



TAG TALK

September 2022



President's Message.....Carol Sevelowitz

Aah September...warm, sunny days, crisp cool nights...oh, wait Carol, you're not in Maine anymore! After an idyllic summer of near perfect weather, I find myself back on Hilton Head...sweating. And apparently in need of an umbrella and a weed wacker! Everything is so green and lush and my garden is screaming for attention.

I am happy to be back, though. I've missed my friends and neighbors and all of you. I've missed more daylight hours. And I've missed my comfortable routines. And I'm looking forward to an exciting year for TAG! Thanks to our Programming Chair extraordinaire, Nancy Renner, we have so many interesting and entertaining speakers and programs planned, beginning this week with a presentation from Ellen Sturrop Comeau, Water Resources Extension Agent with Clemson.

After that comes a trip to an organic farm for an indigo dying lesson, a talk on gardening for wildlife, and a Holiday Home Tour. And that's just this year! Be sure to pick up your Member and Program Directory at this Friday's meeting for a look at the entire calendar.

Well, I'm off to pull some weeds...see you Friday!

Carol

This month's Meeting September 16, 2022 Protecting Local Waterways with Gardens and Rain Gardens

Ellen Sturrop Comeau- Water Resources Extension Agent with Clemson will show us how to protect our beautiful and productive saltmarshes and lagoons with water-wise gardens and landscaping practices!

This presentation will cover the design, installation, and maintenance of rain gardens, vegetated buffers, and simple ways to turn your existing landscape into a saltmarsh-friendly one!

Nancy Renner
Program Chair

American Beauty berry is an excellent plant choice for full sun or part-shade **rain gardens**.

Beautyberry is a tall deciduous shrub. It is drought tolerant. In the fall, American beautyberry creates a spectacular fruiting display of masses of bright magenta berries that persist for a short time.



There will be a raffle at September's meeting of a cutting from former member, Diane Middleton's, American Beautyberry shrub.



The Amaryllis Order Form is on page 5. Please take a look and get your orders in quickly before they sell out of your favorite variety. Sale ends October 24.

Next month October 21, 2022 – 9:30 am (early start time)

The Secrets of Indigo

Field Trip is to Three Sisters Organic Farm in Bluffton where they grow indigo. One of the three sisters, Priscilla Coleman will demonstrate working with Indigo. The tour and demonstration will last about an hour and there will be time for Q&A. This is a working Farm and is not handicap accessible and has bumpy farm paths.

Participants must wear closed toe, comfortable walking shoes. Priscilla also recommends loose fitting long sleeved shirts and pants, hat, sunscreen, bug spray, and water bottle.
(if you have allergies to insect stings- bring your medication.)

Please carpool to reduce traffic on their dirt road
No restroom will be available so plan accordingly!



Save the date

HOLIDAY TOUR OF HOMES
Thursday, December 8, 2022
3-7 PM.

**Get into the spirit of the season by
visiting five beautifully decorated homes!**

**Cost \$20/person. Each member will be
responsible for selling three wristbands
(tickets). Available starting Friday from
Liz Van Alstyne/elizy1106@aol.com,**



Birding.....Beth Hommes

The Clapper Rail

When I first arrived in the Low Country, I was amazed by the plethora and variety of birds. Living on a marsh, I became fascinated with the marsh dwellers. The clapper rail is one of the most elusive of these birds. Seldom seen but often heard, the clapper rail may be gray, reddish, or brown and is about the size of a chicken. There are grey patches on their cheeks. They have a short tail and strong legs. Their bill is long to reach food in marsh mud and is curved slightly downward. The males may be somewhat larger than the females but their coloring is the same.



The clapper rails live in salt marshes. Their range is along the Atlantic coast from Massachusetts to northern Mexico. They prefer wetlands with cordgrass, pickleweed, and mangroves. They build their nests near the ground among the grasses but high enough not to become submerged at high tide. Males do most of the building. Females lay 2-16 eggs, which both males and females incubate for 18-24 days. The females sit on the nests in the daytime and the males at night. The chicks are black and are quick to leave the nest. They can fly in 9-10 weeks. Parents work together to raise the young.

