



Gulf Herb Society Coast Newsletter

January
2025

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

Rosemary for Remembrance DATES

- **January 28th.** GCHS Meeting at MBG (Social time begins 5:00pm following with the meeting at 5:45pm).
- **February 25th.** GCHS Meeting at MBG (Social time begins 5:00pm following with the meeting at 5:45pm).
- **March 14-15th.** MBG Plant Sale
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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.
- A membership form is at the end of the Newsletter. Make checks payable to GCHS - \$25.00.

Did You KNOW

HERB OF THE MONTH: Chamomile Not Flowering: Why Won't My Chamomile Bloom
gardeningknowhow.com

Chamomile is an age-old herbal remedy for many human ailments. It is used as a mild sedative, to reduce stress. It is used to treat wounds, acne, coughs, colds, and other illnesses. It is also used in beauty products. Chamomile is not only grown in the garden for its health benefits to humans, but also for how it benefits plants grown nearby. Chamomile is usually the go-to remedy for so many things, but what can you go to when it is a chamomile plant that needs a remedy – for example, how to make a chamomile plant flower if it's not.

When Does Chamomile Bloom?

Chamomile seeds can be scattered over almost any bare soil and within a week or two the seeds will germinate, and new plants will sprout up. In fact, chamomile grows so quickly and easily from seed that one chamomile plant can quickly turn into

hundreds of chamomile plants. Chamomile plants have such a tendency to self-sow that they may even pop up in the cracks of sidewalks. In six to ten weeks after germination, chamomile plants will generally be in full bloom and continue to produce new blooms right



Chamomile

up until frost covers the area. These blooms are harvested throughout the growing season for healing and relaxing teas, or to be used for skin and hair care. Many gardeners will leave a few blooms on the plant to produce new seed for future plants in the garden. However, if your chamomile is not flowering, you won't have much to use in herbal remedies and the plant won't produce seed. While all parts of chamomile plants contain the plant's beneficial essential oil, it is most concentrated in the flowers. These flowers are the main part of the plant used for herbal remedies and beauty care. Chamomile plants are very rarely afflicted by pests or disease; therefore, a chamomile not flowering is usually a sign of a problem with its environment or the care it is receiving.

Reasons Chamomile Won't Flower

As a companion plant, chamomile deters many pests. It also releases its anti-fungal and anti-bacterial properties in the soil, and nearby plants benefit from this. Chamomile tea is not only made to treat humans, but it can also be made to use in the garden as a low dose fertilizer and disease prevention or treatment. Chamomile also attracts pollinators, so it is oftentimes planted in vegetable gardens or near fruit trees to ensure a bountiful harvest. However, chamomile grows and blooms best in full sun. If it is shaded too much by larger plant companions, it may not bloom. When assessing reasons chamomile won't flower, first pay attention to the sunlight it is receiving. It may need to be transplanted to a location where it will receive more sun in order to produce blooms. As stated above, chamomile seeds will take hold wherever they find

a little bit of soil to root in. They are not particular about the soil quality and may pop up in any little crevice where they land. In fact, chamomile plants prefer poor, sandy soils. One of the most harmful things a gardener can do to chamomile plants is caring for them too much. Throughout the growing and blooming season, chamomile plants do not need fertilizers. Heavy fertilization can cause chamomile plants to not bloom. Due to their small habit and continual cheery blooms, chamomile plants are often used in borders. However, the runoff from high nitrogen lawn fertilizers can cause chamomile plants to grow dense and bushy but never produce blooms. With adequate sunlight and very little care, chamomile can be a great addition to the garden. Just don't love it to death.

Slugs in home gardens extension.umn.edu

Quick facts

- Slugs are present from spring to fall, in cool, moist areas with shade.
- Slugs feed on leaves of many plants (especially seedlings), ripening fruits and vegetables, and decaying plant matter.
- Extensive feeding can result in a weak or dying plant.
- There are several nonchemical steps to combat slugs.
- Insecticidal baits are also available if necessary.

How to identify slugs

- Slugs can be described as snails without shells. They are a type of mollusk, related to clams and oysters.
- Slugs are slimy and soft-bodied, without any legs.
- They are generally brownish or grayish.
- Their head contains two pairs of feelers. A larger pair above carries the eyes and a lower pair below is used for smelling.
- They can range in size from 1/4 inch to two inches or longer.

