

BLOOMING TALES

from Terrific Ten

April, 2024



Direct from the Director: Maria Wolfe

This Wanderin' Wolfe has been travelling the 5 county area visiting the Terrific Ten Garden Clubs and attending fundraisers. I am so impressed with the professionalism of the leaders of each of the Clubs as well as the creativity of the members. This group is so vibrant and hungry for knowledge!

Groundbreakers...Then and Now – Tropical Short Course, a Tri-Refresher was a huge success. Held in January, the quality of the speakers was a huge draw and we had 106 at-

tendees. It was a fruitful fundraiser and the decision on how to spend the profits will be decided upon by YOU, the members of District X at the Spring District X meeting on Thursday, April 18.

Oceans of Orchids, the theme for the Spring District X Meeting hosted by Piper's Landing Garden Club promises to be an educational and fun event. Please join me and ask the President of your Club/Circle if you can be a delegate so you are able to vote on how to spend the profits of the Tropical Short Course. Regis-

tration is on the District X website: www.DistrictX.org.

Gardening School – Course 4 was held at Mounts Botanical Garden and many of the attendees completed the requirements to become "Gardening Consultants." Congratulations to that group.

Learning how to garden was the main reason I joined a Garden Club 8 years ago. The opportunities to become more knowledgeable about landscape design, gardening, floral design and the environment is a benefit of being a member of FFGC. Take advantage of it!

Please invite me to your Club/Circle meetings.

Jupiter Tequesta Garden Club season is in full swing!

by *Emilyn Kane*

The Jupiter Tequesta Garden Club season is in full swing. In January in celebration of Arbor Day and the 100th Anniversary of FFGC we planted a Laurel oak at the new Busch Wildlife Sanctuary. At the ceremony we were presented with an award from the Vice Mayor of Palm Beach County.

In February we had a very successful plant sale with many cultivars grown by the members.

In March we were honored with a visit from Maria Wolfe, District Director who gave a power point presentation highlighting Club ac-



tivities. We hope that this will encourage our members to join in some of the activities in the District and State.

Our season will close with an annual luncheon at the Tequesta Country Club and a trip to Morikami.

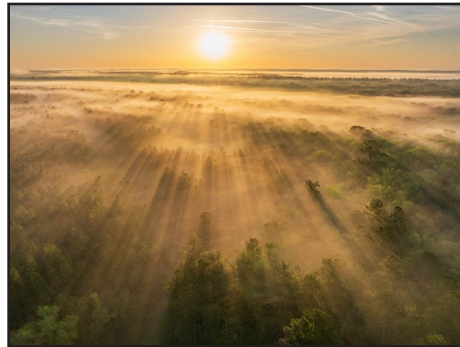


Florida Wildlife Corridor: The Path of the Panther

by Reina Snyder

In the throes of the Covid pandemic, something miraculous quietly happened—the Florida legislature passed, with bi-partisan support, the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

This corridor is 18 million acres—almost 1/3 of the state. Ten million acres are already protected; the remaining 8 million acres are at risk. These remaining acres are where help is needed.



alarming rate. Elusive, wild, almost mystical and hauntingly beautiful, panthers need large tracts of land to mate, maintain territory and to keep their populations genetically diverse and viable.

Panthers also are an umbrella species, meaning by protecting them—we

protect the habitats of Florida that many other species depend upon including black bears, otters, bobcats, deer, gopher tortoises and many others along with plant communities including many endemic species—including the rare ghost orchid among others.

How can you make a difference? Write to southeast_fws_planning@fws.gov to offer support for the establishment of the Southwest Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Area. For more information visit: www.Wildpath.com

Thank you.
Reina Snyder/Co-President/Oleander Garden Club of the Palm Beaches

Wellington GC enjoyed interesting speakers this season

The Wellington Garden Club has had a superb start to the 2023-2024 season. We have 11 new members and 1 renewal since the first of September...amazing!!!

The speakers we have lined up for this season are very interesting: history of the Everglades, permaculture, wild animals endemic to Florida, bee pollinating and natural habitats, pest control, strengthening in gardening and scientific and common names of plants. We will be so well educated!

Let's talk about fun: the *Around and Abouts* lined up are fantastic. It is a mix of educational and fun things to do.

