



President's Message.....Carol Sevelowitz

A quick look at the calendar tells me I'd better start taking my vitamins...we're in for a very busy few months!

This month will bring us on a walking tour of The Three Sisters Organic Farm in Bluffton, where we'll learn some of the secrets of dealing with South Carolina's heritage crop...indigo. A demonstration of dying with it will reward us with a lovely, indigo-dyed silk scarf which we'll raffle off at our November meeting. As a side note, if you find yourself wanting to know more about the history of indigo in SC, I recommend reading *The Indigo Girl*, by Natasha Boyd. Although it's historical fiction, it provides an interesting background to how indigo became an iconic southern crop.

Then, on October 27, we will once again participate in the POA's Halloween Pet Parade by selling cookies and homemade dog treats. Last year was a hoot and we had great fun watching all those adorable dogs in their very creative pet costumes! (*see details inside these pages*). Plus, it provided us with a very successful fund raiser to boot!

In November, our guest speaker, Debbi Albanese, will discuss dealing with the challenges to gardening with native plants, including issues like deer resistance, in ways that will contribute to the health of our planet.

Then, in December, we'll once again be decorating our neighborhood signs for the holidays. And speaking of decorating...the year-end highlight will be our first (hopefully annual) Holiday Tour of Homes. Some of our members have graciously offered to open their exquisitely decorated homes to the public! Info on tickets and flyers is inside these pages and has been emailed to you as well. Invite your friends and family to join you in gathering ideas for making your own homes holiday ready.

Hoping you'll all be able to participate in and enjoy all these events...better eat your Wheaties!!



October Meeting Friday, 10/21 Tour to begin 10am

The Secrets of Indigo

Field Trip to Three Sisters Organic Farm in Bluffton to learn about growing and dying with indigo. The tour and demonstration will last about an hour and there will be time for Q&A.

Reminder: This is a working farm, not handicap accessible and has bumpy farm paths and no restroom. Wear sturdy, closed toe shoes. We will be carpooling; contact Barb Holmes ASAP to let her know if you will attend and if you need a carpool ride. Carpools will depart the Plantation House by 9:00am. Bring a folding chair if you wish to sit for the demonstration.

Halloween Pet Parade

Thursday, 10/27

5:00—6:00pm

Plantation House

TAG will again participate in this fun POA event this year. Please plan to make either a batch of cookies or dog treats and drop them off at the Plantation House between 3:30 and 4:30pm on Thursday, 10/27. Watch your email for a dog treat recipe or two. If you are able to help out on the day of the event, or have questions, please notify Liz Van Alstyne, elizzy1106@aol.com or 315-342-1246, or Carol Sevelowitz, sevelcss@gmail.com or 843-715-2248.



Mulching is a good idea taught to us by Nature itself. In a natural forest, leaves and pine straw cover the ground in a thick mat. This natural "mulch" prevents weeds competing with the trees for nutrients, regulates the soil temperature, conserves water by cutting down on evaporation, and prevents the surface soil from washing away. Natural mulch also returns nutrients to the soil as it decomposes. When we as gardeners apply mulch to attain these same benefits, the results are conclusive. Tests have shown that mulched flowers can produce up to three times as many blooms as unmulched plants. Mulching can also prevent bulbs from heaving from the ground in the winter and plants from drying in the heat of the Summer. Mulched plants perform better and require less care from us. It not only keeps the ground warmer than normal, but causes the soil to freeze and thaw more slowly. Some of the most common mulches are bark chips, pine straw, grass clippings, stones, peat moss and even coffee grounds. Whichever you choose, replace every spring and fall, especially around roses, fruit trees and bushes.

It is very important not to allow the mulch to touch or crowd the trunk or lower stems of plants, shrubs and trees, keep an inch or two away. Crowded trunks will stay moist, becoming more susceptible to insects, diseases and rot. Don't forget to mulch around older trees and replenish with fresh mulch if needed. Replace any mulch which has been around all Summer, it may contain overwintering insects. Rake newly fallen leaves away from your plants - they do not make a good mulch.

As I mentioned in our last TAG Talk, *NOW* is a great time to plant shrubs and bushes. Few shrubs can rival the full form and unique flowers that Big-leaf Hydrangeas can bring to the garden. They feature glossy, light green oval leaves and simple clusters of single-colored flowers in shades of purple, red, blue or white. The flower clusters are available in 2 different forms : The dense "mop-headed" hortensia, and the flatter, looser "lacecap" types. Hortensia blooms look like pom-poms, offered in cobalt blue and light green foliage. It blooms throughout Summer, with its dry foliage heads remaining attractive into early Winter. Lacecaps are flat, open flower heads and include the variety 'Bluebird'. These types of Hydrangea display blue or pink flower heads into late Summer 'Bluebird's light green foliage turn to deep red in autumn.



