

The Bloomin' News

FEBRUARY, 2008, Vol. VI, 4

Lisa Dugowson, Chairman

Joanie Opperman, Editor

Member of FLORIDA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS



Chairman's Message

By Lisa Dugowson

If you haven't been to the Tree Farm for a while, you should go see what our team has accomplished! Our Tree Farm looks better than it has in years. The North side has been cleared of weeds, and ground cloth has been put down. This opens a new section for our growing enjoyment. On December 11th, the Titusville Men's Garden Club received the yearly "TITUSVILLE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD" in recognition of our efforts in making exceptional contributions to improve the quality of the environment in our community.

Titusville Garden Club – Day Group - From the Prez

The next meeting for the Women's Garden Club will be on February 6th at 9:30a.m. This meeting will highlight "Wildlife Photos" by Janet Finnegan. Prints available.

At annual meeting, all past Presidents will be honored.

March 7th from 4:00 to 7:00p.m., and Saturday, March 8th from 9:00a.m. to 1:00p.m. will be our Annual "Fantastic Sale" (gigantic yard sale). Please call Jackie Hope @ 267-9559 with donations.

Florida Native Plant Society – Sea Rocket Chapter

The Sea Rocket Chapter's meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of the month; 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Brevard County Agriculture and Extension Center, 369 Lake Drive, Cocoa. The public is welcome.

Garden Club Web Sites

The Titusville Garden Club web site has link to the Titusville Men's Garden Club web site:

National Garden Club: www.gardenclub.org

Florida Federation of GC: www.ffgc.org

TGC site: <http://www.nbbd.com/npr/tgc/>

TMGC site: <http://www.tmgc.djb.net/>

Potential New Members, YOU Are Welcome

We are always looking for new members and have great opportunities for learning at our monthly meetings, at the Tree Farm and at special events. As a return for members' input/work, many plants are available to members at no cost. We have facilities to start plants from seeds/clippings. For more information call Tony Koromilas: 269-1931, Lisa Dugowson: 264-6389 .

Strikingly Unusual Loropetalum

"Loropetalum Chinese Ruby" by Elaine Schoch

Loropetalum (lor-o-peta-lum) may be hard to say, but is a pleasure to grow. This large, generous shrub is a native of China and Japan, but it loves growing here in Central Florida. Sometimes called the Chinese Fringe Flower, the airy, ribbon-like blooms are striking with showy, purple-green leaves. These plants will light up your landscape several times a year in bright, pink flowers. Plant **Loropetalum** year round in zone 9, watching the new foliage mature from deep olive-green to burgundy. As winter approaches, the leaves turn a brilliant orange-red. The rounded canopy is dense, growing 3 to 5 feet tall. In most cases, pruning is only necessary when the size becomes a problem. To prune, remove single branches with hand clippers just after flowering. Because of "**Ruby's**" compact size and ability to thrive throughout the year, it is often used in foundation plantings. It grows best in loose, well-drained, acid soil. Full sun to partial shade is needed for plants to maintain a full shape and bloom heavily. Use it in sunny sites as an accent, or in deeply shaded sites as a backdrop for shade-loving perennials. The flowers will knock your socks off, as this beautiful and practical shrub adds an exotic flare to your yard

AT THE TREE FARM – by Tony Koromilas

*The Men's Garden Club celebrated Arbor Day by helping the Titusville Environmental Commission plant 10 Live Oak trees to beautify the U.S. 1 shoreline lot East of Harrison Street. These trees are part of an initiative to plant 2,000 trees to absorb CO2, thus helping our environment.

Tree Farm (continued)

* We also gave the Boy Scouts, Keep Brevard Beautiful, schools, Birding Festival participants, and other groups more trees to plant. Titusville is again a "Tree City" as part of the Arbor Day Foundation. We will be planting from now to Earth Day.

* The City of Titusville and our Garden Club are still trying to plant yellow Tabebuia trees along Garden Street.

* Our shade tent was built by Fred, Sam & team..

* Susan, Tony, RoseMarie, Elaine, Steve, Joanie and others are doing a great job of cleaning up the Tree Farm area and laying down new ground cloth for potted plants and trees.

* We need input concerning the idea of offering scholarships for volunteer help similar to the recent project of building the new shade tent.

* Do any members have input about manning a table at the Friday Farmer's Market downtown to give out Tree City and Garden Club information?

Jackie Hope, President of Women's Garden Club, sent a Tree Record to submit to the Florida Garden Club. Keep records of trees planted on school grounds, garden centers, public buildings, parks, roadsides, church property and private property. Please send Tony Koromilas a list of any trees you have planted as part of our Men's Garden Club (deadline week before February 10th).

FEBRUARY IN THE GARDEN

This has been a good winter in our gardens. The cold snaps served to intensify Citrus color and harden most shrubs. We have had some frost and a few freezes so far. Some plants have been damaged by cold, but none beyond recovery. Remember, cold spells are common in Florida during February full moons, and have occurred during cold winters as late as the second week of March.

