



~ Smoke Signals ~

The Calusa Garden Club Newsletter

March, 2021

Editor: Ami Ruiz

Web Site calusa.org

calusagardenclub@aol.com

Hello fellow gardeners!

March is promising to be a beautiful month, weather-wise, as we prepare our gardening tasks for spring. The Gardening Guide tells us to fertilize our lawns, shrubs, and palms in March. Also, it is the last month to plant tomatoes – it will be too hot for them if you wait much longer. And plant some heat tolerant herbs and perennials. My lantana flourishes and flowers all year round. Try some vinca (periwinkle) for color, or red penta or blue daze. Happy gardening!

Although we are still missing our in-person meetings, and the fellowship and good feelings that we get with the exchange of smiles and “How-are-you?’s” among our membership, at last we are scheduling an in-person get together. It will be a leaf manipulation teaching and learning session. The details:

- March 23, 2021
- 10:00 – 12:00 noon
- Residents Beach in the picnic area.
- Wear masks and bring a lawn chair.
- BYOL – Bring Your Own Leaves!

If you are not a Residents Beach member, let me know and I will arrange car-pooling with Residents Beach members. We will do areca palm braiding, cutting, and weaving. Also, papyrus bending, braiding, and cutting into shapes. And pandanus folding, tying, slitting, boon-doggling, and rosettes! If you have Ti plants, dieffenbachia, ginger, or other broad-leaved foliage, bring some leaves! So much to learn! I know you can find some areca palm fronds behind the Bargain Basket – and the condominiums that back up to Herb Savage Way won’t miss a few fronds taken from the street side of their areca palm hedges.

March also brings our membership meeting at which, in odd-numbered years, we vote for a new slate of officers for our Club. We are delighted that these women have accepted their nominations:

- Susan Neustadt: President
- Kimberly Korb Porter: 1st Vice President and Program Chair
- Monique Doyle: 2nd Vice President and Membership Chair
- Annette Kuhn: Treasurer
- Margie Bramel: Assistant Treasurer

- Laura Furlong: Secretary
- Joan Husband: Corresponding Secretary.

Thank you to the Nominating Committee for their excellent work and to these prospective officers for volunteering to serve Calusa Garden Club of Marco Island as officers.
...Sara

Upcoming Events...

3/8	10:00	Member Meeting and Environmental Workshop on Zoom
3/22	10:00	Floral Design Workshop
3/27	8:30	Calusa Park Butterfly Garden Workshop
3/29	10:00	Board Meeting on Zoom
4/8	10:30	Spring Luncheon and Officer Installation. Wesley United Methodist Church
\$15 charge per member Reservations due to Janice Engel by April 1 Bring your lawn chair		
4/12	10:00	Joint Board Meeting on Zoom

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs...

The 2021 Spring issue of “The Florida Gardener” is now available on-line at the FFGC web site, FFGC.org

To access issues of “The Florida Gardener”:

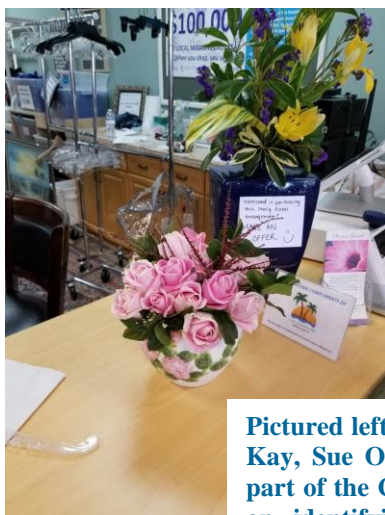
1. Locate the “search box” in the top right corner of the FFGC home page.
2. Type the letters “the florida” in the search box and observe how “drop down” options change as you enter each letter.
3. When “[The Florida Gardener](#)” option appears as a “drop down” selection, click on that option. This will take you to a screen where you can select and read the current or previous issue(s) of “The Florida Gardener”.

