

The Bloomin' News

July, 2002

Les Leckron, Chairman

Don Crocker, Editor

Chairman's Message

By Les Leckron

What Is Our Purpose, What Is Our Club About? The essence of that question was raised at last month's Men's Garden Club meeting during some lively discussion. Then the answer was read directly from The Titusville Garden Club, Inc. Manual - the Objectives of The Titusville Garden Club are to: "Stimulate a knowledge and a love of gardening. / To aid in the protection of native plants and wildlife, and the conservation of our natural resources. / To encourage civic beautification and roadside development through planning and planting. / To plan for and/or join in projects and campaigns to educate all citizens to the desirability and importance of a clean environment."

Hopefully each Men's Club member has personal goals to work together toward the same set of goals. Actions of each Club member affects all other Club members, the image presented to other TGC Circles as well as the image presented to our community. I've proudly stated that I'm a member of the Men's Garden Club because of being proud of what we do. I encourage each member to reflect on how they conduct themselves and see if their personal actions are working toward the betterment of our club and the community. Please take a few minutes and write down what you see as our Men's Club Goals and what we do to meet them. Send your thoughts to me or bring them to the July meeting, I think it would be interesting to see if we can verbalize what we in the Men's Club "are all about".

Have a Safe and Enjoyable Fourth of July - Keep your Flags flying !

Don't forget to put this date on your calendar: Saturday, October 26, 2002. This will be the day of a TGC Horticulture Show. All members of TGC are encouraged to grow specimens for this event and to show them as container grown or cut. There won't be any fee to participate, and qualified flower show judges will judge entries. You are allowed multiple entries. This is an opportunity for Men's Garden Club members to let the community see what you can grow and take so much pride in. We have all summer to grow and groom, so take this opportunity / challenge to get your plants ready to show.

Important Dates:

September 19-21 - FNATS in Orlando

October 12, 2002 - FALL Tree and Plant Sale

October 26, 2002 - TGC Horticulture Show

See you at the meeting, Les

Email: leckronl@cfl.rr.com

Potential New Members, YOU Are Welcome

To prospective members, 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. There are facilities to start plants from seeds/clippings. We meet at 7:00 P.M. on the second Monday of each month at the Garden Center on Sisson; drop by to visit and to possibly join us. For more information call Tony Koromilas, 269-1931, Leland Chernerys, 269-0667, or me – **Les Leckron, 267-2435, leckronl@cfl.rr.com**

July Program:

by Leland Chemerys

As of the printing of your Newsletter, the July Program is still being planned. Many new trees have arrived and have been planted. They will need nurturing to get them ready for future sale.

See everyone at the meeting. I'll make sure to bring the root beer.

Florida Native Plant Society

Sea Rocket Chapter

The Sea Rocket Chapter's meetings are on the 4th Wednesday of the month; this month it meets July 24th at 7 PM at the Brevard County Agriculture and Extension Center, 3695 Lake Drive, Cocoa.

JULY IN THE GARDEN

By Gil Bertie

June has brought much needed rain, and July is also expected to be a wet month with seven to ten inches of rain in north Brevard County. July will be very hot making it one of our most uncomfortable months for gardening. Despite the heat, routine garden maintenance should

continue. Work early or late in the day, apply sunscreen and wear a head cover. Save water by turning off your automatic sprinkler system and operating the system manually as needed.

If you did not fertilize your lawn in May or June, it is still not too late to apply a good 16-4-8 fertilizer. If Bahia lawns still show yellowing, additional iron should be applied. Sod-Web worms could arrive in July. They feed heavily on St. Augustine, but will attack other lawns. Watch for grass that is chewed close to the ground, as if cattle had grazed. Diazinon, Dursban or Thuricide are effective controls. Chinch bugs may also be active in July. Mole Crickets are active in Bahia and Bermuda lawns and should be treated now. Use Mole Cricket Bait or Diazinon or Dursban spray/granules. Follow label instructions.