Judicious pruning of cold-damaged plants can be done. Grape and Kiwi vines and all deciduous fruit and shade trees should be pruned in February, if not already done. Begin routine apple, peach, fig and similar tree spraying. Till and enrich sandy soils with organic matter. Complete transplanting bare root trees and shrubs as soon as practical. Divide and replant large perennials.

You can thin and prune dormant shrubs. **CRAPE MYRTLE** should be pruned. Remove all small, spindly stems from the base of the plant, and small shoots on the main stems. Thin to 3 to 7 main

trunks to open up the plant. Prune stems up to about 1/2 inch in diameter. **CRAPE MYRTLE** only blooms on new wood. Thin twigs will seldom produce big blooms.

ROSES can stand heavy pruning by mid-month. Cut vigorous bushes back by 1/3 to 1/2. Remove all twigs and any branches that are dead, diseased, injured or thin and spindly. Shorten main canes and remove small twigs and older canes that have become too hard. Miniature **ROSES** should be pruned as you would a bush **ROSE**, but lightly.

Vigorous varieties may need heavier pruning to keep them compact. Clean up as much of the cut foliage as practical. Add a new layer of mulch to cover old **ROSE** leaves and Black Spot spores.

Hedges can be pruned heavily and shaped. Keep the top of the hedge narrower than the bottom to allow sun to reach the lower branches.

By the middle of the month, you can work your beds for annuals by removing old plants, checking soil for pH, and correcting, if necessary. Treat for pests, work in compost, mulch or other organic matter and, when needed, colloidal phosphate, other amenders and fertilizer.

By the end of the month, all except spring blooming trees, shrubs and vines can be pruned. Spring flowering plants should be pruned after they finish blooming. A good pruning now will shape the plants for much of the summer. Renew mulches to control weeds and conserve water.

By the end of February, you should fertilize all plants except your lawn. Use 6-6-6 with minor elements, or if you prefer one for a special plant, such as Citrus fertilizer. Citrus trees will need 1/2 pound per inch of circumference measured 6 inches above the ground. Shade trees will need 1 pound per inch when less than 6 inches in diameter, and 2 pounds for each inch above 6 inches. Feed container grown plants monthly.

Major lawn care and fertilizing should wait until March. Repair winter damage. Spraying for weeds can continue. If crabgrass has been a problem, remove brown but surviving crabgrass and apply a pre-emergence herbicide by mid-month. Mow lawns as needed at the normal cutting height. Water normal lawns once a week.

If you did not start seed in January, start the seed now. Seeds started in trays or flats will grow rapidly and be ready to set out in March or April.

Please send your articles to Joanie at freddiefla@yahoo.com to be included in next month's Bloomin' News.

Titusville Men's Garden Club

Meets 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
Garden Center, 5275 Sisson Road, Titusville. FL

Our next meeting is February 11th, 2008!!

Spring Tree & Plant Sale April 18th & 19th, 2008
Mark this date on your calendar; it's never too early to get plants ready for the next sale!!! The parking lot east of Emma Parrish Playhouse is our usual location.

Work Day

Please remember that the **Saturday** after our Monthly Meeting is a day of concerted effort at the Tree Farm. Individuals put in many hours during the week at their

convenience, and this is very necessary for continued success. We also have some tasks that need teamwork to accomplish. This work is the focus of our Saturday events.

Saturday, February 16th is our next Work Day! We will meet at the gate between 8:00 to 8:30 a.m. until about noon. Stay as long as you are able. Please come out and join us as we continue preparing plants for our next sale.

The Bloomin' News
Titusville Men's Garden Club
Joanie Opperman, Editor
Email: freddiefla@yahoo.com Phone: 480-8807

THE TITUSVILLE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB

Titusville Garden Center, 5275 Sisson Road, Titusville, FL 32780

INVITATION TO JOIN THE TITUSVILLE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB

Next Meeting: 2nd Monday of each month Begins at 7:00 p.m.

Who We Are: A non-profit club that enjoys gardening and contributing to our City's beautification and our environment.

What we Are: As a part of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, we are a partner of the Titusville Garden Club.

What We Do: We educate and help each other to enjoy gardening, teach and learn to enjoy plants. We assist others to propagate, grow and distribute trees and plants to non-profit organizations. We participate in voluntary efforts to help Titusville's "Tree City" initiative to plant 2,000 trees per year.

Where We Meet: We meet on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Garden Center, 5275 Sisson Road (south of SR 50 / north of SR 405). We also meet at our Tree Farm near the Titusville Water Maintenance Facility. Members adopt trees and plants to grow and have fun.

How We Operate: We presently sponsor an April and an October Tree and Plant Sale. The sales receipts are used to support the Club, purchase materials, and donate plants to the City and other worthy non-profit causes. Some members grow plants to landscape their own homes (all are welcome to do so). With permission from a plant's adoptee, members may take plants for personal use. Dues are \$25.00 annually, due in April.

Send application below to Titusville Men's Garden Club, P. O. Box 1783, Titusville, FL 32780.
Phone Tony Koromilas 269-1931 or Lisa Dugowson 264-6389

Name: _____

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____ **Cell:** _____

Street: _____ **City** _____ **Zip** _____