The cover page is the first nighttime photo used as a cover page for our magazine. For more information, use your web browser’s search engine to investigate “night blooming cereus” and read about this unique plant. For example, “most plants will only bloom once a year” and “the bloom will only open at night and is pollinated by a moth”.

I anticipate that you will thoroughly enjoy the information published within this issue and that you will receive your “hard-copy” magazine by the first week in March, 2021.

Dave Spaulding, Editor “The Florida Gardener”

Flowers in Public Places...



Monique Doyle made there 2 floral designs for Calusa Garden Club's program Flowers in Public Places and placed them at the Bargain Basket. Bargain Basket will sell the floral designs with the containers.
Thank you, Monique!

Pictured left to right are Linda Turner, Donna Kay, Sue Oldershaw and Sara Wolf who are part of the Calusa Garden Club team working on identifying plants at the Marco Island Nature Preserve. Other team members are Dale DeFeo and Laura Furlong who are not pictured.



Our 2020 Scholarship Recipients...



Calusa Garden Club of Marco Island announces the availability of two \$1,000 scholarships to high school students living on Marco Island, graduating in 2021, and pursuing higher education in botany, conservation, ecology, forestry, horticulture, landscape design or architecture, marine biology, city planning, public sanitation, science, education, nonprofit or law, or a related field. Pictured are the two 2020 Calusa Garden Club scholarship awardees: Kathleen Portu, who attends Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida, and Grace Roloff, who attends Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers, Florida. Both scholarship recipients are pictured with their families and with Marianne Foley, Garden Club Scholarship Chair, as they received their checks in June of 2020.

Orchids...

On Saturday, February 20, The Naples Botanical Garden's LaGrippe Orchid Garden was a stunning display of orchid blooms of all colors and sizes. It is also home to over 1,000 different orchid species. On the same weekend, local Florida vendors brought in their rare and unique orchid species for sale to the public. Orchid enthusiasts, hobbyists, newbies, and browsers enjoyed gazing through the vendors' collection.

Members of the Calusa Garden Club (CGC) Sara Wolf, Marianne Foley, and Cristina Leske took this time to visit and admire the gathering of one of the largest flowering plant families. They came to browse with hopes of adding to their collection, but had a hard time picking one to take home. There were lots of *oohs and aahs* over the scented and showy cattleya orchids.

Like most newbies, author is still learning about terms such as epiphytic (plants that don't grow in soil but on other plants or objects) and that they get their nutrients from the air and rain.

Mary Aronin of Marco bought a small orange flowering cattleya because of the orange color and because it was NOT a Phalaenopsis. Marianne Foley bought a Phalaenopsis because she likes the color of the bloom. Sara Wolf was looking for additional stalks of orange Epidendrum radicans (fire star orchid) but the growers only had purple.

For most people, the exotic names such as Brassavola, Cattleya, Cymbidium, Dendrobium, Oncidium, Grammatophyllum or Epidendrum don't do justice to the



beauty of their blooms.

No matter the size, the orchid flower is elegant and somehow looking so perfect and unreal.

The ever-popular Phalaenopsis orchids, with its long-lasting stunning blooms in all colors and easy-care tag, can be found at your local supermarket. The orchid is planted not in dirt, but in a special orchid mix that is supposed to mimic the soft tree bark it adheres to in the wild.

At the orchid sale, you are not going to find the popular supermarket “blue Phalaenopsis Orchid.” According to orchid experts, no such plant exists in the natural orchid world.



A collage of beautiful cattleya orchids. Often referred to as the Queen of Orchids. Noted for their fragrance and showy blooms. From author's collection.

Some growers have come up with a technique to inject blue dye to make the plant look different and sell better. The blue color will not reappear in future blooms and the orchid will revert to their original white color eventually. Some buyers like the fantasy of “a blue orchid.”

Linda Schwoeppe, a member of CGC, had been growing orchids for 30 years in North Carolina. She had a 1,500 square foot greenhouse which had a controlled temperature perfect for the orchids. She moved to Marco two and half years ago and had to part with more than half of her orchids. On Marco, the summers are hot and moist, but the winters are very dry. Most of her orchids were not well suited to the Marco temperature and she also did not have enough room.

