

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

August 2020

Dates and Events – Not yet...

Announcements

Plant Sale – Rock Shrimp Festival is cancelled, but we are planning another plant sale at Orange Hall in October. Keep getting your plants ready and growing. There is still time to root them.

Garden to-dos for August

Plant coleus, blue daze, salvia, asters, begonias, melampodium, moon vine, pentas, porterweed, tithonia, verbena, black eyed susan vine, cat's whiskers. Bulbs like agapanthus, amaryllis, cannas, crinum, gladiolus, society garlic, and rain lilies can be divided and planted. Plant herbs like Mexican tarragon, mint, parsley, oregano, rosemary, and thyme. Plant tomatoes, beans, summer squash and other warm season crops early in the month so they will have time to mature. Later in the month plant cool season vegetables like broccoli, collards, bunching onions, turnips. Fertilize heavy blooming flowers. Save seeds from flowers. Let pods dry on the plant, harvest when pods begin to open. Dry inside for a few days, then put in a plastic bag or jar and store. Fertilize fig trees after harvesting. Prune dead branches on trees.

The Garden Maven's Advice to the "Floralorn"

Dear Garden Maven,

Some of my rosebushes look like someone used a hole punch to put holes shaped like perfect semicircles in the leaves. What is eating them? How do I get rid of the varmints?

A Hole lotta holes goin' on

Dear Holes,

Well, the good news is that nothing is EATING your rosebushes. These are leafcutter bees that are using the leaf pieces like little blankets for their eggs. More good news is that this doesn't harm the plant, and that the bee will only bother your plant for a day or two, then it will move on. Leafcutter bees are lovely, gentle, solitary bees who lay eggs in soft wood. So if you have a bee house you may have them living there. They use a little leaf circle to cover their egg, and add a little pollen for the baby bee to eat. Some use flower petals instead of leaves. The female does all the work, gathering pollen, laying the eggs, and cutting leaves to line the nest. No mention about what the male does, maybe he waves his studly antennae and bats his big green eyes. Anyway, the leaf cutter bee is a very beneficial and productive pollinator, so give these hardworking females a break and don't get out the insecticide. They don't make honey, and will only sting if their life is threatened. The plant will grow more leaves and will not suffer. The alfalfa leafcutter bee singlehandedly saved the alfalfa seed industry in the 1940's, so let's give all those leafcutter bees a big hand!

The Maven

Plant Hero of the Month: Gingers of all sorts are blooming. White butterfly ginger perfuming the air, hidden ginger with its pink tropical looking flowers, corkscrew ginger with its little orange knob, peacock ginger with its variegated leaves and lavender flowers, Siam tulip buds showing themselves and pine cone ginger coming out of the ground. Blue ginger yet to come!