

# THE GARDENGOER

Volume 10, Issue 2

February 2008



Hi Everyone,

In case you haven't noticed, Mother Nature has been very active lately. I don't think I have ever noticed so many hot, cold, rainy, dry days all packed into 24 hour increments. All four seasons have also shown their debuts for the year 2008 and it is only the end of January. I have issued personal floatation devices to the newborn calves, muck boots to the raccoons, and heat lamps to the chickens. We are ready for 28 hot, cold, rainy, dry days of February. Rice does well in these conditions! I hope someone has some expertise in this area to share with the group.

The Lawn and Landscape Workshop will be this month at the Bogue Falaya Room of the Covington Center. This year's graduates are doing a wonderful job. Please attend and receive education hours. March is the Plant Show and Sale. April is the Plant Swap. May is the scholarship presentation. June is the tomato tasting. Rusty has information on all of these events.

We also have a new Editor for the newsletter and new Vice-Presidents. Please try to attend a meeting so you can meet all of the new graduates.

Now is the time to plant peas, potatoes, lettuces, and green onions. Strawberries should start ripening soon also. Mine have been relocated downstream by the rain and are holding out for drier ground before they will fruit. I hope the blueberries don't follow suit. I think early February is probably best suited to armchair gardening with the seed catalogs. I know spring fever is around the corner, but for now I think I just have a cold. Back in the house and not the garden. - aj



## Orange You Glad You Can Grow Citrus

By Rusty Batty



Yes, I know, the title is a spin-off of the old knock-knock joke "Orange you glad I didn't say banana". It's no joke, citrus can be successfully grown in St. Tammany Parish. I have encouraged many homeowners who want fruit trees to consider many of the citrus varieties, Satsuma, Kumquats, Sweet and Navel Oranges, Grapefruit, Lemons or Limes. The fruit is easy to grow once it's mature, stores well and can be picked over several months. Although hard freezes are a concern occasionally in St. Tammany, freeze protection may be necessary (especially for 1 or 2 year old trees).

The best time to plant citrus is January or February. Choose a tree 2 to 4 feet tall with no branches 15-18 inches above the ground. Plant on a mound and be careful not to bend the roots. Allow spacing of 30 foot diameter circle for navel or grapefruit, smaller (15-20 ft) for Satsuma, kumquat or lemons. Newly planted trees should not be fertilized within 6 weeks after planting. Apply 1 to 1 ½ pounds of 13-13-13 per year of age. Do not fertilize after June.

Minimal pruning is required of mature trees. Dead branches, branches crossing over each other, branches touching the ground or water sprouts should be removed. Limbs that need pruning should be cut to the nearest intersection. Freeze damaged limbs should not be pruned until the new flush of growth begins.

Recommended varieties for our area include: Owari Satsuma, Louisiana Sweet or Navel Oranges, Ruby Red Grapefruit, Meiwa (sweet, round) or Nagami (tart, oblong) Kumquats, Myers Lemons, and Dancy Tangerine.

If you haven't included citrus in your landscape, you should. The leaves, aroma of blooms, and the color of mature fruit add to a creative landscape. The fruit is an excellent source of nutrition. If you already have some citrus trees, "orange you glad you planted them"?



**Hi Master Gardeners!!**



This is a note to remind you that we are accepting donations from Master Gardeners for our raffle table at the Plant Sale scheduled for March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. We will accept any item, big or small. You can bring the item to our scheduled meeting, to the plant show on the day of the sale, or I can pick it up from you if needed. We also have scheduled times for anyone to volunteer at the raffle table selling tickets or giving door prize tickets. Contact me at [joan70435@yahoo.com](mailto:joan70435@yahoo.com) to schedule your volunteer time. Thanks!! - Joan Gagliano

## Upcoming Events

February 10 - Tangipahoa Master Gardeners Camellia Garden Stroll

Hammond Research Station

21459 Old Covington Hwy (Hwy 1076)

Hammond, LA

1-4 p.m., free admission

Collection of over 500 camellias planted in the 1930's-1950's

Contact Annie Coco for other information @ 985/748-9381

February 13 - St. Tammany Master Gardeners Lawn & Landscape Workshop

Greater Covington Center

317 N. Jefferson Street

Covington, LA

Wednesday, February 13, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

\$20 pre-registration fee required, limited seating . . . first come, first served

Contact: Janice Binnings @ 985/674-5822  
Send name, address, telephone number and fee to:  
LSU AgCenter Office  
P. O. Box 5438  
Covington, LA 70434

March 8 - Spring Garden Show  
Hammond Research Station,  
21459 Old Covington Hwy (Hwy 1076),  
Hammond, LA

March 15-16 - St. Tammany Parish Master Gardeners Northshore Plant Sale  
Covington Fairgrounds,  
Covington, LA

March 22-23 - Baton Rouge Master Gardeners "Spring Garden Show"  
Baton Rouge, LA

March 29-30 - Lake Charles Master Gardeners "Spring Garden Show"

April 28-30 - Master Gardener State Conference  
Holiday Inn  
Covington, LA  
Start collecting door prizes and raffle items for this upcoming conference. Items can be turned in to Fran Thigpen or bring them to the Master Gardener meetings. A flyer will be available at the next meeting to solicit donations. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Fran by phone at 985/892-3762 or e-mail at [franthagpen@bellsouth.net](mailto:franthagpen@bellsouth.net)

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

St. Tammany Master Gardener meetings are held at the LSU AgCenter Office in Covington and begin at 10:00 a.m. Be sure to wear your name badge to the meetings to be eligible for the door prize. Pot luck lunch follows each meeting. Bring your favorite dish. The next Master Gardener meetings will be:

February 20 - The planning meeting for the March 15-16 plant sale begins at 9:00 a.m. followed at 10:00 a.m. by the regular monthly Master Gardeners meeting.

March 12 - Final meeting before the March 15-16 Northshore Plant Sale begins at 9:00 a.m. with the regular monthly meeting starting at 10:00 a.m.

April 16 - Spring plant swap

May 21 - Scholarship recipient awards meeting

June 18 - Tomato tasting

July 16

August 20

September 17

October 15

November 19

December 17

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**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE**  
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