

# St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

## November 2018

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

**Nassau Extension Plant Clinics (Monday, 10am): Nov. 5, Nov. 19**, Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.) Bring your sick plants in a bag for diagnosis.

**Wild Amelia Wild Nite – Tues. Nov. 13, 7 pm – “Sea Turtle Update”**, Peck Center, 516 S. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Fernandina.

**Coastal Wildscapes – Thurs. Nov. 15, 11am-1pm – “Maritime Forest Reforestation”** - Cannons Pt. Preserve, St. Simons. \$25, lunch included. Register at Coastal Wildscapes.org website.

**Attention Pollinator Fans!** – January 30 there will be a pollinator workshop at the Camden extension office in Woodbine. Cost is \$10 to make and take home your own bee hotel. Call 912-576-3210 to register, limited to 20.

### Announcements

**Fig Leaf** – Bring to November meeting -- personal care items and underwear, sweatpants, t-shirts, nonskid socks or slippers for Christmas distribution at the local senior care facilities. Larger sizes are needed, unused greeting cards welcome.

### Garden to-dos for November

Plant annuals like pansies, petunias, snapdragons, dianthus, alyssum for winter color, winter- and spring-flowering shrubs, bare-root fruit trees, citrus. Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants). Repot cacti and succulents, if needed, once they have finished blooming. Plant winter-blooming perennials, bare-root roses, bare root trees, shrubs, vines. Prune deciduous trees, fall and winter-flowering shrubs and vines just after bloom. Sow seeds and plant seedlings of cool-season or winter vegetables like beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, collards, Chinese cabbage, kohlrabi, bulbing onions, radishes. Repair or plant lawns, rake lawns to remove debris. Towards the end of the month, begin mulching sensitive plants for winter.

### The Garden Maven’s Advice to the “Floralorn”

**Dear Garden Maven,**

I have several kinds of hydrangeas and am not sure of when to prune them. One of them is pretty old (30 years plus) and really overgrown. Can I rejuvenate it?

**Unsure**

**Dear Unsure,**

Hydrangeas are divided into old wood bloomers and new wood bloomers. **Macrophylla (mopheads and lacecaps)** includes both kinds. Older varieties, such as Nikko blue, bloom only on old wood, but **new varieties such as Endless Summer, bloom on both (“remontant”)**. However, the blooms on old wood are bigger than on new wood. So Macrophylla should be pruned as old blooms begin to fade and only what is necessary (dead, diseased, damaged, crossing). When the bushes get older, like yours, prune about 1 out of 5 of the oldest canes down to the ground in fall or early spring. You want to keep it from getting a big trunk and from getting gangly looking and you want to promote new growth in the center of the plant. You can be more severe if you want to rejuvenate the plant more quickly, but you may not get any flowers next year. Cut old overgrown canes back by 1/3, with a straight cut just above a healthy bud. If the plant is old and hasn’t flowered much, cut 1 out of 3 of the oldest canes back to the ground in late fall or winter. **Quercifolia (Oak Leaf)** also blooms on old wood, so prune like a mophead. **Serrata (Mountain Hydrangea)** blooms on old wood, but is not widely grown. “Blue Bird” is the most common cultivar. **Petiolaris (Climbing Hydrangea)** also blooms on old wood, but does not like heat and humidity. It will grow in a California zone 9 but won’t make it farther south than 7 in the east. Mine is smaller than when I got it 8 years ago.

**Arborescens (“Annabelle”** is the most common) blooms on new wood. These can be pruned almost to the ground, in spring before they start growing or when dormant in winter, although pruning 12-18 inches from the ground will help develop sturdier stems that flop less. **Paniculata (“PeeGee”, “Pinkie Winkie” or “Limelight”)** blooms on new wood, but most paniculatas only thrive in zones 5-8, so are not suited for our weather. Hydrangeas like an acid loving plant fertilizer. Fertilize in early spring. Sharpen up your pruners and go for it!

**The Maven**

**Plant Hero of the Month:** The cool weather has my roses blooming bigger and with more color. And my hardy gloxinia is really orange this year and has spread out a lot over the summer!