As our meetings don't allow sufficient time to really socialize with each other, we have scheduled Sunset Socials, one each month. These are held at a member's home where we are also able to enjoy the various gardens created by our members.

Our fundraisers are:

- A "Holiday Gift Boutique", a joint effort with the Wellington Art Society held on December 2, 2023 (We sold native milkweed plants!).
- A "Shredding Event" held on January 13, 2024.
- A "Lunch & Learn", a joint effort with the Wellington Historical Society, held on March 13, 2024.
- A "Fabulous Tour of Equestrian Estates and Gardens" held on April 6, 2024 (this is our biggest fundraiser – be sure to save the date).
- Last but not least is our "Plant Sale" held on April 22, in conjunction with the Village of Wellington's celebration of Earth Day.



These lands are working ranches, farms, groves, and forests that are crucial to the corridor conservation—they are located in critical areas that connect portions of the corridor; they expand protection of state parks, state forests, and conservation areas.

Why this is relevant is the dramatic story of one man—Carlton Ward, Jr—who together with a legion of scientists, conservationists, ranchers, farmers, and the public—told the story of *The Path of the Panther*—a film and book sponsored by National Geographic.

The Florida Panther is emblematic of Wild Florida—disappearing at an

GC of Stuart is checking off activities on the FFGC Nell Coe Award list

by *Rosita Aristoff*

For Florida Arbor Day our club received proclamations from both the City of Stuart and the County. The club donated 250 South Florida Slash Pine seedlings to the Boys' and Girls' Clubs to plant. We also donated a Dahoon Holly tree which was planted at Halpatiokee Park by the Parks and Recreation Department.

About a dozen of our club members attended the Tropical Short Course. We donated two baskets put together by our Treasurer Li Roberts.

Mary Claire Anderson of the Jacaranda Circle attended Camp Wekiwa Volunteer Training.

Our Secret Garden Tour *From the Tropics to the Trails* is fast approaching and ticket sales are brisk. This is our club's biennial fundraiser and proceeds support our Scholarships Program.

The Academic Scholarships Committee has determined the four local high school senior scholarship recipients for 2023-2024. These scholarships are for furthering the students'

education in agriculture, landscape architecture, environmental science or a related field. Also, another high school student has been selected to receive our Outstanding Youth Award.



This past Saturday several members participated in Audubon's Possum Long Nature Center pine flatwood restoration project assisting with the planting of hundreds of native plants.

Lastly, with our plant swap held at our general meeting and our collected donations for SafeSpace, we continue making progress with the activities related to the FFGC Nell Coe Award.

Ocean Ridge GC holds first Garden Tour

by *Jackie Reed*



ORGC members, l to r: Barbara Cook, Britt Flanigan, Lisa Ritota, Polly Joa, Caroline Robison

The Ocean Ridge Garden Club (ORGC) held its first "Secret Gardens by the Sea" Garden Tour on March 10, featuring seven private gardens and two public spaces actively maintained by ORGC volunteers.

Over 100 guests, including many members of District X garden clubs and circles, attended the inaugural fundraising event which supports the civic, charitable, and educational programs of the ORGC.

Attendees visited properties that featured formal tropical and bromeliad gardens, native plants and dunes, as well as a backyard butterfly garden, where they were greeted by ORGC volunteers and offered informational material relating to the specific plantings at each of the various gardens as part of their experience.

The tour also included a buffet lunch at The Ocean Club with live music. The tour included an opportunity to shop with multiple local vendors including CR Orchids, Rich Akerson's Florida Native Orchids, Nomad Surf Shop and Palm Beach Native Images.

The event exceeded the fund-raising goal and received lots of positive feedback from attendees, garden owners and the volunteers. Planning for next year's tour has already begun.

Garden Club Awards

If your club is doing it, apply and get the Award!

All Florida Federation Garden clubs are eligible and encouraged to apply for NGC Deep South Garden Club Awards. Flower Show Awards, Floral Designs in Public Places or Events Awards and Colorful Public Plantings Awards can be awarded to your Garden Club. Our Garden Clubs present wonderful Flower Shows and have beautiful Garden Tours which are worthy of greater praise from the Deep South Garden Clubs. Encourage your members to apply to get the awards their efforts deserve!

