

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

November 2019

Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Nassau Extension Plant Clinics (Monday, 10am): Nov. 4, Nov. 18, Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.) Bring your sick plants in a bag for diagnosis.

Weds. Nov. 6, 10 am – Composting- Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.)

Weds. Nov 20, 10 am – Herbs - Yulee County Bldg. (86026 Pages Dairy Rd.)

Wild Amelia Wild Nite – Tues. Nov. 12, 7 pm – “Amelia Island Sea Turtle Update”, Peck Center, 516 S. 10th St., Fernandina.

Coastal Wildscapes Events – see Coastal Wildscapes website for more information and to register.

Sat. Nov. 2, 9 am-2 pm – Okeefenokee Kayak/canoe trip. \$35 non member.

Fri. Nov. 8, 1 pm-4 pm – Volunteer work day at Cay Creek Interpretive Center, 189 Charlie Butler Rd., Midway GA. Plant and weed in native plant pollinator garden.

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 a confederate rose that did not do well this year. Should I do anything to help it along next year? Also, my cassia is blooming well, but is a little lopsided. Can I cut it back after it is finished blooming?

Unsure

Dear Unsure,

Confederate rose (really a hibiscus) generally die back in the winter. They bloom on new growth and are pretty forgiving. You can prune them back after they finish blooming this fall, or when their leaves start dropping. Or you can wait till late winter. Cut the old stems to a few inches above the ground. Some people cut it to 1-3 feet from the ground. New shoots will come up and you will have a nice shrub next year. You can also decline to prune it and let it grow to a 15 foot tree if you have the room for it. Your confederate rose may have not been getting enough sun, or it could have suffered from insects or a fungus. It is really attractive to whiteflies. Keep an eye out for problems next year and treat for it early. It will be easier to treat for insects and disease if you prune it way back and keep it to a smaller size.

Cassia is a small tree which benefits from hard pruning after it is done blooming. It has very weak wood and if a branch gets too heavy the whole tree can topple sideways. Kind of like the fainting goat of the plant world. Cutting it back to 12 inches from the ground keeps it to a small size so it can stand on its own two feet.

Spirea can also be cut way back this time of year. Thank you to our Pruning Princess for her advice on this topic!

The Maven

Plant Hero of the Month: Philippine violet has lots of blooms, angels trumpets are having another go round, and the smell of tea olives is in the air!