Hydrangeas are well suited to most areas in the garden as they tolerate both sun and partial shade. They fit well in shrub borders or as single specimen plants. Big leaf hydrangeas thrive when protected by a wall to shelter them from Winter weather. Hydrangeas thrive wherever magnolias and Burford hollies grow. Healthy moist rich soil is essential for this plant to grow large, lush blooms. Mulch well with shredded pine bark to prepare for Winter. In late summer, after blooming, prune stems that bore flowers to just above nearest outward facing bud. Leave new shoots uncut.

HAPPY GARDENING !!!!!

HAPPY HALLOWEEN !!!!!

Irises for the Southern Garden

Jackie Emery

My husband and I love irises and I used to grow 3 different Siberian Iris varieties, the Deep Blue 'Caesar's Brother', yellow and white 'Butter and Sugar' and 'White Swirl' quite successfully in my home in Massachusetts, so I was surprised, and dismayed, to find that I did not have success with them here in the Low Country. My Siberian irises, although healthy, would refuse to bloom.



My husband is partial to the larger Bearded Irises, so I planted some of those as well. The result was less than stellar here too. The Large Bearded ('Immortality') bloomed, but the stems were stunted, being about a foot tall, which made the Iris look wildly top-heavy, and unattractive. In addition by the time it bloomed the weather had warmed to such a degree that the blossoms only lasted 2 days. Not a good return on all the effort I put into them! **What went wrong?**

To discover the answer and find out more about Irises, please go to our website at www.theavidgardeners.org

Reminder:

The deadline for placing your Amaryllis order is Monday, October 24.

Contact Louise Gorny

843-681-5187

—or—

Pat Rapp

843-342-7474

****great holiday gifts !!**

The Avid Gardeners 2022

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)

Woodstorks

In honor of Halloween I thought it appropriate to look at a scary looking bird, the Wood Stork. Wood Storks are very large birds that occupy southern swamps. They are mainly found south of here in Florida and coastal Georgia but during breeding season they migrate as far north as the Virginia border.

They stand about three feet tall and weigh five to seven pounds. Their feathers are white except for black flight feathers and a tail. They have very long and large beaks. Its head is featherless. The scale-like covering makes them look almost reptilian. In flight they look like vultures or raptors.

They feed in groups. Wood Storks are predators who plunge their large bills into the water to catch prey. When a beak touches a submerged food source, it snaps shut. They eat mostly fish including mullet and minnows but they can also feast on crustaceans, frogs, rodents, turtles, insects and some plants. Though large and somewhat ugly, they are not aggressive unless they are threatened.



They nest mostly in Florida and may be well above the water high in mangroves or cedar. Their nests form colonies, often with egrets and herons. They may place twenty-five nests in one tree. The males procure the nesting materials and the females build. Their nests are mainly composed of sticks. They lay 3-4 eggs which incubate for about a month. After hatching, one parent usually guards the nest for the first month while the other secures food. Raccoons are a major threat to juvenile Wood Storks. They begin short flights at two months but continue to live in the nest until they are three months.

Though Wood Storks were classified as endangered in the US in 1984, they were recently downgraded to least concern. Their populations are rebounding from a steep decline that was mainly due to habitat loss and manmade changes to water flow patterns in south Florida. Because of this some have shifted and begun to breed further north. At one time there were 150,000 of them in the US but today they number about 30,000 in the US (up from a low of 15,000) with 250,000 worldwide, mainly living in South America.



TAG presents

A Holiday Home Tour

Thursday, 12/8, 3-7pm



Tickets (in the form of wristbands) and flyers for the “Holiday Home Tour” fundraiser will become available to you this Friday prior to the trip to Three Sisters Farm. They will be distributed to those who are attending the trip. Each member will be responsible to sell three (3) tickets: one (1) for yourself and two (2) additional for you to sell, for a total of \$60.00. We would appreciate it if you would pay for all of them at the time of receipt but, if that is not possible, please purchase yours by check made out to TAG and sell the others. Either way the total will be \$60.00. Should you require more than three tickets, additional supplies will be available from the POA office during normal business hours

The Fundraising Committee will also be available at the Plantation house at specified dates and times (which will be announced by email blast next week) for you to pick up your three wristbands and flyers.



October birthday wishes to

Patti Peacock

and

Lynn Tax



Upcoming in November.....

Gardening for Wildlife

Biologist Debbi Albanese, will discuss dealing with the challenges to gardening with native plants, focusing on ecology and conservation. She will include benefits which include deer resistant native plants and their contribution to the health of our planet.

Nov 18, 2022

9:30am

Spring Lake Pavilion

*If you met the witch twins,
what would you ask them?*



Which Witch is Which??

HAPPY HALLOWEEN EVERYONE !!!

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