Information and applications: Deepsouthgardenclubs.com and click Unified Project Awards or FFGC.org. Easy online applications! Email me for help.

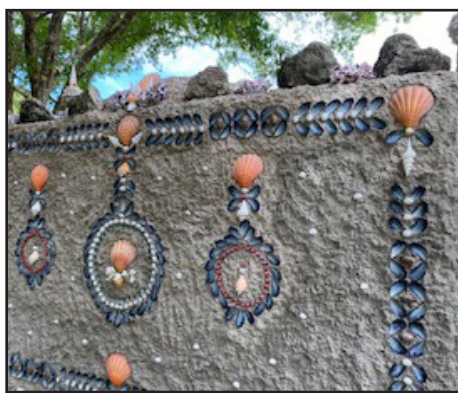
Private five-acre Italian garden wows Jasmine Circle

Jasmine Circle opened its unique March 7th field trip to all members of Garden Club of Indian River County (GCIRC).

Maggie Cook and Judy Shottes co-Vice Presidents, and Linda Beardslee, began the tour by serving refreshments to more than forty women.

Keeping the meeting brief, Jasmine Circle President, Maureen Labadie, had already emailed "homework," by apprising members of their upcoming business.

Cathi Bates, the garden's owner, gave an outstanding tour explaining how she and her husband planned and executed its construction over three years. Cathi then walked members through the various areas of the lush gardens, which included hundreds of unique shells embedded in columns, arches, trellises, benches, and sitting areas, including sit-spots for meditating.



Jasmine is thankful for such gracious members of our county who know and respect GCIRC.

Celebrate National Garden Week in your community!

by Maria Wolfe

Celebrate National Garden Week in Your Community!

Join NGC clubs across the country to celebrate National Garden Week, June 2-8, 2024. This week is an opportunity to encourage pride in your community, interest new members, and work with other groups to be part of those efforts.

Ideas to Consider:

- Plan an educational program and/or workshop at your local library, public garden or garden center.
- Sponsor a hands-on "How Do You Select Flowers/Shrubs for Your

Garden" workshop at an area nursery.

- Beautify a manageable blighted area or enhance an existing garden. This would be a good opportunity to work with other groups.
- Plan an activity with a youth group or school students.
- Place a plant or flower arrangement at public facilities, along with one of the beautiful National Garden Week posters.

To download a copy of the poster visit: <https://www.gardenclub.org/national-garden-week>

Hibiscus Circle of the GC of Indian River County decorates VNA Hospice House

by Hollis Stoddard

The Hibiscus Circle of the Garden Club of Indian River County has been decorating the VNA Hospice House for the Christmas season for many, many years. While the special guests each year may change, our circle's love and devotion to sharing the joy of the season has never changed. We decorate a large Christmas tree in main sitting room, the front desk, each private sitting area and, if permitted, each patients room.

We have had the opportunity to share a hug with family and friends visiting patients who are touched by the warmth the Christmas decor can bring. Our circle member Hilary Dobson has been instrumental in organizing this special program and our circle looks forward to this every year.



Nuts and Bolts are golden at GC of Fort Pierce

It's a busy time of year for clubs, pulling together major projects and gathering energetic nominees for the upcoming year. That means it is time to notice the golden nuts and bolts that make our club's gears work.

Kudos to our Grounds Committee and our House Committee! These members create an environment that welcomes us to our meetings.



"Somebody has to do it," according to past president and current bylaws chair Jane Zezeck.

Whether it is setting up tables or nurturing the landscape, their work is so very important and often goes unnoticed. Special thanks to our Bylaws Committee and Nominating Committee too.

These unsung heroes are the teams that allow us to thrive. Thank you!

Speaking of thriving, our past president and current chaplain, Liz Cohen, was the speaker for our March meeting.

A propagation enthusiast and excellent gardener, her subject covered care of thriving blooming landscape plants. Next up will be Ellen Broderick on Florida Native Plants. How wonderful to be able to tap into our own members and local speakers for knowledge perfectly tailored for our landscapes.

Reaching Out...Some members recently drove to Delray to enjoy exciting floral designs at Judges' POSH Art in Bloom in Delray.



