



## GARDEN CLUB OF CAPE CORAL

PO Box 152022, Cape Coral, FL 33915

*Member of National Garden Clubs, Inc., Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.,  
Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc., (District IX) and Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council*

*"Wreaths hung to fill our homes with holiday cheer – they're made in circles, with no beginning or end to  
symbolize the endless connections we have with family and dear friends." –*

*Anon -Courtesy of Valorie Breen*



## NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2021

### Let's Party!!

Frannie Cox and her wonderful committee have put their heads together and hatched plans for a really fun Christmas party so be prepared to be entertained and to have fun! Don't forget you can BYOB!

The fun begins at **6:00 pm** with 'jingling and mingling; at our usual gathering spot, the Kiwanis function hall on Santa Barbara Blvd. when our own Ellen Morris will be leading us in carol singing on the piano and Santa and Mrs. Claus and 'Rudolph will be joining us. There will be an air plant give-away; Silent Auction; and you will be able to buy tickets for the 50:50 draw.

We will have a short club meeting and the recipient of our Club Service Award will be announced – drum roll please!!

### December Birthdays

Happy Birthday wishes and many happy returns of your special day to all our December birthday girls!

Ria Benton    Deborah Clements  
Debbie Cooper  
Betsy Kosher    Valorie Breen  
Cheryl Shaw    Tammy Wilson  
Joyce Comingore

### Punta Gorda Holly Days Garden Tour

We will meet at the Burnt Store Road Publix Parking Lot - McDonalds end, Saturday, Dec. 4 for 10:45 am departure to the Icehouse, 408 Tamiami Trail, #111, in Punta Gorda. where we will lunch, prior to the Tour. If you have signed up for the tour and do not want to lunch at the Icehouse, please tell Cindy Wasilak (contact details in Elsa's email Nov. 29) Tickets for the tour are \$20 payable at the first garden.

## Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council – Cookie Social! Susan Lawson, President

Come meet and socialize with members of other Lee County Garden clubs at the Garden Council's Cookie Social on **Friday Dec 10th** at the council building, 2166 Virginia Ave., Fort Myers, 1PM to 4 PM.

The Garden Council will be decorated for the season, and there will be cookies, music, games, and prizes. And we'll offer another opportunity to create something crafty to take home to celebrate the season (nominal fee of \$5 for supplies).

In addition to the plant swap table, we'll also hold a cookie swap. If you would like to participate in the cookie swap please bring 4 dozen of your own cookies; we have elves with tongs to put them on a platter so you can transport them home.

So, if you'd like to share items from your garden or your oven, now's your chance!

Come mix and mingle; bring a friend and make some new friends. Just be prepared for fun! **Please RSVP** to [fmlcgardencouncil@gmail.com](mailto:fmlcgardencouncil@gmail.com) or call 941-979-0615 so we'll know how much food to have on hand and if you'd like to be crafty. Looking forward to seeing you!

*Sue Lawson, President, FMLCGC*

## Christmas Season at the Burroughs and the Langford-Kingston homes, downtown Fort Myers - 65th celebration: "The Happiest Time of the Year"

Every year the Burroughs and Langford-Kingston homes in downtown Fort Myers are decorated for the Holiday season and open to the public for

Tours. If you'd like to help with this lovely event, please contact Kay Holloway.

Shifts are from 4-7PM and 7-9PM,  
December 10 – 22.

## Cape Coral Historical Society Invitation to Annual Meeting and Holiday Celebration



To RSVP or for questions, call us at 239-772-7037  
Please RSVP by Friday (December 3) if you plan on attending. We look forward to seeing you.

# Winter Vegetable Gardening for Mild Climates

(National Gardening Association Newsletter  
11/27/2021)

By Dave Whiting, Executive Director

Where we live in Texas, many of the annual food crops that we like to eat are sensitive to heat and long days, and they therefore can't be grown during most of what we call "the growing



season." Spinach and lettuce get scorched by the sun, broccoli quickly bolts into flower, and many other plants just sit and pout, refusing to

grow. The solution to this is winter gardening! When the days get short and the shadows are long, we start getting serious about growing these winter delicacies.

**Lettuce:** This leafy green can only be grown in the winter for us, and as mentioned above, it is also somewhat weak against severe frost. We like to start our lettuce indoors in late fall and transplant them into the garden as little plants. Keep them well watered. As the days begins to lengthen in January, they will start growing and you'll be eating nice salads in late January and beyond.

I treat **Spinach** exactly the same way as lettuce. We love the Spinach (*Spinacia oleracea* 'Gigante d'Inverno') variety and find that it grows quickly and just sits and waits for us to harvest and eat it whenever we want it.

