



Gulf Herb Society Coast Newsletter

March
2021

Mailing Only: 109 Grand Blvd • Mobile, AL 36607 • www.gulfcoastherbsociety.org

Rosemary for Remembrance DATES

Meetings are done remotely via Zoom until further notice. We send out a meeting link every month.

- **March 18-20.** Mobile Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Sale
- **March 23, 5:30pm.** GCHS Zoom Meeting
- **April 27, 5:30pm.** GCHS Zoom Meeting
- **May 25, 5:30pm.** GCHS Zoom Meeting

See calendar page at the end of the newsletter for complete details.

Thymely NOTES

[Click Here to find us on Facebook!](#) Read herb tips, recipes, and see pictures from our latest events.

- Please **volunteer** in the herb garden whenever you can. Contact Pat Ivie peivie@comcast.net, 334-315-5874 for info.

Message from the PRESIDENT

Hello Everyone!

We had a wonderful work day in the Herb Garden. After a foggy start, the sun came out and warmed everyone with sunshine. Many, many thanks to the thirteen members that were present and put in a full morning of work. We added soil to the beds and weeded. We replaced the rosemary in the historical bed and added annual herbs to the culinary bed.



We planted borage in the spiritual bed, yarrow and beard's tongue in the medicinal bed, and bachelor's button in the household bed. The triangle beds on the perimeter were planted with salvia, society garlic, bee balm and Coreopsis (tickseed). We added different gingers behind the gazebo, a thornless blackberry and moon vine on the south perimeter wall and a honeysuckle vine on the trellis by the fragrance bed.

Final touch was planting some sunflower seeds in the south perimeter bed. Our goal was to add color and fullness to the Herb Garden and I think we did a tremendous job. I can't wait to see everything growing in a few weeks!

-Annie Daniels

Did You KNOW

Strawberry Mint anniesannuals.com

An unusual mint with a fragrance resembling strawberry candy, but with an earthy undertone that is not the least bit minty.



Strawberry Mint

It's perfect for sprinkling over fruit salads, ice creams or just add hot water for a unique and delicate tea with a lingering sweet strawberry aftertaste. Refreshing! Relative short, it grows to a little over 1' high and spreads as far as you let it. The deeply textured dark green leaves form a dense, weed-suppressing mat that should be harvested regularly for best form. Lilac flowers emerge in Summer attracting loads of bees and butterflies. Generally grown in a container to keep it from spreading - when choosing a pot prioritize width over depth and repot every year or two for best vigor.

Pesto Perpetuo Basil luv2garden.com

Pesto Perpetuo is non-flowering and does not produce seed so must be started from cuttings or small purchased plants. The lack of flowers allows more energy to go into the production of foliage which in the case of basil is what you are actually aiming for. It is a patented plant, the patent holder, Sunny Border Nurseries of Connecticut thrives on the fact that it is non flowering as well.

Tricolor variegation makes awesome eye candy for any landscape or garden. Plants grow in a columnar fashion, straight up, reaching a height of around 2 feet tall. With adequate light this basil will fare well indoors over the winter. Hardy outdoors only in zones 9-11.

In the culinary realm fans of traditional Mediterranean / Italian style pesto may be disappointed as the flavor is somewhat Lemony and a tad minty, not conducive to traditional pesto. Herb pesto's, Melded with other herbs and spices or even a mint sauce for lamb works well.

Basic Care of Basil

Water – Basil requires ample and persistent water. Mulch to retain moisture in warm weather is advisable.

Delicate flowers on Basil are attractive however they are a sign your plant is going to seed and production will decline at this point. If you are not looking to harvest seeds, you should pinch off any flower stems as they appear.

Temperature – Basil thrives in warm temperatures and heat. It will turn black and die off in temperatures approaching the mid 30s F. Temperatures should be at the very least in the 70s around the clock.

Optimal Growth Temperature 65 to 85°F

Germination Temperature 70 to 75°F

Pests and Disease

Basil has some enemies, Beetles, particularly Japanese Beetles, love Basil as much as people do and have been known to completely skeletonize whole plants. Aphids are also a problem at times. Most varieties are also subject to various plant diseases such as black spot, gray mold and fusarium wilt.

10 Essential Insects You Need in the Garden **gardenista.com**

Start tolerating horseflies. Why? Your garden is a democracy of insects, where even filthy flies have a purpose. Every garden needs a tree or a pond, even if that means one sizable container, filled either with soil or water. A tree or a pond attracts insects and with them, a world of predators. Even if you abhor mosquitoes and ants, you'll want to attract other members of the buzzing, invertebrate world.