Members were also enthralled by Art in Bloom at the Vero Museum of Art. Next, designers will be creating arrangements for Ft. Pierce Art Club's "Color Fort Pierce Beautiful". This celebration honors Crayola's inventor Edwin Binney and took place on March 30, 10-2:00 at Riverwalk Center in Ft. Pierce. Mr. Binney was an avid naturalist. His daughter was a very early president of our club. These fun artistic networking opportunities have truly given us fuel for upcoming projects.

Now as we build steam for our spring Plants in the Park sale, we will be inspired more than ever. Please come and shop on Saturday, April 27th, from 8:00 -2:00 at our clubhouse at 911 Parkway Drive, Ft. Pierce. You will find terrific member grown plants. As always, we will be happy to see you at the Garden Club of Ft. Pierce.

Boynton Beach Garden Club presents its second annual fashion show

by Linda Anderson, President of BBGC



Boynton Beach Garden Club members and guests enjoyed the Raisin' Cane Sugarland Bus Trip to Clewiston on February 15. It was an entertaining, as well as educational trip, about the sugarcane indus-

try, agricultural practices and water conservation efforts underway in the rich "muck" of Florida.

Attendees were treated to a bountiful buffet at the Clewiston Country



Club. Many of us took the opportunity to sample the sugar cane when we stopped at one of the fields.

The Blossoms and Butterflies luncheon/fashion show was presented by Boynton Beach Garden Club on March 20 at Westchester Country Club.

Over 160 members and guests enjoyed the tasty lunch and stylish fashions modeled from over eight stores and boutiques. more than 40 attendees were lucky winners of beautifully displayed raffle baskets!

Thanks to all who supported our fundraiser.

District X Flower Show was an event to remember

by Christine Biscoglio, FFSJ chair

District X Flower Show Judges Council presented “Art In Bloom”, a POSH Event, on February 9th, 2024 in the POSH Gallery, Delray Market Place.

Eleven seasoned designers brought to life their interpretation of the artist of their choice from the many contemporary artists represented at the POSH Gallery. Designs ranged from magnificent traditional to the creative and everything you can imagine.

Opening ceremony began at 4PM with a toast, thank you’s and welcome messages. To our great surprise, Maria Wolfe, our District Director, presented the Council with a check to help with expenses.

The gallery was open to invited guests at Five o’clock who enjoyed beverages, hors d’oeuvres, and treats while our violinist played behind chatter of over 200 guests. This was an event to remember.



Learn how to preserve fresh flowers

There's nothing like fresh flowers around the house whether they come straight from your garden or from a florist. But when you take the time to put together an arrangement, you'd like it to last forever or at least for more than a few days! Here are some step-by-step tips for extending the vase life of cut flowers.

Tools and Materials

- Stem-cutting shears or sharp pruners
- Pail
- Vase
- Water
- 7-Up
- Bleach

Cut flowers. Cut flowers in your garden in the morning before the dew has dried, or in the early evening. With stem-cutting shears

or sharp pruners, snip above a node or dormant bud to spur new blooms. Put stems in a pail of lukewarm water as you cut them.

Recut stems. Recut stems on a slant indoors under water to eliminate air bubbles that block uptake of food and water. Certain types of flowers (including celosia, sunflower, and zinnia) benefit from scalding the stem ends in boiling water for

20 seconds or over a candle flame to stop nutrient-rich sap from oozing. To prevent decay, remove bruised leaves and foliage below the water line.

Condition flowers. Condition flowers several hours before arranging. Rest stems in lukewarm water



in a cool, dark place so they can absorb water.

Arrange flowers. Arrange conditioned flowers in a vase of warm (110oF) water. To slow aging, place the vase in a well-ventilated cool place (as low as 38oF). Don't store flowers near unsealed fruits and vegetables, which produce ethylene, a gas that hastens ripening, or in the case of flowers, aging.

Add water. Freshly cut flowers have enough stored sugars to survive in a vase, but if you would like to add a preservative, try a homemade version. Tests have found commercial floral preservatives to be less effective than the following formula

- 1 cup regular 7-Up
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon household bleach

The sugar in the 7-Up provides energy for the flowers, and the bleach controls bacteria. If you need more liquid, just increase the amounts proportionately.