These leafy vegetables are small and unassuming plants, and they can be grown in unusual places. Do you have a dormant flower garden? That's a fine place to grow some winter vegetables. Most varieties of lettuce are beautiful, with striking colors and interesting patterns, and would provide an excellent ornamental choice for winter.

Peas are a crop that we can never seem to grow enough of. We direct-seed these during late winter, at the very end of January or early in February. They will grow nice vines for a couple months and reward us with a great harvest in April. We grow Snap Pea (*Pisum sativum* var. *macrocarpon* 'Sugar Snap') in a raised bed that lies between the house and our milking barn, where we walk past it twice a day. The peas are so sweet when eaten raw that we nearly never bring this harvest indoors. We will often pick a handful on the way to the barn and munch on them while performing our milking chores. The children relish being turned out on a row of peas to eat their fill.

Winter is also the time for most root crops. Radishes and turnips are easy to grow. Direct seed where you want them, and you'll be harvesting within a month. Radishes, especially, are an excellent vegetable to let children grow. The early return provides a positive encouragement to the little gardeners in your life.

People are often surprised to learn that you can grow carrots all through the winter. Start them in very late summer or early fall by direct sowing the seeds right among your summer vegetables. They will germinate and start to grow but remain very small until the weather turns cool, and then they start putting on the real growth. All winter they'll sit and grow (and can be harvested) and in the early to mid-spring, they'll put on the real final growth. In addition to the periodic snacking through the winter, we like to pick them all at once in late spring, clean them and put them in the freezer for use in cooking through the rest of the year.

Many people like to grow radishes and carrots together. You seed them both in the same place and the fast-germinating radishes will quickly remind you where you sowed the carrots. This is especially helpful because carrots are frustratingly slow to germinate, sometimes taking a month or longer before they finally emerge!

Potatoes and onions are planted about the same time, for us in late January. We always take the easy route and obtain the seed potatoes and onion starts from the local feed store.

Broccoli (*Brassica oleracea* 'Super Dome')

Photo by [farmerdill](#)



What else? Brassicas, of course! Broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, a constellation of interesting cabbage varieties, Kohlrabi, the list goes on and on, and all these crops grow great during the winter for us in the south. We like to grow these as starts, germinating them indoors, and transplant them into the garden. You can grow them in the fall for an early winter harvest, and then again in very early spring for an April harvest.

Every region is different and it's hard to give a prescription that fits all gardeners reading this article. *All Things Plants* has an excellent gardening planting calendar that you can use. You enter in your location, and it tells you everything you could want to know - what you can grow, and when you should start them. Check that out at <https://garden.org/apps/calenda...>

## Upcoming Events

12/04 – 12/5: Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society Annual Plant Sale, Edison-Ford Winter Estates, McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers

12/04 Edison-Ford Estates Garden Talk, 10AM: *Terrariums – details on Edison-Ford Estates website*

1/08 *Wicked Plants - How Plants Defend Themselves*, Edison-Ford Winter Estates – see EFW website for details

1/12 FFGC Board Meeting, Winter Haven

1/14 Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council meeting, 2166 Virginia Ave., Fort Myers  
9 AM social time

9:30 AM Program: *Preserving Plant Material*, presented by Mary Pulick, Master Judge – open to all members of the Garden Club of Cape Coral – come meet other gardeners in the Lee County area and share experiences.

1/21 Florida Arbor Day

1/18 Introduction to FL Gardening 1, Edison - Ford Winter Estates – see [www.edisonfordwinterestates.org/](http://www.edisonfordwinterestates.org/)

1/19 Club visit to Buckingham Farms, Fort Myers - tour and honey tasting. Lunch at the Farm – contact Carol Arnholt/Cindy Wasilak for more details

1/25 Introduction to FL Gardening 2, Edison-Ford Winter Estates – see [www.edisonfordwinterestates.org/](http://www.edisonfordwinterestates.org/)

## Lakes Park Reminders

**1st Saturday** Bird Walks year-round –  
8 AM-10 AM. Meet at shelter A7

**2nd Saturday** Guided Garden Walks - Oct-April  
9 AM– 10 AM Meet at Community Garden Sign;  
end of parking lot #3

**Wednesdays** Farmers Market runs October through April 9 AM– 1 PM

**Tuesdays & Thursdays** Volunteer Workdays year-round 8 AM-10 AM

## Newsletter Online

Our monthly newsletter is always available online

– go to our website at

<https://www.gardenclubofcapecoral.com/getinvolved/newsletter/>

Comments/suggestions always welcome as are suggestions for items to include. Contact editor

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