



The Gabby Gardener

Garden Club of DeLand

January 2022 Volume 28, Issue 5

Presidents Corner



It was my lucky day when I first walked through the Clubhouse door. Since then I have learned new skills, enjoyed relevant programs, embraced new ideas, made lasting friends and have had lots of fun in creating great memories. GCD Circles are strong with education, projects, field trips and just time to be with friends.

I encourage each and everyone of you to continue your support of the Garden Club of DeLand through renewing your membership. It's not just about what you can do now, but also showing appreciation for the knowledge and friendships you have gained over the years.

Happy New Year, Marshall

Circle Around:

December found all the circles celebrating the holidays!

GCD General Meeting

Back by popular demand Kaydie McCormick will speak on Gardening for Wildlife with Native Plants. Please tune into the next **General Meeting on Thursday, January 6th, 6:15pm** log in/6:30pm meeting. Member participation is the key to getting excellent speakers and helping them feel appreciated for sharing their valuable time with us.

January 1st is National Play Outside Day! Make it a good one!



Welcome New Members

- Lynn Andersen - Milkweed
- Philip Dollar- Milkweed
- Carol Gavaletz - Milkweed
- Carly Gibran - Milkweed
- Joy Kingsley - Milkweed
- Beth Milliken - Milkweed
- John Nablo - Milkweed
- Carmen Visconti - Milkweed

SAVE THE DATE

24th Annual Plant Faire

Saturday, March 19th
8 am - 12 pm

Volusia County Master Gardener Volunteer Program
3100 E. New York Ave., DeLand FL 32724

Contact Cyndi or Brittany @ (386) 822-5778
Sales are cash or check only

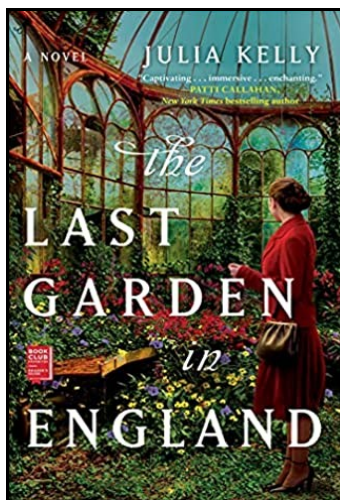


Do you have a passion about flowers, butterflies, horticulture and/or gardening?

The *Gabby Gardener* would love to hear from you.

Please contact Gail at gaillafayette@hotmail.com

Announcing GCD Book Club



The first book is ***The Last Garden in England*** by Julia Kelly.

The third Thursday in February will be the starting date but more details will follow after the holidays.

Cindy Davenport & Sara Zollinger

Christmas Parade Success

A big "Thank You" to Cecelia Earl for her design, dedication, energy, and love she and members put into the 2021 GCD Christmas float.



Enjoyed by garden club members and thousands of spectators!



A evening of friendship and fun for all.



Vegetable Gardening in Central Florida

For the fall/winter gardening season you need to include root vegetables. Nearly all only grow in the cooler season – the exception is sweet potatoes which in Florida is a summer crop. My favorite root vegetables to grow now are radishes, carrots, turnips and rutabaga. There are other root crops like beets and white potatoes, but one I do not like and the other takes up too much room. One of the first rules of vegetable gardening- only grow that which you like to eat.

Carrots are an easy vegetable to grow in Florida. The best varieties to plant are Chantenay Royal, Nantes Half Long, and Imperator 58. [1] The secrets to growing carrots is full sun, lots of water, and do not transplant - direct sow into your garden soil. I have planted Nantes Half Long for a couple of years and am pleased with the harvest each time.

Turnips are a great root vegetable to use in place of or addition to potatoes in stews, also many people like to use the turnip leaves also called turnip greens in their cooking. For both roots and tops, 'Purple Top White Globe' is a popular variety. Some varieties such as 'Shogoin' don't form large tuberous roots, so they are better suited if you are only after the greens. [2]

Rutabagas are also called Swedes and usually only the rutabaga root is eaten, not the leaves although they are edible. The varieties that do best in Florida are 'American Purple Top,' 'Macomber,' 'Purple Top Yellow,' 'Long Island Improved,' 'Sweet Russian,' 'Laurential,' and 'Zwaan's Neckless Purple Top.[3]

Radishes are a fun little crop to grow and they have a short time from planting to harvest so multiple harvests can be done in the fall growing season. Cherry Bell is the best variety but I love trying out different and unusual radishes.