Linda has some advice for beginners: get a basic orchid growing book. According to Linda, once you understand that orchids grow differently from dirt plants, they are easy to grow. Orchids like to be wet and they like to be dry. They don't like to stay wet or they will rot, and it is better to underwater than to overwater orchids.

On the use of fertilizer, Linda advocates fertilizing the orchids “weak weekly”. You can also use Miracle-Gro® but cut the recommended dose in half.

In Southwest Florida, you will find orchids hanging in baskets under mango or avocado trees with enough shade or filtered sunlight. According to Linda, if you want to attach your dendrobium to a palm tree, select the morning facing side of the tree, as afternoon sun is too intense and will burn the orchid.

With over 25,000 species and over 100,000 hybrids – some fussy, rugged, popular, and easy to grow – the average hobbyist has many options to explore and enjoy the world of orchid growing.

Website Calusa.org ...

There have been members who are having difficulties with the site when they want to register or log on.

In the upper right corner you will see the words log on and register. If you open the register tab you will see where you can sign up and make a new password. as well as edit your info. Hope this helps.

... Linda Colombo

Covid Update...

The City of Marco Island announces new process for residents to register for COVID-19 vaccination appointments.

The City of Marco Island has updated the process for its residents to register for a COVID-19 vaccination appointment. The new registration page will remain open for full-time and seasonal residents aged 65 and older, and appointments will be assigned based on zip code and age with the oldest being first.

How City of Marco Island residents can register for a COVID-19 vaccine:

1. Full time and seasonal residents of Marco Island who are 65 and older can register at any time at <http://vaccine.cityofmarcoisland.com>. This link will also be shared on the City website and City social media. The link will remain open as this is not a first-come, first-served system.
2. Once the online form is completed, residents will receive an email confirming that they are registered for a COVID-19 vaccine on Marco Island and on the waiting list. This is not a guarantee of a vaccination appointment.
3. Registrants will then be prioritized for vaccination appointments when allocations are received based on Marco Island zip code and age, and will receive an email with the appointment time, date, and location.
4. Those who do not receive an appointment slot each week will remain on the registration list for future vaccine events with no further action required.

The number of vaccine appointments will vary from week to week based on the allocation the City receives from Collier County EMS. The City anticipates several thousand residents registering in this system, and the City will typically be allocated only a few hundred vaccines each week. Therefore, we encourage residents to continue to seek other vaccine appointment opportunities in addition to the Marco Island registration.

Advice from an Expert...

You just visited your local garden center and have fallen in love with a particular shrub and you want it planted just outside your big front window. But as love at first sight usually goes—this is bound to have an unhappy ending.

On January 11th, Donna Kay of the Calusa Garden Club had a Zoom presentation on Common Landscape Mistakes. Donna is very qualified to speak about landscaping specific to Florida as she is a Landscape Design Consultant. She is also a Collier County Master Gardener since 2004 and a Master Naturalist for Coastal, Wetlands and Uplands. Having lived in Marco for 24 years, Donna has a vast experience in gardening for our area.



We are not all landscape experts and the following will help illustrate some of the common landscape mistakes we see in our own yard and even in some professionally installed landscaped designs.

- ***Plants leaning toward the sun and too close to the foundation wall.*** According to Donna, these plants need constant shearing, and the back part of the vegetation will eventually die from lack of ventilation.
- ***Large trees planted too close to the house*** – is almost a standard practice in older homes. Donna stated she had a mahogany tree that was planted too close to the house and the roots went underneath her foundation. Plants are constantly growing taller and wider.

Rule of thumb – When in doubt, plant farther from the house. Go a minimum of 6' to 8' from the edge of the house.

