



THE HIBISCUS LEAFLET

Coral Gables Garden Club Coral Gables, Florida ~ Celebrating our 97th Year

A proud member of the National Garden Club, Inc. and the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs

November 2021

A Thanksgiving Appreciation

President's Message by Susan Rodriguez

I would like to take a moment as we embark on this holiday season, to tell each and every one of you how grateful I am for your membership. You have stayed the course during a difficult time, and have supported the club while we continue to work to achieve the aims and goals of the garden club for our community. I'm particularly thankful for our new provisional class, who have jumped in feet first: working in the heritage garden and pollinator patch, editing our newsletter, soliciting underwriting, helping with the garden center renovation and coming up with terrific new project ideas I can't wait to share.

I am grateful for the leadership of our board, whose members are working to continue our many projects, taking meticulous minutes, keeping our finances straight, producing a lovely yearbook, putting on special events as well as outstanding programs and workshops, and engaging in the endless amount of correspondence that is so important to the club.

Thank you to all the members who are bringing guests to our meetings. I am excited about the positive energy that is evident in our new prospective members, and it makes me hopeful for the future of our garden club. Finally, I am grateful for the news that—as our November newsletter goes to press—Miami-Dade County is officially reporting a comparatively low, 2% positivity rate for COVID-19, along with the highest vaccination rate by county in the state of Florida and above the national average. While the mayor's office continues to encourage prudent safety measures, the 2% positivity rate gives us the opportunity to finally meet in person. As a result, our first in-person meeting of the year is scheduled for Wednesday, December 8th, at which time we will gather to celebrate the holidays at the Biltmore. (Please see November Program News below for details.)

Sending you the best of wishes this holiday season for good health, good food and good times with family and friends.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours!!

— Susan Rodriguez, President



*Above—Pumpkins
harvested by Lynn & Bill
Kerdyk*

November Program News

by Teresa Zohn

The **November meeting** will be held on **Zoom** on **November 22**, which is the Monday before Thanksgiving. It will begin with the room opening at 9:30 AM and the meeting starting promptly at 10:00 AM. Our speaker will be our own Linda Lawrence Waldron, and she will be speaking on Planting for Pollinators. I hope you will join us.

We have an exciting announcement for our **December** meeting. We are going to meet in person and inside at the **Biltmore Wednesday, December 8**, in the **Danielson Gallery**. We will start gathering at 11:00 AM with lunch served at 11:15 AM. The meeting will start promptly at noon. We will have holiday entertainment for you to enjoy. You are encouraged to wear a mask.

The hospitality committee for December led by Maria Gonzalez is Michele Wisehart, Mercy Arrieta, Ana Collengette and Lynn Kerdyk.

Announcements and Reminders

Saturday, November 13th, 9:30AM, Merrick House—Welcome to another garden workday at the Merrick House herb garden. This spade brigade event will be shorter in duration and less intense than the first one. We only have a little weeding to do and some plants to add. **Participant bonus:** One or more recipes featuring herbs and plants grown at Merrick House will be shared with all who come! If you are interested, please call Paula Biehler at (305) 606-1903 or drop a note to miamicook835@yahoo.com.

—Paula Biehler



Thursday, November 18th, 2:45 PM, MacFarlane pollinator patch—A garden experience

with the Coral Gables High School garden club to weed, mulch and continue to plant pollinator plants at the MacFarlane pollinator patch. —Susan Rodriguez



Saturday, November 20th, Fun With Flowers Zoom Workshop—Details will be sent by email, so be sure to

register by November 15 with either Sharon Trbovich (skyeterriers1@gmail.com ph: 401-935-6709), or Kitty Winkler

(kittywink1@gmail.com ph: 786-479-3599). We will be making two floral designs: a Fall arrangement, and a holiday nosegay. NOTE: The December Fun with Flowers session listed in the Yearbook has been cancelled, since we have added a holiday design to the November session. —Sharon Trbovich and Kitty Winkler



Saturday, December 4th, 10:00 AM, Matheson Hammock—Please join us in our efforts to protect our coastlines,

marine life and water resources by participating in our next mangrove pup harvest. We will gather in the parking lot of **Matheson Hammock**, across from the restaurant at that location. When you come into the park, tell the guard you are picking up mangrove pups with Commissioner Anderson, and you won't be charged an entry fee. Take the left road and be sure to bring your work gloves and sun hats. I hope to see many of you there. (For more details on our first workday and why we do this, see **Magical Mangroves** article on Page 4.) —Susan Rodriguez