Slugs produce slime and use it to move. A dried slime trail indicates slugs are active in your garden.

Biology of slugs

Slugs are generally active at night when it's cool and damp, although they may be seen during the day in cool, shaded sites. Warm, dry conditions are less favorable to them.

- Slugs typically spend the winter as eggs in protected sites in the soil or under plant debris, mulch, and boards.
- Eggs hatch the following spring and early summer.
- If conditions are favorable, slugs can be active throughout the summer and fall.
- Slugs have a layer of slime to protect their skin

from drying up.

Slugs feed on ornamental plants that grow in partial to full shade and on fruits and vegetables. Plants they are likely to damage include bellflower (Campanula), larkspur (Delphinium), plantain lily (Hosta), daylily (Hemerocallis), Dahlia, lungwort (Pulmonaria), strawberries, basil, beans, cabbage and lettuce.

Ground covers like spotted dead nettle (Lamium maculatum) create an inviting slug habitat by shading soil and keeping it cool and moist.

Generally, slugs do not bother plants that grow in full sun.

Damage caused by Slugs

- Slugs use file-like mouthparts (called radula) to rasp and chew plant tissue.
- Because of their mouthparts, they create irregularly shaped holes in leaves, flowers and fruit.
- Low to moderate feeding can affect the appearance of plants but usually does not impact plant health.
- Severe slug feeding can injure plants, especially seedlings.
- It can also reduce the harvest of fruits and vegetables, especially when plants are young. Older plants are more tolerant of defoliation.

Garden from Slugs

If slugs are a problem in your home garden, it is best to use a variety of steps to reduce their numbers. Wet conditions caused by excessive shade or poorly drained soil can increase slug numbers.

Gardening Tasks by Month for Mobile, AL (February) almanac.com

- Plant asparagus.
- Replenish mulch on strawberries.
- Temperatures can drop to freezing this month; annuals that can take the chill include pansies, viola, and dianthus.
- Start your indoor seed boxes of tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and cauliflower indoors.
- Clean your annual and perennial flower beds. Add compost to the soil and add more mulch to the beds.
- Prune roses to remove damaged canes. Then fertilize and apply mulch for protection.
- Bulbs can still be planted. Water well and apply mulch for protection. Try dahlias!
- Divide and transplant perennial herbs.
- Continue to deadhead flowers, such as pansies.
- Seed herbs for April planting.
- Put down mulch across all garden beds to control for weeds.
- Divide and replant crowded perennials after they emerge.

- Fertilize spring-blooming bulbs.
- If not done in January, fertilize established fruit trees now.
- Prune dormant trees. Avoid pruning citrus until the spring.
- Prune shrubs now; wait to prune spring-flowering shrubs until after they bloom.
- Fertilize established fruit trees. Continue planting dormant fruit trees.
- Plant more vegetables, such as lettuce, cabbage, collards, onion sets, brussels sprouts, broccoli, carrots, spinach, kale, mustard greens, radishes, turnips, peas, and beets.
- Plant Irish potatoes now! Plant 3 inches deep.

Myrtle's MUSINGS

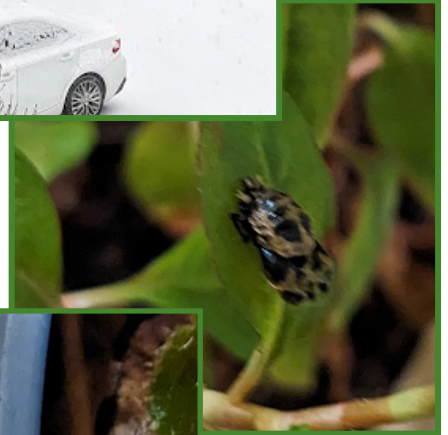
- It seems that every year in our apartment we raise ladybugs over the winter. We find them in the windows and on any plants we bring inside. We raise them from nymfs to adults. But this year we have a new addition, an assassin bug! Hopefully it's keeping the aphids and mealybugs off of the plants we bring inside.

- Qjuana and Richard Cooney



2nd Atlanta snow storm!

Ladybug Nymph on Vietnamese Coriander



Assassin bug on Begonia

“DILL”-ICIOUS Melting Cabbage ~ platingpixels.com

servings 8 slices

Moist and sweet Chamomile Lemon Poppy Seed Breakfast Bread with lemon juice and zest, poppy seeds, almond extract and brewed chamomile tea.

