior care facilities to Joan.

The Garden Maven’s Advice to the “Floralorn”

Dear Garden Maven,

What are some good roses to grow here?

Nothing is coming up roses....

Dear “Nothing”,

Hybrid tea roses are prone to disease, especially in our humid climate. Their roots are weak because they are bred for bloom shape, so they are usually grafted onto sturdier root stock. The bushes are ugly. If you must have hybrid teas, make sure they are on Fortuniana root stock. Then you can start spraying, praying, and doing all the other stuff rose lovers do to keep them healthy.

If you are lazy like the Maven, you will stick to **Old Garden Roses and Landscape roses**. These are usually grown on their own roots rather than a graft. **Old garden roses** grew with no maintenance for centuries, so they are more disease resistant. Some old garden roses only bloom once a year, like the Gallica, Damask, Centifolia, Moss, Portland, Alba, and Rambler roses, so unless you fall in love go with something that blooms again and again. China roses are usually large (6-8 feet tall and wide) and can bloom for 12 months out of the year in a mild winter year. Old Blush and Mutabilis are two reliable China bloomers. Polyanthas like the Fairy and Cecile Brunner (sweetheart rose) have smaller flowers in clusters and bloom again and again. They are smaller bushes than the China roses. Noisette roses are repeat bloomers developed in Charleston in the early 1800’s. Champney’s Pink Cluster and Crepuscule are two charming climbers that can be grown on arbors, obelisks, and trellises. Tea roses (not hybrid teas) are also good for our climate but are not as readily available as other classes. Rugosas are tough rebloomers bred from wild Japanese roses that even thrive in salt air.

Most **landscape roses** have been bred from old garden roses, so they are lower maintenance than modern roses like hybrid teas, grandifloras, and floribundas. Knockouts are tough and easy, but I am sick of them. Drift roses are much better—they come in more colors, stay low and bushy, and have a lot of bloom for a long long time. The coral tends to get long cowlicky canes, and the pink drift looks too much like a knockout for me, but peach, apricot, white, red, popcorn, and sweet drift are reliable workhorses and are easy to care for. They are available at local nurseries, sometimes even at Walmart. Landscape roses are usually called shrub roses or groundcover roses. Bonica is a beautiful shell pink shrub rose. Roses like plenty of water and should be planted with room for good air circulation. Clean up dead leaves under the bushes to prevent fungus. Antique Rose Emporium, David Austin Roses, Heirloom Roses, Wayside Gardens, Angel Gardens, and Jackson and Perkins are good online sources.

The Maven

Plant Hero of the Month: Gardens are coming back from the hard winter.