Change water. Change water every couple of days. In mixed bouquets, some of the flowers may give off sap that is toxic to other varieties in the vase shortening their vase life, a process that is avoided by frequently

refreshing the water.

Tips. Some of the best and most widely adapted annual cut flowers with the longest vase life include: alstroemeria, aster, celosia, cosmos, gypsophila, lavatera, rudbeckia, scabiosa, snapdragon, statice, sunflower, yarrow, and zinnia.

Keep in mind that flowers with hollow stems do not have a long vase life

Fluttering Beauty: butterfly gardening in South Florida

Butterfly gardening in South Florida offers enthusiasts a vibrant tapestry of color and life. With its tropical climate and diverse ecosystem, South Florida provides an ideal habitat for a plethora of butterfly species. From the majestic Monarch to the delicate Zebra Longwing, these winged wonders grace local gardens, adding a touch of ethereal beauty.

Native plants like the Milkweed, Firebush, and Passionflower serve as essential hosts for butterfly larvae, while nectar-rich blooms such as Lantana, Pentas, and Coneflowers attract adults. By cultivating a butterfly garden, residents not only enhance their outdoor space but also contribute to the conservation of these vital pollinators.

Creating a butterfly-friendly environment in South Florida requires thoughtful planning and consideration of both plant selection and



garden layout. Embracing native flora not only ensures the sustenance of local butterfly populations but also promotes a resilient ecosystem. Additionally, providing sheltered areas, such as shrubs and trees, offers protection from harsh weather conditions and predators.

With proper care and dedication, a butterfly garden becomes more than just a floral haven; it becomes a sanctuary for these delicate creatures, fostering a deeper connection to the natural world right in the heart of South Florida's urban landscape.

Piper's Landing GC hosts District X Spring Meeting

Leslie Robinson/Acting President,

Our "little" seasonal Piper's Landing Garden Club has been busy this season, as we are celebrating our 10th Birthday and happy to have added several new members to our roster.

January was our very well attended Floral Design workshop hosted by our own floral design consultant, member, Lois Acinapura.

Our club celebrated Florida Arbor Day by planting a Southern Magnolia.

In February, we created succulent gardens at the instruction of guest Kimberly Helms from the Wellington Garden Club, and in March, we

took a field trip to Pan's Garden in West Palm Beach which was Florida's first all native botanical garden established in 1994.

Also on our agenda is our continuing community orchid refurbishment whereby we are replenishing the 1,000 orchids that we planted several years ago. Always a beautiful sight to behold and getting better.

Hope to see you on April 18 for **Oceans of Orchids:** FFGC District X Spring Meeting which we will be hosting at Piper's Landing Yacht and Country Club in Palm City.

Hope everyone has a safe and healthy summer! Enjoy and nurture your gardens.

Nectar plants to feed your adult Atala butterflies

by Kat Rabla, the District X Horticulture Chair.

The Atala butterfly, *Eumaeus atala*, is a true Florida success story largely due to increasing repopulation of Florida native Coontie. Coontie, *Zamia integrifolia*, is the host plant for the Atala butterfly. The Atala was thought to have become extinct for many years before it was discovered on a Virginia Key in 1979.

A handful of Larva collected and reared by Naturalist Roger Hammer revealed them to be Atalas. Since then there has been great effort made in propagating Coontie plants and educating the public to add this lovely plant to their landscapes. We all now know what their host plant is, but let us talk about what plants the adults like to use for food.

Here are some of the favorite nectar plants frequented by Atala butterfly in my Palm Beach garden:

- **Asclepias incarnata*, Swamp milkweed
- **Bidens alba*, Spanish needle
- **Cephalanthus occidentalis*, Common buttonbush
- **Chiococca alba*, Common Snowberry
- **Citharexylum spinosum*, Florida fiddlewood
- **Chromolaena odorata*, Jack-in-the-bush
- **Lantana involucrata*, Wild-sage
- **Melochia tomentosa*, Grayleaf
- **Monarda punctata*, Dotted Horse-mint
- **Pineland croton*, Grannybush
- **Psychotria ligustrifolia*, Bahama wild coffee
- **Solidago sempervirens*, Seaside goldenrod
- Tournefortia gnaphalodes* Sea-lavender