



Gainesville Camellia Society

Affiliated with the American Camellia Society

Editor: Anna Langford

May 2024

President's Message



Les Marbury

Greetings,

Here we are in May our last meeting of the year. What a wonderful year it has been with another great show and plant sale! Sunday, May 19th is our annual spring barbecue and final meeting of the season. Meats will be provided by John Swanson and Jerry Hogsette, and the rest of us will bring a covered dish or dessert.

Things to do over the summer include fertilizing, cuttings , collecting camellia seed pods for that possible Best Bloom of the future. See you Sunday, May 19th, @ 1:00 for socializing and 2:00 for the meal!

Jay Ellis, President

Minutes for GCS Meeting April 21, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 2:06 pm by our President, Jay Ellis, who welcomed our newest member, Margaret Sneeringer, a long-time friend and former colleague of Charles Simon. Jay started the meeting with the educational program presented by our own Dr. Sanford Porter.

Educational Program

Sanford's talk was entitled "Cool ants on Camellias" and was a fascinating expose of ant types in Florida and the South-eastern United States. The 'winter ant' is the most common type found on Camellia blossoms.



Royal Velvet, Variegated



Apollo 14

These ants fatten themselves in the winter months on flower nectar, and then reside over eleven feet down in the soil during the other half of the year. They use the fat stores from converted nectar to feed their developing pupae.

Sanford also showed us how the ant nest was cast using molten aluminum in the field poured down the nest entrance and then recovered after cooling. A picture of the eleven foot tall casting of the winter ant was particularly impressive. He also had with him an actual aluminum casting of a fire ant nest.



Fred Sander, Variegated

Those nasty bugs were introduced into Florida in 1930 from South America. Due to a lack of natural predators and infectious micro-flora and fungi, these ants have multiplied voraciously and there are now approximately 5 TONS of fire ants per square mile in Florida!

Out of many remaining topics, the group chose to hear about ‘decapitating flies’, a natural enemy of fire ants and other ants. These tiny flies attack the ant and inject an egg in their head that later develops into a pupae that releases a hormone that causes connective tissue in the ant to dissolve, resulting in the decapitation of the head. Dr. Porter was the first scientist to observe the entire life cycle of the fly.

After careful investigation, in 1997 several varieties of decapitating flies from South America that prey selectively on fire ants were released in several locations throughout the Southeastern United States, resulting in a measurable decrease in ant populations.

Old Business

A motion was made and seconded to accept the March 2024 minutes. The motion passed.



Autumn Sunrise



Blaze of Glory

Dr. Craig Tisher announced that the 2024 Wilmot Botanical Gardens plant sale was the best they've ever had! There were 225 pre-sale orders! Over 50 Camellia plants donated by John Swanson were sold within a few hours. Craig said there is over \$600 coming to GCS for half of the camellia sale proceeds.

Charles Simon responded to this by reminding the group that we voted to make all of the proceeds from the sale of donated camellias part of our annual donation to Wilmot Botanical Gardens instead of going through the fund transfer process. Since the fund transfer was already in process, it was decided to start the full donation of camellia sale proceeds next year.

New Business

The April 2024 Treasurer's report was presented by Merry Reid.

Checking:	\$11934
Savings:	<u>10,579</u>
Total:	\$22,513

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion passed.



Ashton's Ballet



Gigantea

President

First Vice President/Show Chair

Second Vice President/Program Director

Secretary

Treasurer

Newsletter

Board Members

Ron Stevens (2nd year)

Deborah Engquist (2nd year)

Julie Burton

George Sharrad

Cat Spurgeon

Rick Davis

Alex Theodore

Joanne Theodore

Jerry Hogsette

May 4th is the Master Gardeners' plant sale to be held at the Equestrian Center in Newberry, Florida. All are encouraged to attend and purchase native Florida plants at bargain prices.

Election of GCS Officers and Board members

The slate of GCS candidates for the upcoming year was published in the March GCS Newsletter and is reprinted below with the addition of Jerry Hogsette as a Board Member. There were no other nominations for Officers or Board members, so a vote was called to approve the entire list. The vote passed unanimously.

Charles Simon, Secretary

Jay Ellis (2nd year of 2-year term)

Debbie Ellis (2nd year)

Sanford Porter

Charles Simon (4th year)

Merry Reid (10+ years)

Anna Langford (10+ years)

Photos of flowers are from the garden of John Swanson.

<i>Date and place of meeting</i>		<i>Refreshments</i>	
		<i>Food</i>	<i>Drinks</i>
May 19, 2024	Kanapaha Botanical Gardens (Meet at 1pm for drinks & socializing, 2pm for food.)	Pot Luck Party	Amy & Phil Puccio

Dues

The annual dues for Gainesville Camellia Society are due at this time. The amount is \$15 for an individual or \$20 for a couple. Please mail a check for your dues to the Treasurer:

Merry Reid
7631 Monongahela Avenue
Keystone Heights FL 32656
reidm729@gmail.com

***Gainesville Camellia Society
has joined social media!***

Search “Gainesville Camellia Society” to find our Facebook page. There you will find photos, tips on growing camellias, special activities, announcements of future meetings and guest speakers. “LIKE” us on Facebook to receive GSC updates, and tell your friends about our Facebook page.



Officers

President: Jay Ellis
1st VP & Show Chair: Debbie Ellis
2nd VP & Program Chair: Committee
Treasurer: Merry Reid
Secretary: Charles Simon

Board Members

Carter Brenneman
Deborah Engquist
Bill Hayes
Larry Hice
Jerry Hogsette
Konrad Hooper
Sanford Porter
Diane Simon
Ron Stevens
Irma Velez

Monthly Meeting of the Gainesville Camellia Society

Date: Sunday, May 19, 2024 (Meet at 1pm for drinks & socializing, 2pm for food)
Place: Kanapaha Botanical Gardens
Program: Pot Luck Party

The Gainesville Camellia Society meets at 2 pm on the third Sunday of each month from September through May at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens. Any changes to meeting dates, times, or venues are posted in this newsletter.