These birds spend most of their time hidden while they forage for food. They are omnivores eating crabs, insects, worms, frogs, fish, eggs, and plant matter. They especially like fiddler crabs, which are abundant in the same shallow marshes. Sight is their main method of finding prey. They grab food off the surface of the mud or make slight digs with their beaks. Like owls they ingest prey whole and regurgitate indigestible materials later. In the winter they exist on seeds and plant material.

Clapper rails swim well and use their strong legs to run. If one is threatened its distinctive call will set up an alarm system throughout the marsh warning others of danger. Their call is sometimes referred to as a clattering cackle. For small birds they are very loud!

Because they are so seldom seen, it is difficult to estimate their populations. Pollution and development of wetlands is destroying much of their habitat. They are listed as game birds but hunters do not appear to be a large threat to them. They have served as an indicator species to measure the health and cleanliness of estuaries and marshes.

AMARYLLIS SALE

Large High Quality Bulbs Delivered in Time for the Holidays

Single Amaryllis Gift Boxes - *PERFECT FOR HOLIDAY GIFT-GIVING* - \$20/each

Each box contains one 30/32 cm bulb, a green plastic pot, lid, saucer, potting medium & instructions.



White/Red Striped



White



Red

Individual Bulbs - (Harvest bulb size 30-32 cm) - \$15/each



Flamenco Queen

Big blooms are bright white, feathered & streaked vivid cherry-red.



Floris Hecker

Exquisitely formed beauty is rich velvety-red.



Magic Green

Trumpet shaped, chartreuse-ivory w/scarlet striations & luminous green throat.



Samba

Lipstick red with a bright white star, ruffled white petal edges.



Sparatcus

Large red flowers w/snow-white stars & lime-green throats.



Doublet

Narrow white petals w/red streaks, stripes, speckles & striations.

Order Form 2022

Name & Address: _____
Phone & Email: _____

Variety

Quantity

Variety

Quantity

Send orders with checks (made out to TAG) to:

The Avid Gardeners, 5 Hermit Crab Ct., HHI 29926

Questions: Call Louise Gorny 843-681-5187

Email: gorny.louise@gmail.com

Order By: October 24

Delivery By: November 11

Pick Up: 26 Hickory Forest Dr. (Pat Rapp)

Horticulture.....Ann Clayton

"Seasons of Mist and Mellow fruitfulness" so begins the poem "to Autumn" by John Keats. However, living in the South doesn't quite conjure up that image just yet. Contemplating on what would be an inspiring article for me to write, I am surprised to find that September seems like a bit of a slow month for gardening. Don't get me wrong, there's plenty of clean up as we all know, but not a lot to make you rush out there after breakfast and dig in !! Especially when the heat and humidity hits you head on !!!! Last official day of Summer is September 23rd. Nevertheless, we can begin to tidy up our gardens and bring into the home the fruits of our labors to be enjoyed through the Winter months. Clean up dead and fallen leaves so as not to harbor disease and insects. Some of the perennials are now looking a little ragged.

Cannas have been magnificent this year, they are still flowering, they grow new plants frequently. Fall is a good time to divide them with a strong garden fork, lift the clump from the ground, break apart thick roots and re-plant 4" - 5" deep, space about 1 foot apart in fertile well-drained soil. Try "Bengal Tiger" green-striped leaves or "Tropicana" dazzling with red and green striped leaves. They should stay in the same place for around 3 years.



Later in September is time to cut back or divide more of your perennials and fill in with some of the new Fall plantings arriving in the Nurseries. Ginger lillies are a wonderful large plant and they are blooming all around my yard. Try something different: colchicums or fall crocuses. Cyclamen is a wonderful blooming bulb. Order early whilst supplies are fresh. Take care: newly planted bulbs will have a tendency to rot without proper drainage. Asters are a delight; mix them with your remaining Rudbeckia, because both of these plants originate from the same area, the American prairies, they get on famously together. Cones of the Rudbeckia make excellent food for the birds.



