



THE

GARDEN BENCH

The Manatee County Master Gardener Newsletter

October 2020 – Volume 19 – Issue 9

Starting SEEDS for Spring

By Maureen Hirthler, Master Gardener Volunteer

Tired of raising the same old vegetables and herbs? Want to save money and try some different varieties? Looking for disease resistance and healthy plants? Many of us grow from seeds for just these reasons!

The first step is always research. Many varieties of vegetables have been created or tested and recommended by the University of Florida specifically for our area. Look for seeds from heirloom or open-pollinated plants.

The seeds you might collect from store-bought vegetables are often sterile and won't germinate, so you'll need to purchase your seeds from reliable sources. The varieties you want may not be available at common seed companies or local stores, but UF/IFAS has a resource for you: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep486>.

Another way to obtain seeds is by seed saving and sharing, but that is an article of its own. See <https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/planting/seed-saving.html> for more information.

Read the instructions on the seed packet carefully. It will tell you about disease resistance and growth habit. You'll find information about timing and when to plant seeds (get started now), the germination rate, how to handle the young plants, and when and where to put them outdoors.

Seed starting trays with plastic covers are readily available. Once again, follow the directions! Seeds can be started in many different containers, too, but it is essential they be sterilized with bleach before planting. You can also use sterilized small pots with a clear plastic bottle, cap on and bottom removed, placed on top. Seeds should be started in sterile germinating soil. Water gently; very little additional water will be needed. Don't forget to label everything.

Germinate in a warm, shady area, and gradually move transplants into larger pots and to their optimal growing sites. Some seeds, like zucchini, can be sown directly into the ground—the seed packet will tell you that, too, and give directions for thinning the plants for good spacing. Pot up some of the healthy thinnings for your friends!

The University of Florida has excellent information on growing from seed and vegetable gardening in general. Instructions for growing from seed can be found at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh026>.

The best resource overall is *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*, a series at IFAS Gardening Solutions: <https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/vegetable-gardening-in-florida.html>. Here you can find explanations for the various disease resistant letters and recommended varieties for our specific location.

For tomato enthusiasts, <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs1189> gives an in-depth explanation of disease resistance and the varieties especially suited for reducing common problems. The book *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*, <http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/p-185-vegetable-gardening-in-florida.aspx>, can take the guesswork out of many of your seed-sowing questions. You'll find a table giving the planting dates, spacing, depth, ease of transplant, and more for each of the most common vegetable crops.

The Manatee County Extension has several Volunteer Master Gardeners with many years of experience growing vegetables who are happy to help you with any questions. We can be reached at 941-722-4524, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9AM to 4PM. or at ManateeMG@gmail.com.





ASK A MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER

Q. Dear Master Gardener Volunteer:

I bought this from a native nursery but did not note the name. When I put it through an app, it says it is a scarlet morning glory, but the leaves are nothing like a morning glory? Can you help me ID?

S.P., Bradenton



Wikimedia Commons CC0 1.0 Universal (CC0 1.0)

A. Dear S.P.:

I don't know this plant so I'm sending your photograph to Marc Frank, Extension Botanist for I.D. Here is his response. He is the best!

"This plant is *Ruellia elegans*, commonly known as Brazilian false petunia, Brazilian wild petunia, or elegant ruellia, in the Acanthaceae (acanthus and shrimp plant family). This species is native to southern and central Brazil but is widely cultivated and has escaped from cultivation and become naturalized (a non-native that has become established) on a few islands in the Caribbean.

There appear to be several forms of *Ruellia elegans*. A dwarf (~1 foot tall), trailing form is sold under the cultivar name 'Ragin' Cajun', but I'm also growing an unnamed upright form of this plant that easily reaches 3-4 feet tall. 'Ragin' Cajun' is a trademarked cultivar name that was coined by Alan Armitage for the dwarf, trailing form, originally marketed under his Athens Select line of plants, and is now sold as part of the South Living Collection of plants. Unfortunately, that cultivar name 'Ragin' Cajun' is now being used as a common name for all forms of this plant (instead of just the dwarf, trailing form).

"From what I have seen in Florida, the taller, upright form seems to be less common in the horticultural trade than the dwarf forms."

Marc S. Frank, Extension Botanist
UF/IFAS Plant Identification and Information Service
University of Florida Herbarium (FLAS)

*Master Gardener Volunteer Karen Holleran
answers your email questions.*

*Send questions and/or photos for identification or for
diagnosis of residential gardening problems to*

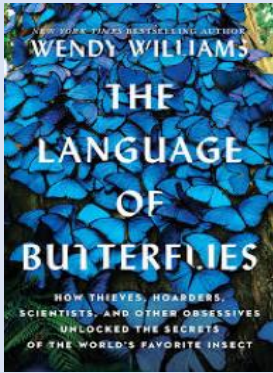
ManateeMG@gmail.com.