CRAPE MYRTLES have been blooming beautifully, but this can be only the beginning. Prune back each cluster to reasonably large stems before seed pods form. Remember strong branches can only grow from branches larger than themselves. Feed with a high super-phosphate fertilizer every two weeks. If Mildew occurs spray with a good fungicide. In 4 to 8 weeks you should have a second flush of bloom.

Continue to pinch new growth, except AZALEAS, CAMELIAS and GARDENIAS, to assure thick compact plants. Use the cuttings to root new plants. Prune POINSETTIAS to develop compact plants. Divide and repot ORCHIDS and BROMELIADS. Fertilize shrubs and flowers lightly with a 6-6-6 or similar fertilizer every 3 to 4 weeks. Feed outdoor container plants every two or three weeks. Transplant PALMS and SAGOS during our rainy season. Remove weak or diseased tree limbs that could be damaged by storms. Make a weekly trip through your garden to check for insects, diseases or other problems. Watch for yellowing or scorching - a sign of Spider Mites. Blast them off with a hard stream of water or spray Mites with Malathion, Cygon, Diazinon or Kelthane. A summer oil home citrus spray will help control mites, scale and whitefly. Again, follow label instructions.

Hot weather plants that add color to the landscape include BEGONIAS, BLUE DAZE, CALADIUMS, COLEUS, IMPATIENS, MARIGOLDS, PENTAS, PERIWINKLE, SALVIA and VERBANA. Add an additional thin mulch layer to flower beds to conserve moisture and control weeds.

DOWN ON THE TREE FARM

By Burl Ferguson

The rainy season is here!! The tree farm says "Thank You" but the weeds say the same thing. Don't forget to give your adopted trees/shrubs applications of fertilizer and Ron Star (pre-emergence weed killer) to encourage growth and minimize your hand weeding.

We have decided to delay any further purchases of "liners" until they are "adopted" for care from "birth to sale." So if you have been thinking about adoption now is the time to step and sign in please. We can't have good sales volume unless we have something to sell and just like kids they don't grow up without some help.

Don't hesitate to sign up with someone to adopt a tree or plant species.

As has been said many times "Empty pots don't give us a return on our investment."

Tree Farm News

by Tony Koromilas

We purchased bottlebrush, live oak, crepe myrtle, wax myrtle, and other varieties which were potted by wonderful volunteers. Thanks to Burl and all the gang that did a splendid job. I am ready to purchase dwarf hawthorn, snow on the mountain, laurel oak, sweet gum, and other species when an adoptee will agree to care for them.

Let the adoption and care begin!!!

Don Hawthorn in getting the shade area built. Keep up the good work Don.

The farm looks a little better thanks to the prisoner help. They cleaned up more areas and upotted the crepe myrtle, sago palms, sweet gum, and other trees. Thanks to Don Crocker for the relief and starting the cleanup of the mist house.

Thanks to all the helpers and especially Burle (for coordinating the planting). Also thanks those folks that have been adding cuttings in the mist bed.

Don't forget to weed and care for your plants. It makes for quality plants.

Billy on the Florida Space Coast

By Billy Rhodes

FNATS is scheduled for September 19 - 21, 2002. I expect to go over as usual on the Friday of the show which is September 20. Last fall we had a great group go over for the day. Is the group interested again? I can purchase tickets for all and be paid back by those who go. Please let me know by the August meeting, which I will try to attend. (I am teaching on Monday through mid June.) The cost last year was \$10 plus parking of \$7 per car. (I think.)

Questions! Answers Anyone?

Do I have the wrong type of Hibiscus for the conditions in my yard where they are planted? They are in mostly sun, the soil is sand and well drained (I mixed about a third of a bag of cow manure compost into the soil when they were planted a couple of years ago.) I've fertilized them a couple of times this year – once with azalea fertilizer, once with some Scots Turf Builder (for the extra nitrogen) and twice with Peter's Bloom Buster solution. The leaves are turning yellow and the stems are leggy. I had a couple of variegated leaf Hibiscus there that also had a hard time. I moved them a couple of years ago to a spot that gets much more shade. They are strong and full, but they don't have many blooms. I didn't use the Turf Builder on them.