By **Dorothy Caldwell**

[1] <https://www.flgardening.com/growing-carrots-in-florida/>

[2] <https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/turnips.html>

[3] <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/MV127>

Florida Native Gardening

Conversations on Florida native asters can be confusing. It is both a type of flower and the name of a family of plants. The family Asteraceae or the family Compositae are commonly referred to as the aster, daisy, composite, or sunflower family which has 140 Genus or groupings of flowers with an amazing variety. But I want to focus on just a few of the native wildflowers that are commonly called "asters".



Maybe the most commonly known aster is **Stokes' aster** (*Stokesia laevis*). It has beautiful blue/lavender/purple flowers. Flowers typically bloom in spring and summer, but may bloom throughout the year, attracting a variety of bees, wasps and butterflies. [1]

The next aster is a tiny flowered plant called **rice button aster** (*Symphotrichum dumosum*), also called bushy aster, is a profuse bloomer with small flowers that attract a plethora of pollinators including butterflies and native bees.[2] rice button aster are a host plant for the pearl crescent butterfly [3]



The last Aster I want to mention is the **climbing aster** (*Symphotrichum carolinianum*). It is a beautiful vine-like shrub that produces many fragrant daisy-like lavender to pinkish blooms. As a late fall- and winter-flowering species, it helps extend the options for nectar and pollen available to pollinators. It is one of the few wildflowers that will bloom in December. Flowers draw a myriad of native bees, including polyester, sweat, cuckoo, leafcutter, mining, bumble and chimney bees. Butterflies and moths also love them: monarchs, pearl crescents, skippers, fritillaries, common buckeyes, gray hairstreaks, swallowtails and sulphurs have been known to frequent the flowers for nectar.[4]

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[1] <https://www.flawildflowers.org/flower-friday-stokesia-laevis/>

[2] <https://www.flawildflowers.org/?s=Asters>

[3] <https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/wildflowers/flowers/bushy-aster/>

[4] <https://www.flawildflowers.org/flower-friday-symphotrichum-carolinianum/>

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Gardens are always a work in progress.



The Artisan Alley Garden is a welcoming part of the vibrant downtown scene with the Alley's weekly farmer's market and jazz night. Previously asphalt and an abandoned retail

nursery, the garden has transformed into a lovely green space. Barb and Jeff Shepherd with the help of horticulture expert Erin Miceli have become the stewards of the garden. They are awarded Garden of the Month for January 2022 by the Garden Club of DeLand.

Ongoing community support from Artisan Alley shop owners, employees and vendors from the farmer's market have generously contributed to the plant collection throughout the years. Shop owners have also added their own plantings to enhance the setting.

In December 2018 Miceli was hired as the gardener/horticulture consultant. "This project attracted me by providing an opportunity to beautify an existing green space in downtown DeLand. Urban horticulture is one of my passions. The tenacity of a flower growing persistently through a crack in the pavement is a thing of beauty. Over the past three years we have been adding permaculture elements as

well as planting to attract pollinators. In 2019 we received certification as a Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary from the Garden Club of DeLand."

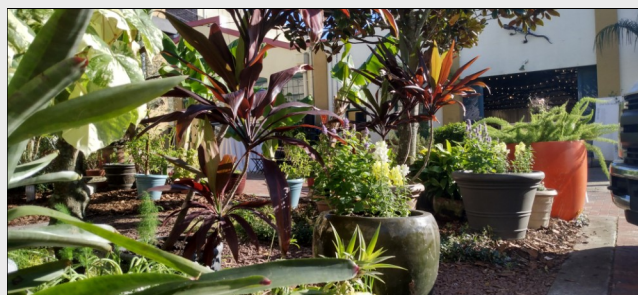
Jeff Shepherd shares, "We began our interest in gardening as a social awareness of our impact on the earth. After reading the book titled No Work Gardening by Ruth Stout we started composting and that's when I first got my hands dirty with gardening and growing edibles in the garden."

Erin continues, "We try to demonstrate how edibles can be included in a small space with fig, pineapples, tomatoes, blueberries, papayas and hot peppers grown in the ground or in containers. Herbs vary by the season including sage, chives, oregano, parsley, mint, tarragon, basil and fennel. We are situated in a bit of a microclimate, due to the geography of the garden. This allows us to experiment with zone-pushing a few things that are typically grown further south."

"We have had broccoli, eggplant, and other edibles bought from the farmer's market. We love supporting the market and demonstrating to our attendees what can be grown in a small space. We have thought about labeling our plants to help answer the many questions we receive. That may be a future project," shares Barb.

"Gardens are always a work in progress. Come for a visit and see the garden evolution happening at Artisan Alley," invitation by Erin Miceli.

Written and submitted by Cheryl Floyd for the Garden Club of DeLand, affiliated with the National Garden Clubs, Inc.



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