- *Trees planted too close to the seawall* – Donna had a gumbo limbo planted too close to her seawall and it would have pushed her seawall outward. She had it moved.
- *Rule of thumb* – Always consider the mature size of a tree before selecting a planting site.
- *Planting too close to a walkway* infringes on a comfortable walking space and will need constant shearing.
- *Planting in front of a window* – windows are made for looking out and letting light in. Suggest planting the shrub in front of the stucco.
- *Planting under a power line* – in Marco we have Shady Ladies planted underneath the power lines on Bald Eagle Drive and LCEC regularly will need to cut the branches to avoid touching the power lines.
- *Mulching too deep and too close to the trunk of the tree* – roots need to breathe and too deep a mulch holds water and cause diseases. You only need 2-3 inches to stop weed growth.
- Mulch pulled away from the trunk like a donut – applied too deep will not allow the roots to breathe.
- *Topping a shrub hurts its growth and deforms its natural shape* – Hedges cut too severely, too short or too narrow or cutting in the same place all the time—in time will thin out and look unhealthy and die. Cut it a little more rounded at the top for the leaves to grow.
- *Hat racking is also referred to as “tree mutilation”* where the tree is turned into a hat-rack and end up with a few large stumps sticking out without leaves or twigs. Donna suggested that when shaping a tree, you need is a certified arborist.
- *Hurricane cut on palms* – According to Doug Caldwell, a landscape entomologist with the University of Florida Collier County Extension program, “hurricane haircut,” removes nutrients especially potassium, which keeps palms green and thriving. The more you cut, the more browning you will cause as the palm tries to absorb lost potassium from fewer fronds and eventually your palm will die.” A certified arborist knows how to prune a palm.

Hope these common landscape mistakes have started you thinking about your own yard and how you can improve it with proper planting maintenance and pruning.

Calusa Garden Club has other members who are also certified National Garden Club Landscape Design Consultants such as Sue Oldershaw and Dale DeFeo.

Calusa Garden Club Horticulture Report...

FEBRUARY 2021

DALE W. DeFEO

PLUMBAGO

P. auriculata and *P. zeylanica*

Plumbago is a genus of 10-20 flowering plants in the family Plumbaginaceae, native to warm temperate or tropical regions of the world. Although the genus contains numerous species, two are most frequently found in Florida – *Plumbago auriculata*, which blooms blue, and *Plumbago zeylanica* (also called *P. scandens*), which is more sprawling and blooms white.

Plumbago auriculata is the classic blue plumbago that is so often seen in our Zone 10 landscapes. It is native to South Africa but is classified by the University of Florida/IFAS as Florida-Friendly, due to its low invasive risk. It is also referred to as Cape plumbago, leadwort, or sky flower. Both plumbago and leadwort names have been used since the times of Plinty the Elder. He named it plumbago because the blue color reminded him of lead, so the story goes. The species of this genus is a pale blue color that does not stand out very well in the garden. However, once

the cobalt-blue cultivars ‘Imperial Blue’ and ‘Royal Cape’ were developed, the popularity of these shrubs skyrocketed. Few flowering shrubs can give us such a bright sky blue in our Zone 10. The bright blue color really makes yellow, pink, maroon, red and even white blooming companions stand out. It is almost as if a little of the sky has been brought down to our garden.

Lesser known is the species *Plumbago zeylanica*, which is a Florida native plant. It is also known as *P. scandens* and you may find it under either name. Since “scandens” means plants of a creeping or climbing nature, you immediately know that this is a plant that likes to spread or even climb. It can be used as a ground cover, in mixed borders or even used as a cascading plant in a large container. Flowers are pure white or sometimes edged with pink. The common names include “doctor bush,” “summer snow,” “devil’s herb” and “leadwort flower.”

Both species of *plumbago* develop sprawling, mounded shapes. Pruning will keep them more compact and less sprawling and more shrub-like. They do look their best and produce more flowers when allowed to simply be themselves. This makes them a good choice for foundation and mass plantings. They have bright green foliage of medium density and remains evergreen in frost-free areas of the state. Stems are thin and somewhat vine-like. The best time to plant here is at the beginning of the rainy season, as they require more water until established and then are moderately drought tolerant, needing occasional water during the dry season. Either species can be pruned back hard in late February to encourage bright new green growth and new clusters of flowers. To prune or not to prune is simply your own choice, depending on the look you wish to have, and they recover quickly as they are fast growers. Excess growth can really be trimmed at any time but be careful not to cut off branches bearing flower buds, or you will lose flowers.