Here, in appreciation of insects, are 10 essential bugs (some of which may surprise you) to help the garden flourish.

Bluebottles and Horseflies – Standing under a tree (which I find myself doing increasingly) is educational. Bluebottles, whose Latin name *Calliphora vomitoria* is self-explanatory, land on fruit tree leaves and clean them up. Down goes the proboscis and when the fly moves on, sickly-looking leaves that have had too much attention from aphids look better for their ministrations. Their catholic eating habits help food waste to break down and they pollinate plants too.

Predators of bluebottles, horseflies, and *Musca domestica*, the common housefly, need to be kept in business: They include frogs and toads, birds and bats, and spiders.

Beetles – The under-appreciation of beetles is symbolic of our relationship with insects. Beetles are the largest insect group, while invertebrates make up 95 percent of all creatures. Apart from the pretty ones, like ladybirds, beetles are generally treated

with distrust and misunderstanding, when they come indoors. The best thing to do is gently remove them.

Predators: Badgers, foxes, reptiles, frogs, bats, rats, some birds—such as swifts.

Ladybugs are toxic to birds, as advertised by their bright colors. However, they are crucial members of the garden food chain because of their predilection for eating aphids. These emerge early in spring, which is one good reason for growing nettles, as the nettle aphid is also early, and will give ladybugs something to eat.

Green Flies and Black Flies – Budding populations of aphids can be wiped out by squashing them between thumb and fingers. Some aphid damage is not a disaster for a plant, although their sap attracts ants as well as mildew. When you spot a growing number on one plant, check for ladybugs, who may be getting to work. It's easy to transport ladybugs to plants that are in need.

Predators: Aphids are an important food source for beetles, earwigs, wasps, and birds feeding their young.

Butterflies and Moths – Landing on the stamens of flowers with pollen-brushed wings, butterflies and moths are most often seen drinking nectar. They also sip on decaying fruit, not so different in this way from less glamorous creatures such as flies and wasps. Many butterflies and moths rely on nettles and thistles as breeding grounds, so allow some weeds to grow, near a compost heap or behind a shed.

The Caterpillar-Butterfly Dichotomy – Romantic ideas about butterflies are connected to the fluttering ones, newly emerged from their cocoon. For gardeners, the fun is gone when egg-laying starts a week later, with a total withdrawal of affection for the butterfly's offspring. It's amazingly short-sighted; like the food chain and the whole living planet, you don't get one without the other.

Predators of moths and butterflies: Birds, spiders, hornets, and moths. Predators of caterpillars: Birds, beetles, wasps, spiders, toads, snakes.

Hoverflies and Lacewings – Hoverflies and lacewings, like ladybugs, are most appreciated as predators, rather than as a food source themselves. A hoverfly's looks confuse people (as well as predators), seeming to combine horsefly-style aviator eyes with wasp-like colors. But a closer look reveals a benign pollinator that hovers around umbels such as Queen Anne's lace, laying eggs near aphid colonies.

Lacewings are wonderfully transparent, with 1930s-costume wings enveloping slender green bodies and beady metallic eyes. Their larvae, like those of hoverflies and ladybugs, are prolific aphid eaters. Lacewing larvae also eat caterpillars.

Wasps and Bees – Wasps help with the breaking down of organic matter. Without their help food that is not harvested would take longer to decompose, putting more pressure on fungus and bacteria. Annoying as it is when you find that a wasp has dug a hole in some perfectly ripe fruit, they are doing what they were designed to do and will not attack fruit that isn't ready to be picked.

Centipedes and Woodlice – Like the peach inhabitants in Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach*, centipedes, earthworms and other invertebrates are a welcome sight. Under the lid of a compost heap, they are active when the pile is at mid-temperature, before and after the main business of decomposition. Aided by fungus and bacteria, invertebrates are crucial in the process of breaking material down, in or out of a heap.

Predators: The enemy within. Toads and grass snakes in compost heaps are happy to eat either, while the carnivorous centipede may be about to eat one of the wood lice.

Myrtle's MUSINGS

- **GCHS March Zoom Meeting.** [Click Here!](#) Meeting ID: 826 3524 9512. Passcode: 623632

- **Market in the Park- Spring.** Cathedral Square. 300 Conti St. April 24 to July 17. Saturdays: 7:30am to noon. Buy locally-grown, locally-produced and homemade items at Market in the Park!
- **Gulf Coast Herb Society Dues.** Dues are \$15.00 for the remainder of the administrative year.
- **Old Dauphin Way Plant Swap.** The event will take place April 10th at Central Presbyterian church parking lot. It is free and we just trade plants for plants. Hours are 10am-12pm and it is based on an honor system. In the past we averaged about 65 people and 500 plantings. Nobody goes home empty handed. Added bonus this year, *Felder Rushing* will be presenting his new book of which we are mentioned in a chapter.
-Joan Hoffman

• GCHS March 2021 Work Day!