*Or call us during office hours 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at
941-722-4524 and ask for a Master Gardener Volunteer.*

Fall Book Review:

Books for Gardeners and Naturalists

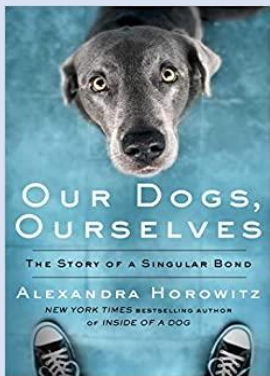
By Amy L. Stripe, Master Gardener Volunteer



The Language of Butterflies: How Thieves, Hoarders, Scientists and other Obsessives Unlocked the Secrets of the World's Favorite Insect

(Simon & Schuster 2020) By Wendy Williams

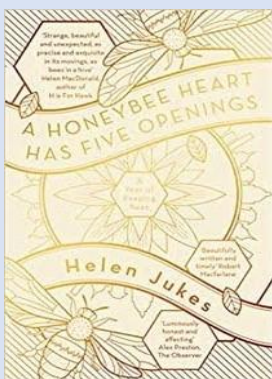
I read this book in one sitting. Fascinating revelations about butterfly behavior, anatomy, and their ecological importance kept me glued. The book does tend to emphasize monarchs in lieu of other species, but what a riveting tale it tells. Violent sex is involved, so censor accordingly! Exploring the symbiotic relationships between some butterflies and ants, plus the medical breakthroughs being made by studying butterfly anatomy make this book a must read. Tenacious scientists involved in butterfly research are featured.



Our Dogs, Ourselves: The Story of a Singular Bond

(Scribner 2020) By Alexandra Horowitz

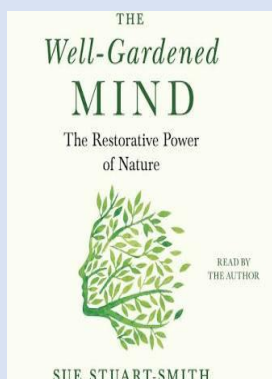
Horowitz is a canine cognition scientist and author of three previous books. This one explores the human-canine bond that is not always pleasant: neutering, medical experimentation, interbreeding. She raises anthropomorphism issues (attribution of human qualities to non-humans), how we talk to our dogs, name our dogs, even how we dress up our dogs. As we include dogs as part of our families, so do we “own” dogs: we are free to euthanize, give away, or otherwise abandon these “family members.” A disturbing, yet probably necessary read for pet owners.



A Honeybee Heart Has Five Openings

(Simon & Schuster 2018) By Helen Jukes

A quick read written by a Millennial which presents many fascinating aspects of bees and beekeeping in an urban setting. A bit overly introspective but at the end of the day a joyful exploration of keeping bees. My favorite sentence: “....getting a beehive won’t save bees, who don’t and never have needed our keeping. If we want to do something to help them, we’d do better to turn our attention to flowering habitats.... on which they do depend.” In conclusion, the author called herself keeper of hives instead of bees.



The Well-Gardened Mind: The Restorative Power of Nature

(Simon & Schuster 2020) By Sue Stuart-Smith

Stuart-Smith is a psychiatric psychotherapist; her husband, Tom is a renowned U.K. garden designer. Honestly? I had a hard time making it past the introduction of this book. She dips into Wordsworth and his “gentle aspects of the natural world.” She lives in England, where they have four seasons. I live in Florida, where we have two: wet, hot and weedy; and dry and dormant. However, she explores multiple garden scenarios, including “guerrilla” and urban gardening and makes many salient points. Get past the idyllic English garden of the intro, and it’s a good read in these days of COVID-19 isolation.

Twig Girdlers

Photo: <http://entoweb.okstate.edu>

By Joy Derksen, Master Gardener Volunteer

What are all these tiny twigs doing under my oak? Is my tree dying? Are the squirrels damaging my tree? What should I spray it with? I have good news for you. It is probably a tiny insect and you don't need to do anything chemical (unless you own a pecan grove or are raising commercial nursery trees).

The insect most likely to cause the twig fall in this area is the twig girdler (*Oncideres singulata*). Twig girdler beetles get their name not because they wear the insect version of Spandex, but because they girdle (or cut off all the bark) around a twig. The adult twig girdler is about ½ inch in length with long antennae and a grayish brown body. It is well camouflaged against tree bark and hard to spot in the tree canopy. In the southern U.S., these beetles like to live in oak, hickory, pecan, and persimmon trees.

