

November, 2001

Les Leckron, Chairman

Don Crocker, Editor

Chairman's Message

By Les Leckron

This past month we were busy with the October Tree and Plant Sale. We had lots of Club Members put in phenomenal effort to put together another successful sale. We might have gotten a little over-ambitious taking three truck loads of plants to the Garden Center, but we did sell a good many and only had the one truck load to take back. If it hadn't been for the ingenious packing of the trucks by John (Dusty) Walters, we would have had at least another trip. Most of the plants got back to their respective homes at the tree farm, making it easier on us later so they don't have to be moved around. Thanks to all the club members that spent time preparing for the sale, helping during the sale, cleaning up and putting away afterward. It is a real team effort to do a job this big, but we repeatedly do it twice a year, supplying affordable trees and plants to our community.

It was good to see many repeat customers at the tree sale, some of whom have requested to be included in our e-mail version of the monthly newsletter. That seems to be a good idea, saving postage and getting the news to additional persons. We'd like to invite these interested people to join our Men's Garden Club, to participate in our activities and to help strengthen and improve the club.

I had some e-mails this past month from Tony Koromilas concerning Titusville City's comments and concerns about our Tree Farm. Hopefully Tony will be able to give us a run-down on this at the November Club meeting. We've had a good relationship with the City for many years and it's to our benefit to nurture that relationship to continue for many more years.

Some of our Seasonal Members will be returning to Titusville and some of our regular members will be staying in town now that winter is approaching. Welcome back and bring a friend or neighbor along to the club meeting!

Potential New Members, YOU Are Welcome

A note for any Prospective Members reading a complimentary email copy of the Bloomin' News. We are always looking for new members and have great opportunities for learning at our monthly meetings and at the Tree Farm and as well as at special events such as FNATS (Florida Nursery and Associates Trade Show). We have a good bunch of hard working guys in the Men's Garden Club. We enjoy learning from each other as much as the friendships and fellowship we develop. As a return for members input/work, many plants are available to you at no cost. There are facilities to start plants from seeds, clippings, (and I'm sure ways your editor hasn't learned yet). 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 you may also call Tony Koromilas, 269-1931 or Leland Chernerys, 269-0667, and of course me –

Les Leckron, 267-2435, leckronl@cfl.rr.com

November Program:

Leland Chernerys, Vice Chairman and Program Chairman reports that the November Meeting will have Marcia Gaedcke, the President of the Titusville Chamber of Commerce, as our speaker. She will give us ideas about how we may be able to help with the city's Arbor Day observance.

This is one of the things that allows us the use of the tree farm. Our support is important.

Sea Rocket Chapter Program Florida Native Plant Society, Nov. 14th

Ramona Smith, F.I. T. grad student, Ecology and Conservation Biology, will speak on Brevard County's endemic mint (*Dicerandra thimicola*) 7 PM at the Brevard County Agriculture and Extension Center, 3695 Lake Drive, Cocoa.

NOVEMBER IN THE GARDEN

By Gil Bertie

November is a good gardening month with warm days, cooler nights and low rainfall. Some cool days and cooler nights are needed to start dormancy in our plants for winter protection. Most plants other than hardy annuals will be preparing to go dormant for the winter. Tropical plants and many plants that retain their leaves in the winter will need some protection from frost and winter cold. You can hill around the base of the plant with mulch, soil or Spanish moss to provide some protection.

When frost is expected, cover tender plants with paper bags, cardboard boxes, trash containers, burlap of cloth. If you use plastic for protection, keep it well away from the plant. In severe cold a small electric bulb, 40 to 100 watts, at the base of covered plants can prevent freeze damage. Running sprinklers during freezing weather can save many plants. You can also reduce damage from light frost by washing frost off lawns and tender plants early in the morning before the sun hits them.

DIEFFENBACHIA, CROSSANDRA, EPISCIAS, LIPSTICK VINES, PEACE LILY and other cold sensitive plants will suffer if temperatures drop much below 55 degrees, so be prepared to bring them indoors or place them in a heated shelter. A few nights of 50 or even 45 degrees will not harm most ORCHIDS although it may retard their flowering. However most ORCHIDS will benefit if protected from temperatures below 42 degrees.

Prepare lawns and woody ornamentals for winter by withholding fertilizer. Renew mulches to conserve moisture and to reduce cold injury.

Shorter days and cooler temperatures have slowed lawn growth, but lawns and citrus trees should still be watered as needed. Bahia and St. Augustine lawns should continue to be cut 3 to 4 inches tall. Remove fallen leaves from the lawn. Lawn weeds that survive mowing should be controlled with a liquid herbicide. If your lawn is thin in areas, you can make green by over seeding with winter rye grass seed late in the month as the permanent grass goes dormant. Broadcast eight to ten pounds of seed per 1,000 square feet to get a good winter cover. Rye grass will grow in light shade. It will need fertilizer, water and regular mowing.

This is a good time to control Scale on AZALEAS, CAMELLIAS, GARDENIAS, IVY, HOLLY, MAGNOLIA, LIGUSTRUM and many other plants. When the temperature is below 80 degrees, use dormant of low toxicity oil spray as directed on the

container. CAMELLIA scale can also be controlled by spraying with Diamathoate (Cygon). Do not use Cygon on Holly. Repeat oil spray in one month and Cygon in a week.