“DILL”-ICIOUS Cherry Tomato & Garlic Pasta ~ eatingwell.com

Servings: 4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 ounces whole-wheat penne pasta • 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil • 6 cloves garlic, peeled • 2 cups cherry tomatoes • 1 medium yellow squash, halved and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sliced 1/4 inch thick • 1teaspoon salt • 1 cup chopped fresh basil • 1 cup pearl-size or mini mozzarella balls (about 4 ounces) • 1 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add pasta & cook according to package directions. Reserve 1/4 cup cooking water, drain the pasta & cover to keep warm. 2. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic, reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring, until it begins to soften & turn light golden, about 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, squash & salt; cook, stirring occasionally, until the squash softens and the tomatoes begin to burst, 4 to 5 minutes. Lightly mash the garlic with the back of a spoon. Remove from heat. 3. Add the pasta & reserved cooking water to the pan along with basil & mozzarella; toss to combine. Serve topped with Parmesan.
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GCHS Officers 2020 - 2021

President ~ Annie Daniels • President-Elect ~ Beth Poates • Recording Secretary ~ Martha Adams
Treasurer ~ Kathy Lovitt • Historian ~ Jennifer Williams • Ways & Means ~ Kathy Lovitt

Parliamentarian ~ Martha Fuller • Weeders & Planters ~ Sybil Burnett & Nita Crandall • Newsletter Editor ~ Qjuana Cooney

GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY Calendar of Activities – 2020 - 2021

March 18th-20th: Plantasia! Mobile Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Sale.

March 23 - 5:30pm: GCHS Zoom Meeting.

April 27 - 5:30pm: GCHS Zoom Meeting.

May 25 - 5:30pm: GCHS Zoom Meeting.

HERB DAY Postponed. Date to be determined.

NOTE: The above listed plans may change, or additional events and meetings may be added, so please check back frequently

MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS Calendar for 2020 – 2021

EVENTS/ SOCIAL (for more info [CLICK HERE!](#))

- ***Plantasia! Spring Plant Sale*** March 18th – 20th – FREE. Thursday 1-4, Fri & Sat 9-1. Location Mobile Botanical Gardens. Masks are required to enter the venue - Thank you. Plant List - An updated list will be uploaded before the In-Person sale.
- ***Georgia Roussos Boxed Lunches*** Take it to go or eat in the Gardens! Pickup at Mobile Botanical Gardens between 11:30 and 12:30 on your selected menu day. Georgia Roussos Catering provides boxed lunches with desserts that may be purchased online and picked up curbside at the Gardens on Wednesdays and Fridays. Take it home or find a quiet spot at the Gardens to eat outside. We also have the Botanical Center set up with tables set far apart. Click [HERE](#) for more info.

CLASSES (for more info [CLICK HERE!](#))

PRESENTATIONS (for more info [CLICK HERE!](#))

GCHS Food Team Duties

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| • Make sure kitchen tables and counters are clean | • Clean spills from floor | • If table and chairs are to be put up we will let you know - if not they can be left out | • Make sure all doors are locked |
| • No food left in fridge | • Take out garbage & place new - bags in cans bags are on to fridge | | • Thermostats must be left as you found them |
| • Pick any trash off floor | | | |

February 23, 2021

Gulf Coast Herb Society February Meeting Minutes

Welcome and approval of January minutes:

- President Annie Daniels welcomed everyone to our February zoom meeting.
- The January minutes were approved.

Important Notes:

- Kathy Lovitt was unable to be at meeting - but sent word there were no changes in the bank account since January.
- Annie advised the bricks had been pressured washed.

March 13th work day:

- We will have a work day on March 13th.
- We discussed which plants would look good and do well in the beds.
- MBG is having a spring plant sale and we will order some plants from them.
- Nicole will bring her plants that are ready to go – basil, dill, parsley, and bachelor's buttons.
- Alicia will bring different varieties of ginger to put in the ginger side of garden. We discussed clearing and cleaning out cast iron plants.
- We will ask MBG about clearing out cast iron plants.
- Larry is getting 2 large bags of soil from Shore Acres to put in beds.

Meeting adjourned.

