

St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

November 2020

Dates and Events (events are free unless noted)

Wild Amelia Wild Nite – Tues. Nov. 10, 7 pm – “*Amelia Island Sea Turtle Update*”, **Zoom meeting**. Codes will be posted on WildAmelia.org/WildNites website.

Announcements

Fig Leaf – To be determined when and where to bring -- 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 would like to grow some rosemary and am wondering what is the best way to do this? Should I put it in the ground or keep it in a pot?

Herb Lover

Dear Herb Lover,

Rosemary is very easy to grow in our climate, in the ground or in a pot. It wants to be about 3 ft. x 3 ft. in size, so give it enough room if you put it in the ground. It likes sun and well drained soil. Like most herbs, if your soil is too rich, it will not be happy and will not have the flavor and scent that we expect. This is probably why it is so easy to grow in our sandy soil. Don’t fertilize unless it is looking pretty bad.

If you are growing it in a pot, you need one at least 12 inches in diameter. A terra cotta pot is a good choice for this plant that does not like wet feet, but plastic is okay too. Don’t water too much, let it dry between waterings. You can add some perlite to the soil to help with the drainage.

You can make topiaries from potted rosemary easily. Root cuttings and plant in a pot with a form made from wire or a coat hanger. Let the stems grow long and train them on the form. Heart shapes or circles work well.

To start from cuttings, take 6-8 inch cuttings from the plant. Have some woody parts at the bottom. Strip off the leaves for about 2-3 inches at the bottom, then stick in a pot of dirt about 2 inches apart, water well, and place in the shade. Keep watered, and about half of them should root in a few months. You can dip them in rooting hormone before sticking in the dirt, but make a hole with a pencil or skewer before sticking them in the dirt so you don’t knock off the powder.

There are two main types of rosemary, upright (usually called “officinalis”) which is the most available, and prostrate, which trails. The upright is better for cooking (stick some in your turkey with some oranges, lemons, and onions) and decorative uses. The prostrate doesn’t smell or taste as good, but is beautiful spilling itself out of a pot or over a retaining wall.

Rosemary has many legends associated with it. The blue flowers are said to come from the Virgin Mary hanging her cloak on the shrub on the flight into Egypt. Rosemary is said to grow to 6 feet in height over 33 years, the age of Jesus at the time of his death. It signifies remembrance in floral language, and in many cultures it is believed to repel evil spirits.

The Maven

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