Hardy plants that will provide winter color in your yard include ALYSSUM, CALENDULA, CLEOME, DIANTHUS, LARKSPUR, PANSIES, PETUNIA, PHLOX SALVIA, SNAPDRAGON and VERBENA. Remove faded blooms to extend flowering. Hardy foliage plants include DUSTY MILLER and ORNAMENTAL CABBAGE and KALES.

DOWN ON THE TREE FARM

by Burl Ferguson

Since I don't have x-ray vision I can only report on what I have heard from you fellows when you drop into room 1200 at Sand Point ALF.

With all the rain we have been having the weeds are growing faster than our plants. Weeds also rob the fertilizer as you can see from pots full of weeds. I find the best way to pull the weeds is to knock the plant from the pot, pull weeds sideways and repot; fill soil to 1/2 inch from the top, apply water, fertilizer, and Ron Star (that's pre-emergence weed killer).

We are still anxious to have you adopt one or more tree and/or plant species and grow them from seedlings to salable plants, so pick a species you like and "dig in". Oaks need more than one person.

I am always available by phone 267-7618 to discuss your ideas for the farm. MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK so step up and sign in please.

And don't forget that a scheduled work session is always planned for the Saturday following the Monday of our monthly meeting. If you have a schedule conflict, we can always work out a make up sessions at your convenience.

Florida Arbor Day, January 18, 2002

Plant a tree on Arbor Day is observed Nationally. In the United States of America, Arbor Day is celebrated to encourage tree planting and tree care. The first Arbor Day was celebrated in the state of Nebraska in 1872 in response to a state proclamation urging settlers and homesteaders in that prairie state to plant trees that would provide shade, shelter, fruit, fuel, and beauty for residents of the largely treeless plains. On that first Arbor Day, more than one million trees were planted in Nebraska's communities and on its farms. The Arbor Day idea was promoted by J. Sterling Morton, editor of the *Nebraska City News*, who later helped the idea spread to neighboring states and eventually to all of the United States and many other nations.

In Florida Arbor Day is celebrated on the Third Friday in January, our best tree-planting time. If you are looking for a tree to plant, try a Cabbage Palmetto as it is our State Tree.

Grow Your Own Pineapple

It is easy to grow pineapples in your own backyard. You can from those you buy at the grocery store:

1. Get one of your favorite pineapple from the grocery store. Cut off the crown from the top of the fruit and set aside. Eat the rest of the fruit as you normally would.
2. Allow the bottom of the crown to dry out for a day or two.
3. Plant in sandy (somewhat improved) well-drained soil.
4. Water weekly. Pineapples, like most Bromeliads, prefer water in their vase-like tops.
5. Once the young plant is established, pour a cupful of well balanced water soluble liquid fertilizer into the top of the plant Monthly. Avoid getting dirt or sand into the buds at the top of the plant as it may kill it. Pineapple plants also enjoy a well rotted compost spread on the ground at their "feet".

(Ed's comment – I did pretty much as above 'cept I wasn't smart enough to let the tops dry off; I just cut them off and planted them – told you guys I'm a real novice. I used azalea fertilizer and Epson salts every 4-8 weeks – I'm not too conscientious a gardener either. They were in an area that was sprinkled 3 times a week / 2 times a week now since the drought. First season I got two really good, large store type premium fruit. The next year my plants multiplied to five or six, four bloomed, and were growing the same kind of fruit – large, golden perfect shaped. I was just ready to harvest one morning when I was shocked to find something left only the tops and a little of the core of what were to be four, again, perfect fruit. This last winter really froze them out. But they hadn't given up even though I did. With no care they gave me 4 more very small – about 3 inch diameter by 5 inches long not too tasty fruit. So if they were that determined, I cut off all of the dead leaves from the freeze, and thinned out all of the suckers in the bed, stuck the tops from my 4 little ones back into the ground, am fertilizing them, and they're looking strong. With some fertilizer, some water and some prayer – who knows?)

Tree Farm News

By Tony Koromilas

The water leak that greatly reduced the pressure in the sprinkling system causing plants not to be watered is fixed thanks to Steve Connell identifying the leak because of slow water flow from one section.

The rain has negated spreading roundup on the North side. Weeds are still dominate. We need to start thinking about up-potting some plants. I will be placing signs on plants to help us identify and learn the names. Please, whenever anyone of us comes by, take a few minutes to move the orphans that are not together into one group. I will also get the signs up to show where the various groups belong.

We still need some folks to adopt a species or corral. George Mendez has adopted the bald cypress. Let's discuss this at our next meeting.

From Your Newsletter Editor

Please send any input and/or comments, pro or con, to me via any of the following: snail mail, email or phone. (my short hand is non existent, so phone messages are best received as short ones.) : Don Crocker , 5175 Kirkwood Trail, Titusville, FL 32780-6719; 'phone 264-0947; Email - trini@digital.net

Saturday 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 11/17 to and join us at the Tree Farm

Fall Tree & Plant Sale

April 13, 2002

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

The Bloomin' News
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, November 12, 2001 – 7:00 PM
Program Information Inside

Titusville Garden Center
5275 Sisson Road
Titusville, FL 32780