After mating in the summer, a female selects a pencil sized twig in which to lay her 3 to 6 eggs. First, she chews off the bark and cambium layer all around the twig which cuts off the nutrients from there to the tip. Next, she chews a hole near the tip of the dying twig where the eggs are deposited. The larvae cannot develop in green, moist wood. After hatching,

they eat the dead wood until emerging from the twig. The larvae are now about one inch long and they move underground, pupating and returning in next spring as a full-grown twig girdler. And so, the cycle begins again.

How can you tell if your tree has twig girdlers? Look at the ground around the tree; do you see many fallen twigs? Pick up a twig and look it over. If a twig girdler is responsible the twig will look like it has been attacked by a miniature beaver. We are in the midst of twig girdler season right now. The twigs start appearing from August to November. The damage is rarely of any consequence to a tree. To stop the cycle, simply gather up any fallen twigs, put them in a hot, dry area, or bury them in a wet location, or send them away with yard refuse.

Websites with more information and photographs:
<http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/extension/4h/foresthealth/insects/twiggird.html>,

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/pests-and-diseases/pests/twig-girdler.html>.



Photos: Eugenio Nearn, Purdue Entomological Research Collection (PERC), Bugwood.org

Strike Them BEFORE They Strike!

By Nancy Porter, Master Gardener Volunteer

Weeds by any name are a pain in the neck! You work hard planning and planting your landscape; no one wants to go out in a week and find weeds taking over. And that is about all the time it takes.

To combat weeds, choose turfgrass suited for the area you have in mind. Next comes the care. Proper fertilization, watering, and mowing are necessary to create a thick healthy turf. A thick turf helps to prevent weed infestations by covering the soil and blocking germination of weed seeds. Another important factor is being proactive: wash off the blades of mowers and trimmers between jobs, especially if you have a lawn service.

You must plan ahead to control weeds that have taken over. This is where pre-emergent herbicides come onto the stage. They kill weeds BEFORE they get a chance to sprout their weedy little heads in your lawn. By keeping weeds out of your lawn, your flower and landscape beds will also benefit.

Next is knowing your weeds. WHAT?! One could do a great deal of research to learn all the weeds and when they grow. Do you have time for that?

While having knowledge is most helpful, the general rule here in Florida is to understand that there is a narrow window of opportunity to strike.

If you miss that, the pre-emergence herbicide you apply will have little effect, because your enemy has already begun to grow. You can also check with your local County Extension Office's Plant Clinic for advice.

Vital knowledge is whether a weed is a winter or summer annual. To get the upper hand on winter annual weeds, you need to apply your pre-emergent herbicide in mid-October into the middle of November.

For those pesky weeds that appear in the spring it is best to apply the pre-emergent herbicide around February 15th here in Central Florida. Then you must pray for rainfall of at least ¼ inch to activate the pre-emergent. If rain isn't in the forecast, be sure to thoroughly water the area with a sprinkler.

It is also important to know that most herbicides will begin to break down soon after you have applied them. So, be prepared to reapply in about 6-9 weeks of first application.

Final Thought:

ALWAYS READ THE PESTICIDE LABEL!!

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag398><https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep141>,

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag398>.

UF

Larva

UF

Household Casebearer a.k.a. Plaster Bagworm

John Dawson, Master Gardener Volunteer

At my house this year, we felt like we were under siege by household casebearers, *Phereoeca uterella*, more commonly known as plaster bagworms. Casebearers are not true bagworms, even though they are both larval stages of moths. They showed up in our house after we were away for six weeks, one or two a day. We have often found them inside our garage, but never inside our house. Whereas in the garage they would be on the walls, inside they were on our floors.

After doing some research, I learned that after hatching from an egg, the larva begins to encase itself within a silky cocoon which it drags along as a shelter (hence the name “casebearer”). Apparently, before we left, a pregnant moth made its way inside the house.

The moth is very small, about 3/8 inch, and would have gone unnoticed. After

depositing her eggs, she would have died, and the little crawlers would emerge soon after. Casebearers eat spider webs, cobwebs, wool and hair, amongst other things. I surmised that our unwelcome guests were feasting on our cat’s hair which is always in abundance.

Casebearers are easy to pick up as they can only crawl very, very slowly and tend to hide in their cocoon when threatened. If tossed in the trash or sucked up by the vacuum (without emptying outside), they somehow manage to escape, so I now give them a burial “at sea” with a single flush. Since you do not want them to continue their life cycle and become reproductive adults in your home, it is imperative to be vigilant and clean often, especially behind furniture. For more information, go to <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/files/IN/IN12900.pdf>.

Food for Thought Part 2

By Rob Hinz,
Master Gardener Volunteer



Photos: Jan Hinz



Firebush (*Hamelia patens*) is a southern Florida native shrub. This fast growing, evergreen perennial has reddish-orange or scarlet tubular flowers. Its botanical genus name, *Hamelia*, is taken from a French botanist, Henri Louis DuRoi de Rochefort de Launay who promoted this colorful plant. Some common names besides firebush are butterfly bush, firecracker shrub, redhead, and scarlet bush.