Monday, December 6th, 9:00 AM, Merrick House—Sign up soon to take part in a popular seasonal project: our traditional holiday decorating of the Merrick House. Please contact Alexis Ehrenhaft at aje47@hotmail.com or (305) 606-5054. —Alexis Ehrenhaft

Pollinator Focus: Meet the Zebra Longwing

by Linda Waldron



Adult Zebra Longwing butterfly. Image by Barbara Jackson from Pixabay.

The Zebra Longwing butterfly is our state butterfly. The zebra heliconian (*Heliconius charithonia*) is unmistakable with its long narrow wings striped black and yellow. Unlike other butterflies that only live for a few weeks, the Zebra Longwing can live and lay eggs for several months.

Most butterflies can only sip fluids like nectar, which is mostly sugar. Longwings can take pollen as well, and they can dissolve this with their saliva. Pollen is very nutritious and rich in proteins. It is this richer diet that allows Zebras to prolong their lives.

The Zebra Longwing feeds on a wide range of flowers, making them good pollinators. After mating, the female lays her eggs on passion vines. Caterpillars feed on the plant and acquire some of its toxicity, which makes them distasteful to predators. The bright color and bold pattern of adult butterflies advertise this to predators.

Such color-based survival strategies are ingenious. The Atala, for example, signals that its caterpillars are toxic with their bright red color and 12 bright yellow spots. The Giant Swallowtail butterfly has caterpillars that look like bird droppings in black and white, and with Zebras, the adult butterfly's bold markings signal to predators that the butterfly doesn't taste good!

Zebra Longwings and other heliconians have a reputation as very intelligent insects. They roost at night in a group, and the oldest ones choose the best places. I am lucky enough to have a lot of Zebras in my yard, and it is really neat to see them deciding where to roost. They circle around plants, eventually picking one where they will hang in groups, upside down with their wings folded. They also remember where their food sources are and return to those daily. So, get some passion vine, lantana and firebush growing in your yard, and enjoy the show!!!

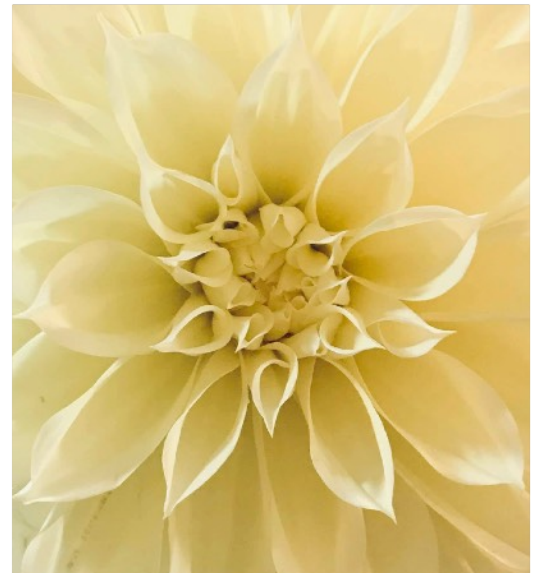
Enjoy the Beautiful Dahlia in Florida

by Sharon Trbovich

Next to Orchids, Dahlias are my favorite flower, and now I have discovered they are winter hardy to Zone 11...wow! Dahlias are documented back to the Aztec era. The Aztecs incorporated Dahlias in religious ceremonies and used the tubers for a food source (think sweet potatoes) and for medicinal purposes, mainly as a cure for diabetes.

Dahlias symbolize wealth, elegance, involvement, inner strength, creativity and dignity, i.e., everything you find in a garden clubber! During the Victorian Era, they were often used as a symbol of commitment. There are at least 42 species of Dahlias and more than 20,000 cultivars. Fourteen categories of different types of blooms exist, among them Cactus, Semi Cactus, Waterlily and PomPom. Blooms come in many sizes. Most popular are the Giant or Dinner Plate, which are at least 10 inches across. The medium size averages six inches across, and the PomPom size are the tiniest at two inches across. Colors are amazing and make it impossible to choose just one!