Perennials should be mulched and the mulch should be renewed as the layer decomposes. Do not mulch over or against the crowns. Remove all faded flower blooms. You can thin out and divide later in the month. This allows and promotes air circulation, and larger flowers. Deadhead and prune roses to encourage new growth as cooler weather approaches. Granular rose food or fish emulsion. The last rose of Summer has been as late as December for me. Clean up diseased rose leaves. Rose aphids and spider mites could still be active - so spray leaves with a water wand on a weekly basis preferably in the morning so that the water doesn't sit too long on the leaves.

Continued on following page.....

Horticulture continued

Fall is a great time to plant shrubs. Design an area where a specimen shrub can become a focal point, one large enough to dominate the area. Spend a pleasant afternoon perusing the nurseries or catalogues so that when the weather turns a little cooler you know exactly which shrub you want. Variety is overwhelming and a great deal of shrubs have beautiful flowers growing amid the leaves. Root systems establish well in the Fall, ready for next year's growing season.

NOTE : Sasanqua camellias have their buds set for next year already so be careful if you need to trim a branch or two !!!

Finally, Chrysanthemums, I don't really have to mention these staples of Fall except they are so nostalgic and their perfume ?? (smell) is reminiscent of wonderful autumns gone by, nature's abundance and goodness to us all.

HAPPY GARDENING AND A WONDERFUL PEACEFUL FALL



As 'Avid Gardeners', all of us have a garden, some big, some small. Now, I don't know about you, but my garden is always too small to house all the plants I might like to grow, regardless of its actual size.

At the moment I am trying to become more knowledgeable about Garden Design, and I find some of the expert advice given to owners of smaller gardens to be particularly insightful and helpful. So I thought I would share some of the more creative ideas and design principles I have come across.

After all, when it comes to creating a beautiful garden, size doesn't matter. You can make big dreams happen in a small space, with the right plant choices, artful design and just a little originality. Here are ten expert ideas on how you can transform a smallish backyard, a mini-garden, or a strip of side yard into an expansive-feeling area that reflects your personality. Enjoy ...

Visit the avid gardeners website theavidgardeners.org

Select "Gardening Tips" tab.

Jacqueline Emery
Publicity Chair



MEMBERS CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Ann Clayton.....25

Peg McCann.....5

Jacqueline Emery.....1

Nina McGlade.....2

Claudia Hawn.....8

Nancy Renner.....8

Jane Johnson.....25

Kate Stryker.....1

Happy belated birthday:

Dodi Eschenbach.....June 14

Barbara Holmes.....Aug 21

Karen Malecha.....June 21

Sharon Jaunsem.....Aug 31

Melissa Olsen.....June 21

Marilyn Lorenz.....Aug 4

Mary Ellen Phillips.....June 20

George Westerfield.....Aug 26

Joyce Prange.....June 20

Sally Price.....June 6

Rosemary Kratz.....July 10

Mary Anne Sweet.....July 20

If you would like to have your birthdate listed in TAG Talk, please send us the date.

Native Plant Sale

Saturday, September 24th from 10 am to 1 pm

The Coastal Discovery Museum will have a variety of native plants to cover diverse landscaping needs, from vines to blooming bushes to butterfly friendly landscaping.

Native plants are adapted to the local environment and require little or no care at all. Native plants are used by local wildlife, birds, and attract pollinators. Many butterfly host-plants will be available.

1 gal. plants \$9.00 / 3 gal \$16. The sale will accept cash and checks only.

There will be limited supplies.



ON THE WEB

www.theavidgardeners.org

- ♦ **Amaryllis Care**— instructions for planting
- ♦ **Gardening Tips**—Resource article for garden design
- ♦ **Gallery**—See other members' photos of amaryllis in their gardens or homes.

Visit the website to see what's new. Click on the tabs listed above.

Deadline for submitting articles for this newsletter is the second Sunday of the month.

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843-415-6809



Carol Sevelowitz
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843-715-2248

**“To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.”
Audrey Hepburn**