Firebush can tolerate cold temperatures that drop to 40-degrees Fahrenheit. The leaves may drop off, but new shoots will emerge in spring. During a hard ground freeze, the roots and whole plant may die.

This large shrub can reach a height of 6 to 12 feet with a spread of 5 to 8 feet. It can be trained to grow into a small tree. Firebush requires little maintenance and is suited for borders, hedges, and as a foundation plant for buildings.

For optimal growth, firebush likes heat and full sunlight. It can grow in partial shade but may not blossom as well as in full sunlight. It is drought and heat tolerant, though it may still need some watering and an occasional pruning

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continued from page 7

for size and shape. A top-quality granular fertilizer may also benefit the plant. Mites, scale, aphids and some moth larvae may attack the plant. Butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds pollinate the flowers. The result is half-inch oval berries that turn black when ripe.

Firebush berries have both edible and medicinal uses. The grape-like berries have sweetness with a lingering, bitter aftertaste. Processed berries can be made into catsup, tea, carambola (*Averrhoa carambola*) chutney, syrup, and wine. Teas made from firebush have been used to treat skin problems such as burns and insect bites, and the leaves were used as remedies for fever and diarrhea. Recipes are available on the internet.

For more information, visit:

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/FP/FP23700.pdf>,

<https://www.south-florida-plant-guide.com/firebush.html>,

<https://www.thespruce.com/firebush-growing-profile-3862385>,

<https://www.inaturalist.org/guides/taxa/529979>,

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/firebush.html>.



Photo: Jan Hinz



Fall for Cool Season Veggies

By Nancy Hammer, Master Gardener Volunteer

Growing some of your own vegetables will get you out in the fresh air, and provide you with the ultimate in fresh, and tasty local produce. Soon the heat and humidity will lessen, and planting, caring for, harvesting, and enjoying your own cool season veggies will do your heart good!

Whether you choose an in-ground garden, raised beds, or containers, here are some of the edibles that will thrive in our county over the next few months: Easily survives transplanting - arugula, beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, collards, eggplant, endive/escarole, kale, lettuce, peppers, strawberries, Swiss chard, tomatoes. Survives careful transplanting - carrots, celery, mustard, spinach. Use seeds - beans (bush, pole, lima), cucumbers, onions (green, shallot), radish, squash (summer, winter), turnips. Let's take a closer look at just a few cool season options.

Arugula (*Eruca sativa*) adds a delightful peppery flavor to salads. As a member of the Brassicaceae family, it is high in phytochemicals, antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals.

Bok Choy (*Brassica rapa* subsp. *Chinensis*) is a variety of Chinese cabbage. It is served both fresh and cooked. An increasingly popular Korean dish called kimchi is made by fermenting Chinese cabbage and pickling it in salt solution.

Cilantro (*Coriandrum sativum*) is an annual herb popular in many Latin American, Indian and Asian dishes. Planting a few seeds every couple of weeks will extend your harvest. My family enjoys a snappy *pico de gallo* which includes cilantro and habaneros from our garden.

Eggplant (*Solanum melongena*) is actually a fruit but is prepared as a vegetable. I'm a big fan of the fast maturing Japanese eggplant which I use in stews and soups. One cup of eggplant has only 38 calories – it's the sauce and cheese in eggplant parmesan that adds up!

Lettuces (*Lactuca sativa*) include crisphead, butterhead, leaf, and romaine. Leaf varieties are easy to grow and

allow you to do cut and come again harvesting. As with cilantro, start some seeds every 2 weeks for a continuous cool weather supply.

Onions (*Allium cepa*) may be planted from seeds, sets or plants. Interestingly, the onions you grow may taste differently than the ones you buy in the store, as the flavor is affected by the soil in which you grow them. They contain vitamins, as well as beneficial flavonoids and phenolics.

Swiss Chard (*Beta vulgaris*) leaves are borne on white, green red, yellow or pink stalks which are so attractive that gardeners add them to landscape beds.

Tomatoes (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) are the most popular homegrown vegetables (again, actually a fruit). Cherry and grape tomatoes tend to be the easiest to grow. They are an excellent source of lycopene, and vitamin C.

University of Florida/IFAS offers an abundance of information on vegetable gardening starting with the free online Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide which includes a chart detailing the planting dates for Central Florida, days to harvest, and more. This is also a table of recommended varieties for Florida and many growing tips. UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions provides articles with helpful information on individual veggies. Plus, don't forget to call our plant clinic with any questions or concerns.

So, make a list of your favorite cool season vegetables, peruse seed catalogs, prepare your planting bed, visit your garden center for seedlings, and get outdoors for a boost to your health!

Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide

www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021,

UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions – Vegetables

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/>.



October CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Close-up of head, pronotum and "wheel" of the wheel bug, *Arius cristatus* (Linnaeus). Photo: [Donald W. Hall, UF](#)

Date	Time	Event
Friday October 2	10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Tomatomania! A Zoom Webinar Join us for Tomatomania a webinar about growing tomatoes in Florida. Topics include: Tomato history, cultivation requirements, techniques, and much more! \$5 registration fee plus Eventbrite fees. Register early as webinar limited to 40 participants! To register: click here
Wednesday October 7	1:00-:3:00 p.m.	Introduction to Invasive Plants Zoom Webinar Join our Master Gardener Volunteers for a new class series. Invasive plants threaten our natural areas and biodiversity. Find out how and why plants are classified as invasive and what resources are available for determining species that pose risks. Limited to 100 participants. To register: click here .
Saturday October 10	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Riverview Pointe Preserve/DeSoto National Memorial Plant ID/Nature Tour Stroll through River Pointe Preserve to learn about Florida's native plants and inhabitants of a coastal environment. Suitable for all ages. To register, click here .
Wednesday October 14	1:00-:3:00 p.m.	Invasive Plants in the Home Landscape Zoom Webinar Join our Master Gardener Volunteers for the second installment of our invasive plants series. Many commonly available landscape plants are, in fact, invasive. Learn how to spot these before you buy and meet some Florida-Friendly alternatives. To register, click here .
Saturday October 17	9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Rye Preserve Nature Tour Join the Manatee County Extension Master Gardener Volunteers on an educational stroll. Take a hike through upland habitats along the beautiful Rye Branch and learn about Florida's native plants, natural history, and early settlement of the area. Suitable for all ages. For more information and to register: click here .
Wednesday October 21	1:00-3:00 p.m.	Taking Control of Invasives Zoom Webinar Join our Master Gardener Volunteers for the conclusion to our invasive plants series. Learn about options for control and eradication, as well as resources including community association funding. To register, click here .
Wednesday October 28	10:30 -11:30 a.m.	Florida-Friendly Landscaping for Backyard Wildlife Webinar With the increasing urbanization in our state, wildlife is being squeezed into fewer natural areas. This free webinar presentation can help guide you in landscaping your property to benefit wildlife while being Florida-friendly! To register, click here .
Friday October 30	12:00-1:00 p.m.	Tree Care Webinar Series: Selection and Planting Join UF/IFAS Extension Manatee County's Residential Horticulture Agent for a series of webinars focused on community tree care. Trees are incredibly important for our personal and environmental health. This series will cover selection and planting, establishment and maintenance, and pruning. Register for one or all three. To register, click here .

Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Fair

SAVE THE DATE: March 20, 2021

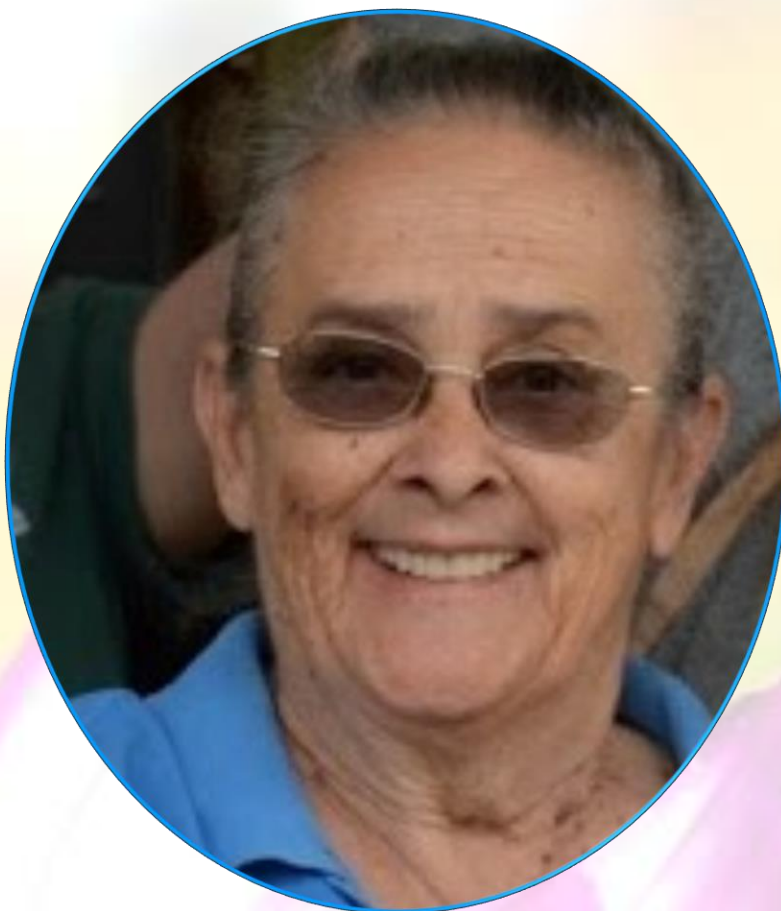


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Web site: <http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/manatee/> E-mail: ManateeMG@gmail.com