- 2 tea bags Chamomile tea
 - 1/2 cup water
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 cup granulated sugar
 - 2 teaspoons baking powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1 large egg lightly beaten
 - 1/2 cup milk
 - 1/4 cup light olive oil
 - Juice and zest of 1 large lemon
 - 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
 - 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Pour 1/2 cup boiling water into a bowl. Add 2 tea bags and steep until brewed and cooled. Discard bags and set tea aside.
 2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Form a well in center and set aside.
 3. In a medium bowl, combine egg, milk, olive oil, lemon juice, zest, poppy seeds and brewed tea. Pour into flour mixture and stir just until moist and combined.
 4. Pour batter into a greased 8x4x3-inch loaf pan. Bake 50-60 minutes, until top is lightly browned and toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. If serving immediately, cool on a wire rack for 30 minutes before slicing. If refrigerating overnight, cool completely on rack and store covered in fridge; slice before serving.

GCHS Officers 2024 – 2025

President ~ Beth Poates • President-Elect ~ Joy Harrison • Membership ~ Lydia Criswell
 Hospitality ~ Priscilla Gold Darby • Treasurer ~ Annie Daniels • Historian ~ Vacant • Ways & Means ~ Alicia Davis
 • Newsletter Editor ~ Qjuana & Richard Cooney

GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY Calendar of Activities 2025

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MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS Calendar for 2025

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

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

First Friday February: Camellias with Seth Allen. February 7. 10am - 12pm. Join us for the first presentation in our First Friday series of 2025 as MBG Horticulturalist, Seth Allen, shares an introduction to growing camellias, the Queen of winter flowers! Besides touching on care and culture, Seth will share details about the camellias that MBG will offer during Spring Plant Sale. If the weather is cooperative, he will also lead a tour of the K. Sawada Winter Garden here at MBG, which is one of only six Camellia Gardens of Excellence formally recognized by the International Camellia Society in North America. Don't miss this event, which is FREE for MBG members and with the cost of admission for not-yet members.

Introduction to Qi Gong and Tai Chi. Tuesdays & Fridays. 9am - 10am. This course focuses primarily on basic breathing techniques and movement practices to improve concentration, balance, and overall health. We will employ visualization and meditation. Of course, these practices help us to achieve relaxation, reduce stress, and aid the natural healing processes of the body.

MBG Docent Training Class. February 4, 11, 18 & 25; 8:30-12am. Classes and activities will take place at the Mobile Botanical Gardens, in the Larkins Classroom, at Magnolia Hill outdoor classroom and throughout the Gardens. Participants are expected to attend all sessions. A training manual and reference handouts will be provided. Participants will become familiar with the various garden collections, the facilities and regular program offerings through guided walks and activities.

Sketch Club in the Gardens. Every Friday, 2-4pm. The Larkins Classroom OR at Magnolia Hill Studio. Cost: FREE for members. A Casual sketch club experience with oversight from Derek Norman, our MBG Artist in Residence.

Onions and a Japanese Knot Bag in 3 Sessions. February 1, 10am - 11:30am. Onions? Japanese Knot Bag? What? This class is designed as an introduction to natural dying and surface decoration. Artisan and educator extraordinaire, Jan Johnson, will lead students in creating a unique and usable piece of art in the form of a handy bag! Class will take place over 3 Saturday sessions: February 1st, February 8th and February 15th, 2025, at 10:00 am. Class is \$25 for MBG Members and \$35 for not-yet members.

USA Biology Lecture Series: What is in Our Waters? January 30. 6pm - 7pm. A Closer Look at the Pondweed Family in the Southeastern US

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 | | | |



GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member? Y N

Name: _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Email _____ (to receive our Newsletter and updates)

Committees I am interested in: _____ Herb Garden _____ Membership _____ Herb Day

Yearly dues are \$25 and payable in August.

Please make check payable to GCHS and mail % Annie Daniels, 1355 Carson Rd W, Mobile, AL 36695

Or bring your check or cash to one of our meetings

Date _____ Amount \$ _____ Paid by Cash _____ or Check # _____

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Welcome to the Gulf Coast Herb Society! We meet at the Mobile Botanical Gardens from 5:30 to 7:00pm the fourth Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise announced in our newsletter, emails and Facebook.