Dahlias need full to partial sun, a good organic soil and not to be overwatered. Grooming is easy. Pinch the lower shoots for sturdy growth, and pinch multiple buds that appear on a single stem to promote maximum size. Planting in containers for a patio or balcony is increasingly popular. To become enchanted and enthusiastic about Dahlias, visit the American Dahlia Society at dahlia.org or reach out to me for additional links.



Magical Mangroves

by Susan Rodriguez



Above—Rhonda Anderson (l) and Paula Biehler

inviting other community members to join in. With a goal this year of growing over 1,000 trees, she has engaged local Boy Scout Troop 7 to plant the pups we collect as one of their community service projects. An August 2022 plant date has been set, and Commissioner Anderson has partnered with Miami-Dade County Mayor Levine Cava to establish planting locations within the county.

But first we needed to harvest. The keys to planning this project were knowing when, where and what to look for.

After a high tide, mangrove pups are pushed into the parking lot at Matheson hammock. That solved the questions of when and where. The next challenge was determining how to identify pups that could be replanted. For this, we owe thanks to members Paula Biehler and Rhonda Anderson, at whose side I also worked to harvest over 500 pups that day. I would also like to thank Grace Carricarte for bringing snacks, corralling 1-gallon pots to hold the pups and for negotiating with Galloway Farms for a great price on sand used for potting.



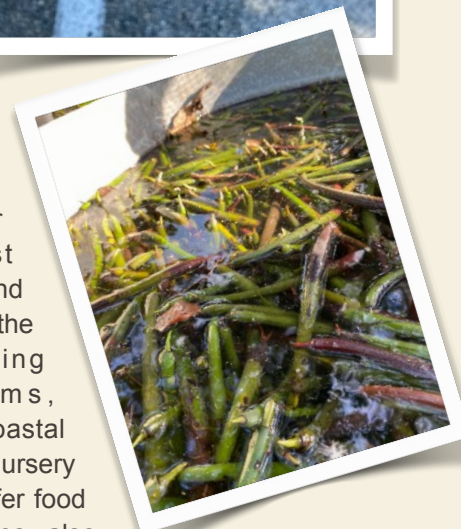
Above—Rhonda Anderson, Paula Biehler, Susan Rodriguez and Grace Carricarte

Driving into Matheson Hammock on Saturday, November 7th, I was struck by how beautiful the mangrove canopy was, filtering the bright sun on my way in to meet Commissioner Rhonda Anderson. We were about to begin our first mangrove pup harvest of the year, and the day had turned sunny and beautiful after a morning rain.

You may not think of the mangrove tree as magical, but if there is one tree that could save our planet, this could be it. Tiny new mangrove trees are known as pups, and to restore a coastline, these baby mangroves need to be gathered and relocated to areas in need.

The Coral Gables Garden Club has long supported such coastal restoration efforts.

Commissioner Anderson is now carrying on this project,



Magical mangroves are our frontline defense against hurricanes, storm surges and high tides. Growing in or near the water's edge and sporting enormous root systems, mangroves help reduce coastal erosion, provide sheltering nursery habitats for marine life and offer food for native wildlife. Mangroves also provide a filtration system for our

oceans and bays by filtering water as it leaves land, helping cleanse it of pollutants, heavy metals, pesticides and agricultural runoff before entering waterways. I think we were all reminded of its importance during the summer of 2020, with the horrific fish kill attributed to pollutants and low oxygen levels that was reported by the Miami Waterkeeper organization. Please join us on **December 4th, 10:00 AM** at **Matheson Hammock** for our next pup harvest day!!



Coral Reef Preservation

by Sharon Trbovich, FFGC Coral Reef Chair

What do Australia, Indonesia, Philippines, Hawaii, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Maldives and the United States have in common?

They all have coral reefs, and all these reefs are in danger. Coral reefs are home to over 4,000 species of marine life, 840 species of coral and one million types of other living organisms.

Corals are finicky organisms. They need clean, clear water so that sunlight can filter through. They need warm water, not the hot water that our oceans are in danger of becoming. They need a healthy wildlife population, and, ideally, reefs should remain as undisturbed as possible by human activity.

Threats leading to the slow demise of coral reefs include global warming, sea level rise, stronger storms and ocean acidification. (Acidification is due to the fact that 48% of the fossil fuels released into the ocean is absorbed by the water, making ocean waters more acidic. This inhibits the coral's ability to build reefs.) The combination of these threats increases the incidence of coral bleaching and can lead to destruction of affected reefs.