Barbara Davis Remembered

Master Gardener Volunteer Barbara Davis passed away unexpectedly on August 18th. She was a 21-year veteran of the program, a driving force behind many of our key initiatives, a mentor to many and a green thumb extraordinaire. There is not a single person in our program or at Extension whose life she did not touch. The Manatee County Master Gardener Educational Gardens will be renamed in her honor in an upcoming event. In the meantime, leading off the memories and tributes to Barbara, is Lisa Hickey, who served as Master Gardener Coordinator from 2007 to 2017.



“Barbara and (her husband) Jim were my ‘Florida parents.’ Barbara took me under her protective wing in March 2007. She never sugar-coated anything, as many of you witnessed.! She had unconditional pride in UF/IFAS Manatee County Extension, and she let everyone know who she volunteered for. She held many roles during my 10 years of Master Gardener Volunteer coordination. She was a mentor, a guidance counselor, a shoulder to cry on, a visionary, as well as our historian, an incredible plant propagator, an excellent hands-on teacher, the vegetable garden organizer/planter/harvester extraordinaire, FRIEND, and MOM. She was the glue that pulled many events together and she taught others her roles so they could fill her shoes. It will take some time to fill all of Ms. Barbara's shoes. This past Monday, I saw a screen shot of New Zealand landscapes. In the photo was a kangaroo paw plant that Barbara sought out and brought to our gardens. I knew it was a sign that she would be looking over me all the time. We all are missing you so.” - Lisa Hickey (Extension Agent II, M.S., Sustainable Fruits and Vegetables)

Master Gardener Volunteers add:

AS A MENTOR

“I loved Barbara. She was my mentor during my first year being a Master Gardener. She was always there with encouragement, support and advice. Rest In peace, my friend.” - Adria Henslick

“In one of her classes, she asked if anyone could ID one of the plants, and I raised my hand. Her quote: ‘Juanita, put your hand down; you know all the plants!’ She was very special, and I am so happy that she was my mentor. I will miss her.” - Juanita Centanni

“Barbara was an ever-ready, willing, and very capable person to answer all my questions-i was new to Florida; a real 'real down-to-earth person and gardener.” - *Betty Rosas*

FROM TUESDAY PLANT CLINIC CREW

“I cannot emphasize how influential Barbara was in my life. Every Tuesday, I was part of her “crew” in Plant Clinic. She wasn’t only a wonderful Master Gardener, but more importantly, a warm, generous, and loving person. I had the privilege of having lunch with her and the incomparable Larry Bearse (a retired Master Gardener) before the pandemic. I’m so happy we hugged and cried together.” - *Maureen Hirthler*



“Please remember it was her VISION that made the greenhouse and gardens become a reality. Thank you, Barbara!” - *John Melton*

“Barbara and I worked together for years potting up a zillion plants and weeding, propagating plant, washing dirty donated pots and working in the clinic on Tuesdays. She will be missed.” - *Candie Clerkin*

“My memories of Barbara Davis begin with my first meeting with my new Master Gardener class at the business luncheon. Barbara gave a report on the money being raised to finance a new demonstration garden. She was very passionate. I soon learned how knowledgeable she was about growing things and decided to sign up for a weekly Plant Clinic date when I knew she would be there. We worked together on Tuesday mornings for ten years, and I saw the classic Barbara Davis at work making things happen. Barbara did not “do” computers, so she often asked me to type things up for her – lists, plant labels, online orders. For a woman who was not computer literate, she sure got a lot accomplished! She shared her tender heart and compassion with her many Master Gardener friends. How she'll be missed!” - *Kathy Bondur*

“Barbara was a shining light in the Plant Clinic and Wonder Woman in the MG Garden. That was a huge project that she took on. We continue to evolve but the bones of the Garden still remain and that says a lot about her tenacity and her vision. Will miss her comments on gardening and everything else!! Will miss her every time I sit in the Plant Clinic or walk through the Garden.” - *Mairyann Montalva*

EXCELLENT TEACHER

“I remember being online waiting for a business meeting buffet, and for some reason commenting to Barbara that being a transplanted Chicago suburbanite, I didn't know the ins and outs on cows. She proceeded to explain to me in great detail the difference between cattle, cows, steers and heifers. I was much impressed!” - *Nancy Hammer*

“Barbara was one of the most knowledgeable people I had the privilege of knowing. Barbara loved sharing her knowledge with others and teaching how to grow plants.