From Your Newsletter Editor

Please send me your questions for the "QUESTIONS and ANSWERS" column.

This web site <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> offers interesting info.

Any input and/or comments, pro or con, are welcome. Send them via any of the following: snail mail, email or short phone messages: Don Crocker, 5175 Kirkwood

Trail, Titusville, FL 32780-6719; 'phone 264-0947; Email – donandjoanc@wmconnect.com

Programs at the Titusville Garden Center

Thursday, August 15, Vegetable Gardening

Tuesday, September 17, All About Trees

The programs will be from 10 AM to 12 Noon at the Garden Center, 5275 Sisson Road. Call **264-4266** to sign up at least **3** days before the scheduled program.

Soil Fertility and Fertilizers

The following is taken from <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/SS171>, **Soil Fertility and Fertilizers A Five-Session Short Course for Florida Producers** by Gerald Kidder, Professor, Soil and Water Science Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville (The following is published in outline form as the first of five teaching sessions and has been condensed as follows.)

Most of Session I (of the five sessions), SOIL FERTILITY AND FERTILIZERS, Essential Plant Nutrients -- What Plants Must Have and How Much follows.

Plants obtain most of their essential nutrients from soil. An essential nutrient is defined as one which the organism must have to complete its life cycle. The 16 nutrients essential for all higher plants are shown in information from Table 1 & 2, Plant Essential Elements: Air and water supply carbon, hydrogen, oxygen; soil supplies—Macronutrients: nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur and Micronutrients: Iron, manganese, zinc, copper, boron, molybdenum, chlorine.

Growth will be limited by the element in shortest supply in relation to plant needs. Plants take up nutrients that are in the soil solution. Most minerals are only slightly soluble in water so only a small portion is in solution at any one time. Organic matter (and chemicals) releases nutrients as it is decomposed by soil microorganisms. The relative quantities of essential nutrients needed by plants range from very large to minute amounts. Carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen from air and water are used in large quantities. The essential nutrient elements supplied by the soil have been classified according to the relative quantities needed - macro nutrients (large quantities required) and micro nutrients (small quantities required). Some of the 6 macronutrients are used in such large quantities that the soil frequently can't supply enough for the desired plant growth. Deficiencies of micronutrients occur with less frequency than those of macronutrients. The nutrients that are most frequently deficient in soils are nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. These three nutrients are frequently needed in a "complete" fertilizer, but not always, e.g. legumes don't need N, so a "complete fertilizer" should not be used on legumes. The percentages of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K) in a fertilizer are expressed in that order, e.g. 14-9-17. Many soils in Florida are high in phosphorus because of their mineralogy or due to years of P fertilization.

A nutrient is deficient if its addition as fertilizer produces a desired plant response, e.g. a lush-growing tomato plant, which does not fruit, is not giving the desired response. Fertilizer provides the nutrients that the soil cannot supply in sufficient quantities, but too much of a nutrient can be as harmful as too little.

Saturday, July 13th: Work Day

Please remember that the Saturday after our Monthly Meeting is a day for Concerted Effort at the Tree Farm.

Many hours are put in by individuals 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 type work is the focus of our Saturday events.

Plan on coming out Sat., 7/13 and join us at the Tree Farm

Fall Tree & Plant Sale

October 12, 2002

Put this date on your calendar; it's never too early to start getting plants ready for sale!!!

Leland Chemerys, 269-0667, is the fearless leader for this sale.

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Titusville Men's Garden Club
Don Crocker, Editor
5175 Kirkwood Trail
Titusville, FL 32780-6719

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The Titusville Men's Garden Club

Next meeting

Monday, July 8, 2002 – 7:00 PM
Program Information Inside

Titusville Garden Center
5275 Sisson Road
Titusville, FL 32780