The Plain Garden Planting Cycle

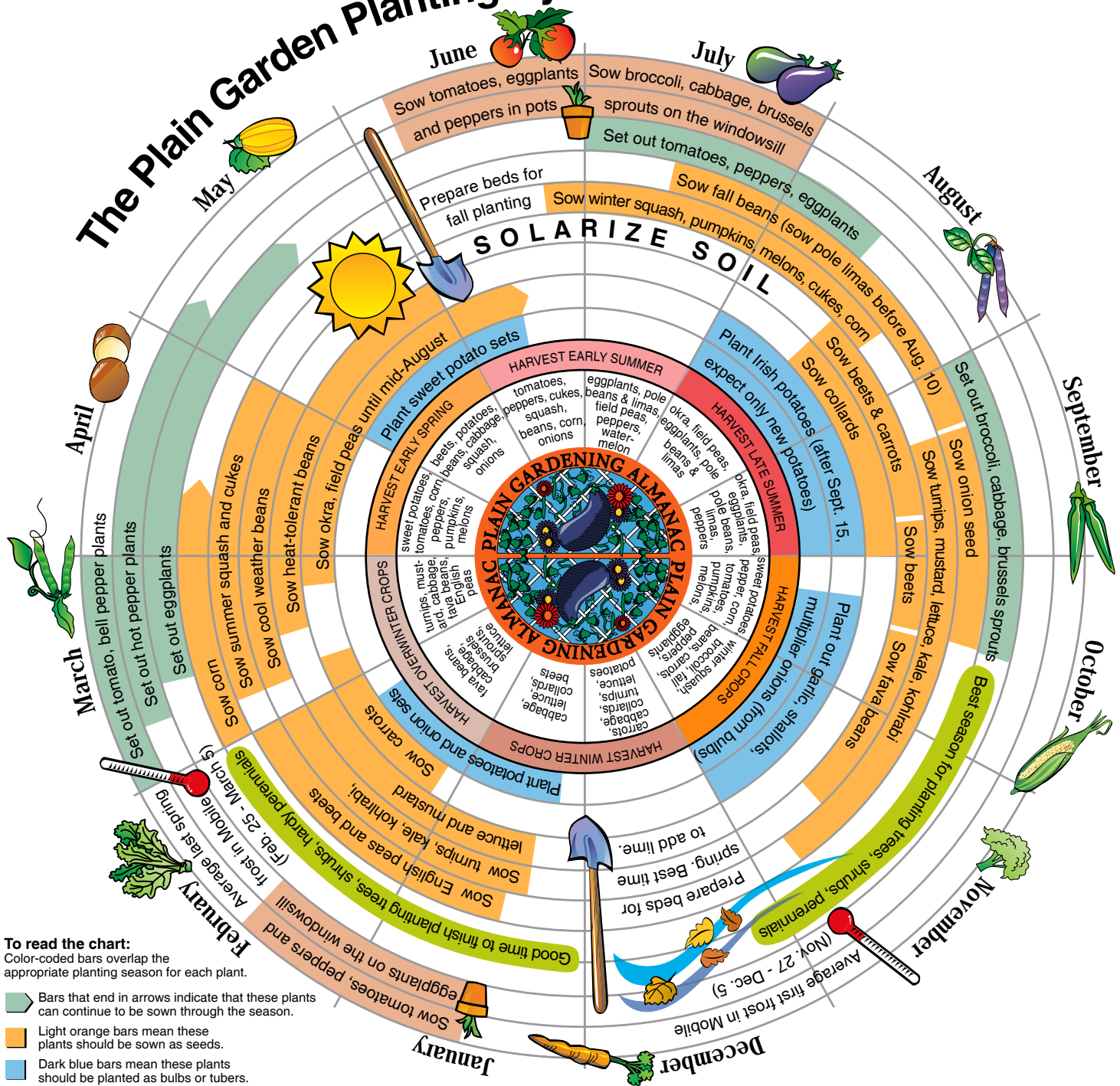
May Sow corn

June Sow tomatoes, eggplants and peppers in pots

July Prepare beds for fall planting

Sow winter crops

SOLAR



Color-coded bars overlap the appropriate planting season for each plant.

- Bars that end in arrows indicate that these plants can continue to be sown through the season.
- Light orange bars mean these plants should be sown as seeds.
- Dark blue bars mean these plants should be planted as bulbs or tubers.
- Green bars mean these plants should be 6-inch-high transplants when put in the garden.
- Brown bars indicate that these plants should be sown in pots in a cold frame or inside the house.