What else causes harm to coral reefs? Many activities, including some that might surprise you. For example, there is coral mining, in which huge chunks of corals are harvested for use in construction materials and even jewelry and home decor...so please think twice before you buy that coral decor for your coffee table. Verify whether it is real or manufactured to look real, and never purchase anything made from real coral. "Bottom trawling" is another form of harm to corals. This is a fishing method in which a very large, weighted net is dropped to the bottom and dragged for some distance, scooping up anything in its path. It is a profoundly cruel, destructive and inefficient method for catching marketable fish, but many fishing operators continue to do it anyway, whether or not it is allowed. What you can do to discourage the practice is to NOT buy any product caught by bottom trawling—and lobby for prevention of it where possible. Overfishing by any method can deprive coral reefs of too many fellow creatures that help promote health in the reef. Sustainable fishing, on the other hand, helps ensure that coral reefs, sea life and humans have a good chance of survival. So again, be sure to check the labels on your seafood purchases, and shop responsibly. Even tourism has an impact: improperly placed boat anchors, careless scuba diving and even snorkeling activity can all cause damage. Many of us love to see coral up close, but if you are touring, take care with your fins when you dive or snorkel, and choose a dive operator with a good reputation for care of the reef environment before you plunge.

The following organizations should be excellent sources of information and support for those who are interested:

- Coral Restoration Foundation, Inc. founded by Ken Nedimyer (<https://reefnewalusa.org>)
- Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium
- University of Miami (UM) Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science— Rescue a Reef coral conservation program
- The Florida Atlantic University Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (FAU Harbor Branch)

Last month, the Coral Gables cinema presented a film on coral reef restoration called "One Hundred Yards of Hope" that I hope many of our club members were able to see. The project on which the film was based is part of an ongoing National Football League endeavor to give back to each community in which they play the Super Bowl. In this case it was Miami and Super Bowl LIV. Involved in the project were NFL players, Navy Seals and students at Rosenstiel, one of whom is a Ph.D student who received a scholarship from the Coral Gables Garden Club to continue her work. The greatest thing about this project is that it is not a one-time event. It's an ongoing effort for all.

So much more I can say on the subject of Coral Reefs...but here's hoping you will get involved in any way you can!



Above—Scuba divers work to restore a reef



Green Tip

by Marlin Ebbert

PLEASE DON'T FLUSH expired medications and pills down the toilet! The City of Coral Gables provides a wonderful service to its residents – a 24 hour/seven days a week pharmaceutical drug drop located in the lobby of the Public Safety Building at 2151 Salzedo Street. We MUST do all that we can to keep our water supply clean and pristine!

*Drug collection bin at
2151 Salzedo St.
—Photo by Marlin
Ebbert*



November Flower Show

by Donna Box

We are continuing our exploration of the Horticulture Division of the Flower Show Schedule for our November meeting. This month Class 3 Orchidaceae and Class 4 Container grown plants (flowering) on page 14 of your yearbook are the topics. To participate, send a picture to Susan Rodriguez at susan56athome@gmail.com and include the identification. We are having a Zoom meeting, so container size will not matter. Share your favorites with us and participate in the show.



Left— Cattleya Bowringiana. Photo by Donna Box

Guests and Prospective Members

If you would like to bring a prospective member to our Monday, November 22nd meeting, please send their name and email address to Sally Morris, our Membership Chair, at morris.sally@comcast.net. We need your guest's email in order to extend an invitation and a Zoom link. Remember that prospective members need to be Coral Gables residents. For more details about membership, check the bylaws in your yearbook.



The MacFarlane Project

by Susan Rodriguez

October 16th was a great day for the planting of the MacFarlane pollinator garden. Garden Club members Susan Rodriguez, Denise West, Marlin Ebbert and Commissioner Rhonda Anderson were joined by Coral Gables High School (CGHS) students and residents of the neighborhood. A friend of the heritage garden also joined in that day, Maria Teofil, a fabulous garden club member in the making.



We dug holes, laid mulch and planted many native plants that will increase the native wildlife in this neighborhood. On November 10th, we conducted a rain barrel workshop on the property, with Barbara McAdams from the Miami-Dade Extension office. Several CGHS students joined us to paint the rain barrels.