“In the last few years Barbara, her husband Jim, our friend Daisy, and myself would do a Friday day trip to get me out of the house. No matter what plant we saw Barbara, or her husband could identify it. I once showed them a wooden bowl a friend of mine had made me from old wood and they told me what it was made from and that the tree no longer existed. I feel naming the Master Gardener Educational Gardens after Barbara would be marvelous since she greatly loved them.” - *Betty Glassburn*



“We have known Barbara since we became Master Gardeners in 2002. Barbara was part of the core and base of the program at that time, serious about helping the community. She was the ‘Mom’ of us Master Gardeners. Sure, we had our classroom education, but Barbara was our hands-on education, inspiring us to be the best in order to serve others in our community. We always looked forward to working with Barbara because she made everything so interesting and we learned so much.” - *Dennis & Kathy Puckett*

“Barbara was an inspiration to all of us. I especially enjoyed working with her in the Extension garden, most often the vegetable garden. I learned so much from her.” - *Norma Kisida*

GARDENING FRIEND AND CO-WORKER

“Me: ‘I love the quiet that goes with gardening.’

Barbara: ‘God’s first language is silence. Now be quiet and dig.’

“Barbara : ‘Why do you hide my gardening tools?’

Me: ‘I love to help you find them.’ - *Elizabeth Gould*

“I once taught a class on making stained glass stepping stones. Barbara ‘suggested’ that I make some for the children’s gardens. She was always trying to make the children’s gardens more inviting for the littles.” – *Kathy Puckett*

“Barbara Davis was one of the most avid supporters of our rose demonstration garden. She encouraged us to expand and beautify the gardens and was always complimentary of our work. I remember many times working in the garden and Barbara would stop by to chat for 30 minutes and admire the roses. We commiserated on the challenges of gardening in central Florida but agreed we wouldn't want to be anywhere else. She had a particular affinity for Mutablis, the Butterfly rose, but then who doesn't? I will miss my dear friend and fellow rosarian.” - *Tom Eckert*

“Barbara intimidated me at first. I was a total newbie, she a pro. But as the years unfolded, she treated me as an equal and we found common ground to share. I felt rewarded by her deep-

throated laughter and throw-away witticisms. I am adrift at her loss but can hear her telling me to take a moment and then get on with the job at hand.” - *Arwen Blankenship*

“She meant so very much to me. When I first became active in MGs, I was warned that she could be hard to get along with, but I never saw that. We kidded each other like siblings. I miss all my MG friends, but I will especially miss her” - *Bob Nicholson*

“Barbara was one of the first people I met at the Extension Office. She was one of the committee members interviewing new candidates for the Master Gardener Class of 2015. There were about five others on the interview committee, and all the initial questions were essentially easy to respond to. Until it came to Barbara’s turn to ask the question. She looked at me squarely in the eyes and ask, ‘How many hours a year do you plan to work because 10 hours a year ain’t gonna cut it.’ That first year I worked at least 200 hours. I was determined not to disappoint Barbara!” - *Jim Haupt*

“My heart breaks with the loss of Barbara. I have her home phone number on my phone and I don't want to delete it!! Such a wonderful and helpful Master Gardener. Losing her is like losing part of my MG soul!! She will always be in the Gardens when I work there! I just know she will be there in spirit!” - *Helen Pausenwein*

“The first time I remember meeting Barbara Davis was on Propagation Day during MG training. In front of the class was a sturdy, deeply tanned woman with her hair pulled back into a neat, no-nonsense bun. ‘I’m Barbara Davis and I’m going to show you how to propagate plants in Florida.’ She instructed us in selecting bits and pieces of plants in our gardens, followed us outside and kept instructing on what would be a good plant to pick at this time of the year, then she took us back inside and showed how to cut the leaves off and how to put our sticks into the tiny pots. Like any excellent teacher she knew all our names and had hawk-eyes that saw who needed help and who needed correcting. ‘Miss Joy, ‘she’d say, ‘you left too many leaves on.’ Over the years working on gardens and greenhouses and committees and grants with Barbara, I came to expect the, ‘Miss Joy’, followed by excellent advice, words of wisdom, demands for help, and her deep, deep laugh. She was interested in the Master Gardeners, the greenhouse, new plants and decor for the garden, and using our money wisely. She put her whole heart into making the Master Gardener Program better. Although she left us suddenly, she will always be part of our gardening skills. We look around our gardens and find Barbara in the plants that she sent out to us. Every time I’m outside I look at my cestrum, my red pentas, my iris, my succulents and I hear her say, ‘Miss Joy, take a piece of this to grow.’ You may be gone but we see you every day, Miss Barbara.” - *Joy Derksen*

“Barbara was a shining light in the plant clinic and wonder woman in the MG Garden. That was a huge project that she took on. We continue to evolve but the bones of the Garden still remain and that says a lot about her tenacity and her vision. Will miss her comments on



Gardening and everything else!! Will miss her every time I sit in the plant clinic or walk through the garden.” - *Mairyann Montalva*

“I have known Barbara Davis for 21 years. Funny whenever she called, she would identify herself as Barbara Davis unless I beat her to the punch and answered the phone Hi Barbara. That would always make her chuckle.