Refreshments are served at each meeting, it's optional to bring something to share.

Meetings start at 5:30p.m., program will follow, work days in Herb Garden TBA

Questions? Email Beth Poates at poates57@gmail.com or

Annie Daniels, at mbdmobile@aol.com.

Check out our website www.gulfcoastherbsociety.org Like us on Facebook!

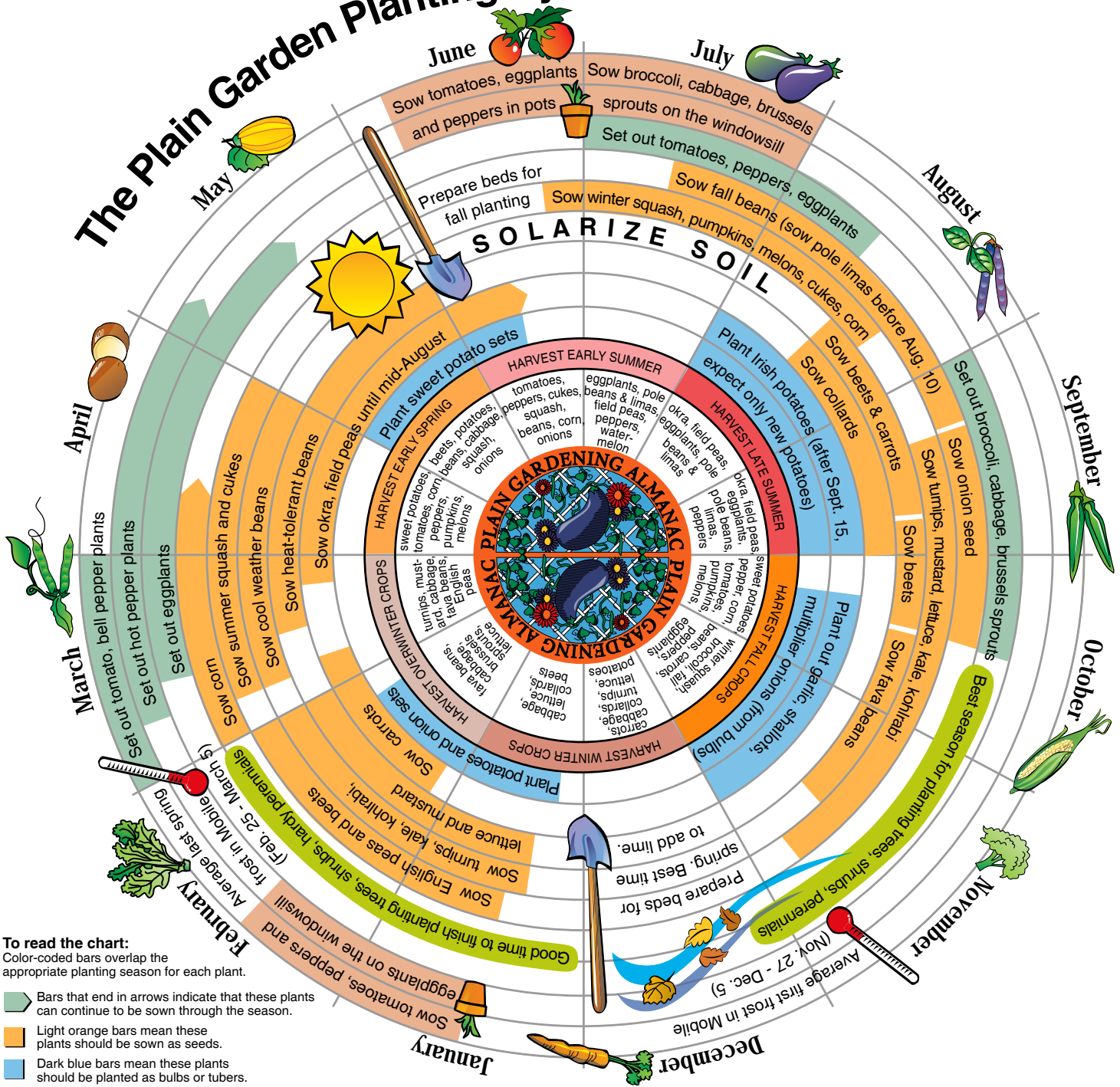
The Plain Garden Planting Cycle

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.