Both species bear phlox-like blue or white flowers that attract butterflies and give off a light, pleasant fragrance. In our area we can enjoy blooms all year, unless hit by a rare frost. The flowers attract butterflies and even serve as a host plant. The Cassius blue butterfly, which sports two bright blue eyespots, especially like them.



P. zeylanica



P. auriculata (Dale’s garden)



Cloudless Sulphur butterfly
On *Plumbago*



Cassius blue butterfly
On *Plumbago*

The Original Owl Ladies...

In a statement from Lori Beall of the Audubon of the Western Everglades (AWE), “it’s with great sadness that one of the original ‘Owl Ladies’, Carol Patterson, passed away last weekend. Carol was one of the four original Owl Prowl volunteers. We lost Eva Schliesser last year and the Owl Ladies are the primary reasons that burrowing owls thrive on Marco Island.”



Photos by Jean Hall
Nancy Richie, Lori Fredericks, and Eva Schliesser –
September 2011- all ready to trim around the burrows.



Original Owl Ladies (l-r) Carol Patterson, Lori Fredericks, Eva Schliesser and Nancy Richie.

The legacy group of Carol Patterson, Eva Schliesser, Lori Fredericks, and Nancy Richie, fondly called the Owl Ladies, started the Owl Prowl in 1999. Nancy Richie, then the Island’s Environmental Specialist, performed the very first survey of the burrowing owls with four to five owls on Marco. Every Friday, on her own time, Nancy, with her Owl Prowl volunteers Carol, Eva, and Lori, posted, and also weeded and whacked the burrows.

Starting at 7:00 AM, the Owl Ladies worked for about three to four hours and during the nesting season, they counted the chicks and made sure the burrows were protected. Once the chicks have fledged, they took over the task of cutting back the weeds and replacing signs, postings, and stakes. They were the pioneers in conservation and for over 15 years protected the burrowing owls on Marco Island. They passed on their passion to the Owl Watch volunteers.

It would make our Owl Ladies, Eva, and Carol, proud to learn that Owl Watch had another successful 2020 season. They had over 80 active volunteers for 404 sites and 225 pairs of burrowing owls nesting on Marco Island and six pairs in Naples. Owl Watch volunteers also started using NestStory software to track burrows and owls.

The 2021 Burrowing Owl Nesting Season will officially start March 1, with over 50 volunteers monitoring 390 burrow sites in Marco Island. Sadly, we have lost some burrows due to development. The sites are broken down into 21 neighborhoods with 15 sites each. Each monitor/volunteer is assigned one of these neighborhoods to check throughout the nesting season from March 1 through July. In addition to counting owls

and their chicks, monitors will also be contributing to research by checking for owls with leg bands.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) listed Burrowing Owls as state threatened in 2016. They are also federally protected in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and under Marco Island’s Protected Species Ordinance.

For additional information on Burrowing Owls or how to volunteer, please email: owlwatchmarco@gmail.com.



Photos by Jean Hall
Carol Patterson and Eva Schliesser
– in 2015.

Please report malicious destruction or harassment of burrowing owls or their burrows to 1-888-404-FWCC (3922).

Eva’s deep roots on Marco: In addition to the Burrowing Owls, Eva had another passion. In 1979, as a new transplant to Marco Island, she placed an ad in the local paper to see if anyone was interested in forming a garden club. To her surprise, a group of both men and women responded, and thus the beginning of the Calusa Garden Club.

In 1984 Eva, with a group of volunteers from the Calusa Garden Club (CGC) and working with the Collier County Parks and Recreation Department, assumed the task of developing Leigh Plummer Memorial Park into a bird sanctuary and educational area. The theme was to use plants and trees native to this sub-tropical area. They started planting, pruning, and weeding at the Leigh Plummer Memorial Park.