There is still much to do, and I would like to invite you to

come and join in the fun the next time we have an event scheduled. Bring something to eat and drink so we can sit under the Moringa trees on the picnic table the city provided.

This garden is much more than a pollinator patch, it is a project that is bringing two neighborhoods together that have lived in the same city but never really interacted with each other. As Louis Duncanson pointed out to me the other day, "We are doing something really beautiful for the people in our community."

Send me an email at susan56athome@gmail.com if you would like to join me in future activities there.



This page, clockwise from left— Property owner Louis Duncanson, Susan Rodriguez and Marina Devine, Rhonda Anderson, CGHS garden club and art club students with their decorated rain barrels.

Club Happenings and Volunteer Opportunities 2021/22*

2021

- Nov 20 (Sat) **Fun with Flowers 10:00-12:00 Thanksgiving and Fall Designs** (Sign-up deadline is Thursday, November 18)
- Dec 4 (Sat) **Mangrove Pup Harvest** 10:00 am Matheson Hammock. Please contact Susan Rodriguez.
- Dec 6 (Mon) **Merrick House Christmas Decorating 9:00 am.** Our traditional holiday decorating of the Merrick House is back. Please contact Alexis Ehrenhaft at aje47@hotmail.com or (305) 606-5054

2022

- Feb (TBD) **Tour of Kitchens:** The Coral Gables Community Foundation's annual event is scheduled to return in February. To chair this event, please contact Susan Rodriguez at susan56athome@gmail.com.
- Feb 16 (Wed) **Field Trip: Casey's Corner Natives Nursery**, Homestead, FL
- Feb 26 (Sat) **Fun with Flowers 10:00 AM-12:00 PM** – Winter Wonderland Designs (Sign-up deadline is Thursday, February 24).
- Mar (TBD) **Garden Therapy** - COVID -19 permitting
- Mar 18 (Fri) **Spring Floral and Fashion Show**
A very special Floral and Fashion Show chaired by Barbara Reese and Jowanda Peterson, this will be our main Fundraiser and open to the public. The show will be held at the Biltmore Hotel, Alhambra Room, starting at 11:00 AM. Plan now to bring your friends, as this promises to be a fabulous event! Please sign up for a committee by contacting Barbara Reese: barbarareese1@aol.com, (305)-445-2258 or Jowanda Peterson: jogpeterson@gmail.com, (305)-669-3140.
- April 1 (Fri) **CGGC Photo Contest**
April 1st - April 31st, 2022—Our 2nd annual Photography Competition that reaches all photographers in the State of Florida. Participate in this virtual fundraiser from the convenience of your home. Volunteers who have website, Excel and/or social media experience are needed. We will be distributing promotional materials at our Farmers markets, so we need volunteers to participate in the setup and the day's events. Contact Susan Rodriguez at susan56athome@gmail.com. An exhibition after the results is being discussed; we would need a Chair to plan this event. Please contact Sherry Jordan or Susan Rodriguez. To become a sponsor of this event, contact Margaret (Peggy) Groves, our new member at mmgrovesint@gmail.com or (305)-804-6751.
- April 23 (Sat) **Fun with Flowers 10:00-12:00 – Springtime Designs** (Sign-up deadline is Thursday, April 21)
- April (TBD) **Arbor Day To be arranged with the City of Coral Gables**
- May (TBD) **Luncheon and Installation of CGGC Officers:** Contact Liz Parnes at ecparnes1@aol.com to sign up for that committee.

*2021-2022 club happenings subject to change based on COVID Guidelines

Feb, 2022 note: The Lamar Louise Curry Park, a collaboration between the Garden Club and the city of Coral Gables, is beginning construction and scheduled to open in February 2022. The triangular plot of city land in front of Venetian Pool at 2701 De Soto Boulevard was chosen by our club and the city to turn into a flowering park and was officially named the Lamar Louise Curry Park on October 9, 2018 by the city commission. The ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled to be in February, so if you would like to be involved in the planning, contact Audrey Ross at aross@miamirealestate.com or Sharon Trbovich skyeterriers1@gmail.com.

There are many opportunities to volunteer; please review our committees on the website and in your Yearbooks, and contact the appropriate Chair to volunteer.

