

The Bloomin' News

February, 2015, Vol. VI, 91

Les Leckron, Chairman

Joanie Opperman, Editor

Member of FLORIDA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS



Chairman's Message

We are so lucky to be here on the Space Coast of Central Florida with “relatively” warmer weather than many of our Northern family and friends! The Weather Channel internet site shows that Orlando’s average February high temperature is 74 and low average of 52. So much better than in areas that have had single digit temps and when it was double digit there was a Minus sign involved! I hear it’s time to start Warm Season plant seeds and time to put the last of Cool Season plants in the ground. Spring is right around the corner and so is our Spring Tree and Plant Sale! Stay warm – Enjoy the cooler days and I’ll see you at the February 9, 2015 Meeting! Keep it Growing! Les

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. **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 ½ 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 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 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 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.nbbd.com/npr/tmgc>

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. There are facilities to start plants from seeds/clippings. We meet at 7:00p.m. on the 2nd Monday of each month at the Garden Center on Sisson; drop by to visit and possibly join us. For more information call RoseMarie at 385-9051.

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: (large, vigorous, dense) Formosa-Magenta/ fuchsia, George Taber- pale pink with red blotches, Mrs. G.G.Gerbing-white, Southern Charm-pink . (Small) Fashion-salmon pink, Red Ruffles- bluish red.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR -

Feb 13 (9am to 5pm) & Feb 14 (8am to 2pm)

Titusville Garden Club Annual Plant Sale

5275 Sisson Road

Feb 21 -LEU GARDENS - "Seed Swap"

Trade or donate your extra seeds. Place seeds in small packet with individual labels, which should include botanical or common name. Participants in Seed Swap will receive FREE ADMISSION. 9am -noon.

(407-246-2620) www.leugardens.org

Winter Red Wheat Berries - RoseMarie

The winter red wheat berries that we tasted at the luncheon served at the club house after Tony's funeral were delicious. It was explained to us that the 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.

Chesville Garden Club

Annual

PLANT SALE

5275 Sunset Road

February 13th & 14th

Friday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Saturday 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Roses, Camellias, Lilies & more
from a Personal Garden
This is a variety of plants grown by members.
Come early for best selection!

And please be sure that money contributed

Presiding Gardens!

Contribute to the Club!

Titusville Garden Club – Day Group -
February 4th – Honoring Past Presidents
February 13th & 14th - Spring Plant Sale
Contact: kheide@cfl.rr.com
(Start collecting items for Fantastic Sale ;)

TITUSVILLE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB

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

Our next meeting is February 9th, 2015!
Come join us!

UPCOMING GARDEN CLUB SALES:

Women's Garden Club Plant Sale – Feb 13 & 14
Garden Center, 5275 Sisson Road kheide@cfl.rr.com

Men's Garden Club Tree/Plant Sale – Mar 6th & 7th
Friday 10:00am to 6:00pm---Saturday 8am to 2pm
Tree Farm – N of intersection Stuart & Thoreau Sts

Brevard Botanical Garden Spring Plant Sale
3695 Lake Drive, Cocoa (633-1702) –April 11 (9-2)

Brevard Tropical Fruit Tree Sale– April 25
Brevard Rare Fruit Council (8am-4pm)
Field next to Melb. Auditorium on Hibiscus
www.brevardtropicalfruitclub.org

Platinum Coast Orchid Society 52nd Orchid Show
May 2, Saturday, 9am to 5pm and
May 3, Sunday, 9am to 4pm (Admission \$5.00)
Kiwanis Island Park Gym & Annex,
951 Kiwanis Island Park Road, Merritt Island.
(321.525.7540) platinumcoastorchidsociety.org

TREE FARM NEWS –

Thanks to all who help at the Tree Farm--it continues to look great! We will be buying liner Plants soon for eventual sale and beautification of our City.

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 put your name on them. 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.

Winter Yard Work – Joanie

*Check vegetable garden for any diseased, infested or old & non-producing plants and remove them. Add organic matter like compost or aged manure to enrich the soil for new plantings.

*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.

*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.

A big “THANK YOU” goes to Buck, one of our members, for telling us about Orchids (Dendrobium and Cattleya among many others)! He raises Orchids, and was kind enough to give everyone an Orchid to take home. Buck also told us about an Orchid Show in May, and some things to look for. A very interesting time. BUCK, THANKS!!!

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: RoseMarie @ 385-9051

Name: _____

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

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