

The Bloomin' News

February, 2020, Vol. VI, 146

Duane "Buck" Cowen, Chairman

Thomas Perez, Editor

Member of FLORIDA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS



Chairman's Message

Members,

The tree farm is looking outstanding since we chose to elevate all plants. Thank you to everyone for helping to make this happen. The north side shade house has been demolished and we are now getting ready to set down ground cloth. Soon you will start to see the reemergence of the new shade house with upgraded structural components and a new sprinkler system. Tom & Alan were very happy to see the old structure collapse but were a little alarmed when they realized they were under the structure as it was collapsing. Buck has fixed our pressure washer and we will be cleaning up shelving units before our sale in March. Titusville solid waste was out today to haul off a winter accumulation of plants, weeds and brush. Marianne had a bumper crop of cauliflower and lettuce this year and she is ready to plant potatoes. Vicky has continued to support the club working with Cat and Rick to make the sales floor presentable. Rose has been hard working organizing and bringing plants and leaves in for cultivation. We will be participating in the Titusville Garden Club Sisson Road February sale coming up in about two weeks. Let's not forget our sale at the Tree Farm will be the second weekend in March. Next Tuesday is our next meeting and we need all hands on deck to discuss both sales. Please make an effort to be there. Regards Alan

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. 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. **GRAPE 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 ½ inch in diameter.

GRAPE 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 ½. 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 add 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 ½ 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.

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 Enchanted Forest, 444 Columbia Blvd (Hwy 405). The public is welcome. For info, please call: 264-5185

<http://www.nbbd.com/npr/SeaRocket/>

Garden Club Web Sites

The Titusville Garden Club web site has link to the Titusville Garden Club Tree Farm web site:

National Garden Club: www.gardenclub.org

Florida Federation of GC: www.ffgc.org

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

TGCTF site: <http://www.nbbd.com/npr/tmgc>

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. There are facilities to start plants from seed and clippings. We meet at 9:30 am on the 2nd Monday of each month at the Tree Farm, behind Stuart Park. For more information, call Joanie at 480-8807.

Planting & Care of Azaleas & Camellias - RoseMarie

This is a very good time of year to think about planting azaleas and camellias if you need to add to your landscape. Both of these plants are being offered in bloom at the local garden stores and garden club sales. It is easy to lump these two plants together because they require many of the



same or similar cultivation practices. Azaleas, (genus *Rhododendron*), and Camellias (native to Asia) are both cold hardy and grow well here in Central Florida in the inland areas. Both require a low soil ph. 4.5-6.0. When the ph. is too high, the plant has trouble

absorbing the micronutrients it needs. All azaleas require varying amounts of sunlight from filtered to fairly bright depending on the variety. The *Sasanqua* Camellia tolerates a fair amount of sun, while the *Japonica* prefers bright filtered shade. Total shade results in sparse foliage and fewer blooms for both azaleas and camellias.

Azaleas have a very shallow root system and require consistent moisture but will not tolerate poor drainage. Because of this shallow root system, they can be transplanted more easily than camellias if sufficient care is taken and it is done at this cool time of year. Camellias do not require as much water after they are established and do not tolerate poor drainage either. They require water during times of drought.

Both require a specialized fertilizer containing sulfates designed for acid-loving plants. Azaleas prefer light and more frequent fertilizations during the warm months. Camellias do not need the frequent fertilization; perhaps twice a year and also lightly. Do not over fertilize, especially when first planted.

Azaleas often require pruning after blooming and pruning can be repeated up until the 4th of July. After that date, pruning will greatly lessen the amount of blooms. Camellias only need minimal pruning. Both require minimal care and do not have very many pests. Tea scale, aphids and spider mites are the main pests.

Popular cultivars of azaleas are: *Formosa-Magenta* (fuchsia); *George Taber* (pale pink w/ red blotches); *Mrs. G.G.Gerbing* (white); *Southern Charm* (pink); *Fashion* (salmon pink); *Red Ruffles* (bluish red)

Winter Red Wheat Berries - RoseMarie

The winter red wheat berries are delicious. Wheat (in Greek culture) is symbolic of rebirth or life after death. The wheat plant lives, bears the seeds and dies, but the seeds can sprout and there is new life.

The wheat kernels are pleasantly nutty and chewy and are a wonderfully nutritious snack or topping for salads. They can be used in soups and stews as one would use barley etc. The wheat can be purchased at the health food store on Washington Avenue here in Titusville for approx. \$2.00 per pound.

To prepare them, you can soak them overnight as you do for beans to shorten the cooking time. Cover them in water and cook as you would rice or barley etc. (Approx. 45 min.) but keep checking for desired doneness. Season with a pinch of salt and a little olive oil while still warm. I also add small amount of balsamic vinegar. Can be refrigerated for a week.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR:

Titusville Garden Club

Day Group Plant Sale –

February 14th (9 to 5) & February 15th (8 to 2pm)

At the Garden Center, 5275 Sisson Road, Titusville
kheide@cfl.rr.com (321-543-3696)

Gardenfest! 2020
The 19th Annual Gardenfest!
February 1 & 2, 2020 - opens at 9 a.m.
Riverside Park, Vero Beach
3250 Riverside Park Drive
-beachside off SR 60

For two days in early February, Vero Beach's Riverside Park transforms into one of the largest

free and family-friendly garden shows in Florida. Visitors enjoy the vendors, lectures, demonstrations, food and raffle prizes. For more information, visit

www.gardenclubofirc.org/Gardenfest.html.

TREE FARM NEWS –

Thanks to all who help at the Tree Farm--it continues to look great!

It is time for all of us to propagate, using cuttings and seeds, and hoping that the weather cooperates. Just bring your favorite cuttings to the mist house. Trays are crying for adoption--just label tray with your name, name of plant & date. We need variegated Schefflera, Red Maple seeds, Gardenias, Fig, Mulberry, Pomegranate and many others. Just have fun trimming, cutting, dipping in Root-tone, and placing in the vermiculite and perlite trays. Voila!! roots will erupt if you are patient.

***** ***** ***** ***** ***** *****



*Prune Poinsettias back to about 2 feet from the ground .
Apply 1 to 2 tsp of Epsom salts to supply Magnesium.

*Flowers to plant: Alyssum, Dianthus, Pansy, Petunia
Nasturtium, Phlox, flowering Kale & Snapdragons

*Herbs to plant: Basil, Comfrey, Chives, Dill, Fennel
Parsley, sweet Marjoram, Mint, Sage and Thyme

*Add new mulch to landscape areas where the mulch is
less than 2 inches deep. Be sure to keep the mulch away
from the stems or trunks of the plants.

*Mid-month is good time to prune Rose bushes. Choose
4-5 main canes to form new shrub & prune off the others.
Cut main canes back a third of the way.

Titusville Men's Garden Club
Meets 2nd Tuesday of each month.
Our next meeting is February 11th, 2020
"At the Tree Farm" Behind Stuart Park

The Bloomin' News
Titusville Men's Garden Club
Tom Perez, Editor; 240-285-6189
Email: Tomp@MountAiryAlpacas.com

The Titusville Garden Club Tree Farm

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

Next Meeting: Second Tuesday of the Month, -- 10:00 a.m.
(@ "the Farm" Behind Stuart Park)

INVITATION TO JOIN THE TITUSVILLE GARDEN CLUB TREE FARM

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 Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at our Tree Farm near the Titusville Water Maintenance Facility, next to Stuart Park. Members adopt trees and plants to grow and enjoy.

How We Operate: We presently sponsor a March 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.

For more information, please phone Joanie at 480-8807

Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Street: _____ City _____ Zip _____