Eva said her goal in life was “to educate our community about our beautiful native plants and to help get rid of the exotics.”

On January 15, to remember Eva’s legacy and in honor of Arbor Day, the Calusa Garden Club planted two native plants at the Leigh Plummer Memorial Park.



Photo by Maria Lamb | Calusa Garden Club Plaque Ceremony at Leigh Plummer Memorial Park with Eva Schliesser (with vest and dark glasses) in 2017.

Dues are due...

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN! CALUSA GARDEN CLUB MEMBERSHIP DUES DUE APRIL 1, 2021

Dues: \$40 for Active members
\$45 for Associate Members

Due Date: April 1, 2021

Send Check To: Annette Kuhn
160 Delbrook Way
Marco Island, FL 34145

You may add \$15 to your check for your lunch at the April 8 In-Person Spring Luncheon and Officer Installation. If you add \$15, then your check is \$55 for active members and \$60 for associate members.

Calusa Garden Club Spring Luncheon

THURSDAY APRIL 8, 2021 10:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH -under portico

BIG AL'S BOX LUNCH (sandwich, chips, potato salad, cookie)

BOTTLED WATER & ICED TEA provided or bring your own

PLEASE CHOOSE SANDWICH FROM MENU BELOW

Cold Hoagies & Wraps

Served with lettuce, tomato, onion, banana peppers,
sweet peppers, pickles, blended olive oil & vinegar,
salt, pepper & oregano

<i>Wraps Regular 6" Size Only</i>	6"
Classic Italian	6.40
<i>Ham, Capicola, Genoa Salami</i>	
Combo	6.90
<i>Ham, Turkey, Roast Beef</i>	
Genoa Salami	6.40
Ham & Turkey Breast	6.40
Ham	6.40
Turkey Breast	6.40
Roast Beef	7.85
Bologna	6.40
Tuna Fish (white albacore)	6.40
Chicken Salad -all white meat	6.40
Krab Salad	6.40
Egg Salad	6.40
Cheese Combo	6.40

Sandwiches

Your choice of Whole Wheat, White or Rye bread.
Your choice of Cheese Lettuce, Tomato, Onion

Roast Beef	7.85
B.L.T.	6.40
Bologna	6.40
Turkey Breast	6.40
Turkey Breast & Bacon	6.40
Ham	6.40
Genoa Salami	6.40
Chicken Salad	6.40
Krab Salad	6.40
Tuna Fish -albacore	6.40
Egg Salad	6.40
Corned Beef	7.85
Pastrami	7.85
Liverwurst	6.40

BRING A LAWN CHAIR

COST : \$15.00

MAIL CHECK TO ANNETTE KUHN 160 DELBROOK WAY, MARCO ISLAND, 34145

PLEASE RSVP by MARCH 31

JANICE ENGEL 239-316-0074 CALL/TEXT , JENGEL13@AOL.COM



We had a successful ribbon cutting being recognized as a Blue Zone Club for Southwest Florida on March 1,2021. The Blue Zone organization would like to provide members who would like them “Blue Zone T-shirts.”

THANK YOU!!

Mike Kirby, Subtropical Trees, for donating a tree to Leigh Plummer Park for Arbor Day.

**Subtropical Trees
CEP and Certified Arborist
3241 German Woods court, Naples FL 34116.
Mobile 239-271-0081**

THANK YOU!!

Eric Jadazewski, Everglades Native Designs, LLC for planting the tree in Leigh Plummer Park for Arbor Day.

**Everglades Native Designs, LLC
239-300-8115
evergladesnatedesigns.com**

THANK YOU to Cache Cleaners for storing our 6 bins of archives. Cache Cleaners is offering Calusa Garden Club members a 10% discount on cleaning services, which you can obtain by showing your CGC Name Badge. Thank you, Bruce, and Susan Neustadt!