Barbara Davis and her cohort Carol Davis convinced me to take on the President Elect position on the Advisory Committee. I had never served on the Advisory Committee, but they were persistent. Shortly after I became President Elect our President Chuck White passed away and for some reason, I became President. I think I held that position for far longer than I signed on for. However, Barbara was extremely helpful telling me in November that I needed a nominating committee for the open positions. She made sure that we made the announcement of the nominees at the Holiday Luncheon and voted them in at the March meeting.

I promised Barbara that I would take over the vegetable gardens when I retired. Well, 7/1/2020 I retired and attended the July 30 vegetable garden workday. I told Kathy Oliver that I would take over the vegetable garden just before she asked me! The last time I worked with Barbara was at the Open Garden. I was assigned to table with Sharon Krueger but Barbara was determined to get the vegetable garden planted that day and we got it done. Barbara and her husband Jim came to the vegetable gardens during the fair in 2020. Jim asked me when I was going to take over the vegetable garden. We laughed and I assured him that I would take it over.

She was one of a kind, was always there for me if I needed advice and we shared many laughs. She will be sorely missed by me and I am sure many others.
RIP Barbara Davis” - *Patsy Ugarte*

“I always looked forward to Tuesdays at work, it was the day Barbara Davis (and her crew) staffed the Plant Clinic. For as far back as I can remember, Barbara was at the Extension Service every single Tuesday. It didn’t matter what other obligations she had or if she was going to be at Extension four of the five weekdays, she maintained her presence in the Clinic on Tuesdays. Before we instituted a limit on the number of MGs per shift in the Clinic, there was a time when MGs were negotiating over who was going to work the Tuesday morning shift because many of the other MGs wanted to shadow her – she was so knowledgeable and an excellent mentor. It was not uncommon to see 6–8 MGs in the Plant Clinic at one time on you guess it, Tuesday morning! Tuesdays were bliss! Tuesdays were terrific!

From the time my employment began with Extension, Larry Bearse and Barbara Davis were like parents to me, looking after me, guiding me, and educating me. I felt so cared for by them



both. I fondly called them my work parents! Barbara was with me through happy times, she was encouraging me through the rough times. I grew very close to her over the years. My heart has this hole now, but I know Miss Barbara will live on here at Extension. She's everywhere here. The gardens are a reflection of her. She's now peacefully looking over Extension, the gardens, and yes, I feel her looking over me too! May you rest in peace dear lady. - *Cindy Mozeleski*

"I'm having a difficult time limiting a tribute to a wonderful lady and a very good friend to just a few short lines! My first awareness of Barbara was hearing her name reverently mentioned as a volunteer, a teacher, and referenced for her caring way of mentoring and drawing others in. My appreciation for her dedication, stamina, and drive was realized as she championed getting the MG Garden and Greenhouse built. My appreciation for her grew as the garden grew. She was concerned about the daily operations and the future of the garden. Her vision was instrumental in leading the team of volunteers engaged in the work of maintaining the teaching site that is the envy of many Extension programs. Once I left Extension and moved downtown to work for Manatee County Government our friendship blossomed. Barbara was a confidant, a trusted friend. She rescued some sentimental plants I gathered from my grandmothers' and my parent's homes, taking clippings, and growing them into plants that I could incorporate into my new landscape. We shared our joys and sorrows as friends do. I cannot count the number of times she asked what she could do to help me. Her legacy is great, her efforts have impacted all who knew her. I was blessed to call her friend." - *Brenda G. Rogers, M.S. SW District Extension Director University of Florida IFAS*

"Barbara was usually the first volunteer into the plant clinic on Tuesday mornings, and she would stop by my office for our weekly chat. We talked about so much in our lives – events, family, travels, gardening – and traded lots of advice. I loved the forthright, dedicated, and caring attention she gave to the people and interests in her life. She was an example to us all and will be greatly missed." - *Kathy Oliver*

"We all feel bereft, as Barbara was ever-present amongst us. She was driven and was a driver. None of us could say "no" to her asks and thank goodness for that. She was our touchstone, our chief nagger, and our biggest champion. She always had a twinkle in her eye, a hearty laugh, and a shared joke. The day she passed we had a huge thunderstorm. Clearly, she was already organizing things "upstairs" and she brought much needed rainfall to my garden. Thanks for everything, Barbara, God bless, and keep up the the good work." - *Amy Stripe*

