

BOYNTON BEACH GARDEN CLUB

YOU HEARD IT THROUGH

THE GRAPEVINE

OCTOBER 2025

Fun Facts !

A sunflower is not just one flower. The sunflower is a huge flower, but the head or fuzzy brown center actually contains 1,000-2,000 individual flowers. Each of those individual flowers will produce a sunflower seed.

Plants really do respond to sound. Talking to plants to help them grow is a well-known old gardeners tale, but studies have shown vibration (like music, or perhaps even the sweet sound of your voice) can positively affect plant growth.

Butterflies might be more attracted to your weeds than your flowers. Colorful blooms aren't the chief reason these insects love your garden - it's more about the fragrance and nectar. Some cultivated plants that have been grown for brighter or bigger blooms, have lost the strength of their scent or aroma over the years, so butterflies may gravitate to dandelions or clover instead.

By Thussadmin



**Who's living in
your bird house?**



**Our wonderful
visit to
Gumbo Limbo**



Calendar BBGC Programs 2025-26

October

Tuesday, Oct. 14 – FIELD TRIP (carpool) – Okeeheelee Nature Center, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd., West Palm Beach

9 a.m., Thursday, October 16 – District X Fall Meeting – “Barefoot in Paradise”, hosted by The Garden Club of Indian River County, Vero Beach Country Club, 800 30th St., Vero Beach

1:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 21, Bingo at Rustic Retreat

9:30 a.m., Tuesday, October 21 – Board Meeting – Woman’s Club Building

1 p.m., Tuesday, October 28 – General Meeting

Program: Making Orchids Easy, Jason Mackey, Horticulturist, professional orchid grower, Orchid Society member, owner of Barefoot Orchids

November

10 a.m., Wednesday, November 5 – Nature Walk & Talk, Galaxy Sand Pine Scrub Reserve, 461 Boynton Beach Boulevard, Boynton Beach

9:45 a.m., Tuesday, November 11 – Veteran’s Day activities at Blue Star Marker and Rustic Retreat (10 a.m.)

9:30 a.m., WEDNESDAY, November 12 – Board Meeting

1 p.m., Tuesday, November 18 – General Meeting

(NOTE: A week early due to Thanksgiving.)

Program: Artful Landscaping in Small Gardens, Nancy Calderone, ISA Certified Arborist, Environmental Horticulturist & Garden Designer

December

10 a.m., Wednesday, December 3 – Nature Walk & Talk – Gumbo Limbo Nature Center Butterfly Garden, 1801 N. Ocean Blvd., Boca Raton

10 a.m., Friday, December 5 – Rustic Retreat visit

8:30 a.m. Saturday, December 6- Float Prep

4 p.m. Saturday, December 6 - Boynton Beach Holiday Parade

9:30 a.m., Tuesday, December 9 – Board meeting – Woman’s Club Building

1 p.m., Tuesday, December 16 – General Meeting

(NOTE: A week early due to Christmas.)

Theme: Holiday Party

Snacks: Holiday themed party food provided by members.

Click on link below for full listing of upcoming events!!

[Boyntonbeachgardenclubs.org](https://www.facebook.com/groups/boyntonbeachgardenclubs.org/)



[https://www.facebook.com/groups/
boyntonbeachgardenclubs.org/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/boyntonbeachgardenclubs.org/)



A Note from Your President...

Welcome to the start of the BBGC 2025-26 Season!

All who were able to attend the September General Meeting, which was a “Welcome Back”- themed Ice Cream Social, received their new and improved yearbook and heard a preview of the coming attractions for the year. Attendees also learned that I am continuing with my “How Does Your Garden Grow?” theme from last year. It is such a good theme I had to stick with it!

All gardeners know, you are never done growing your garden. From one season to the next we are continually working to find new varieties, moving plants around for better light, or shade or water. We are always figuring out what works best in our never-ending quest to create a better garden. That’s part of the fun, right?

The same is true of our collective garden, the Club, made up of all of us with our unique personalities and talents with so much to offer. Like plants seeking the proper spot to grow, I hope all of you try out some different programs and activities, so you can blossom. The ground is fertile with opportunities, from cultivating new skills, to sowing seeds of friendship.



Some of those opportunities were highlighted at the September meeting. This month we start out with a bang. Members can go on a Field Trip to learn about native animals and Florida habitat; attend a District meeting to find out what the state organization is doing this year and listen to a program on native species. Let’s not forget the upcoming October 28 General Meeting with a professional orchid grower speaking. (Check out the calendar in this issue of **The Grapevine**.) So much to do and experience and so little time!

Speaking of **The Grapevine**, I am so pleased that we are restarting the club’s newsletter and that the very capable Debra Nastasi, Communications Director, is serving as Editor. This new quarterly publication will provide yet another opportunity to reach our members, with longer articles and photographs that the club’s emailed News Briefs can’t really address in its limited format. Let us know what you think.
See you at the next BBGC activity!

Linda S. Anderson
President



BBGC's First Field Trip of the Year to Okeeheelee

Join us on Tuesday, October 14 as we carpool to Okeeheelee Nature Center. We will rendezvous at our usual spot, Cracker Barrel (1475 SW 8th St., Boynton Beach) at 9 a.m. Our guided tour will begin at 10 a.m.

Okeeheelee Nature Center's exhibits focus on three ecosystems found in Palm Beach County: freshwater, coastal and the upland pine flatwoods. Our 90-minute program, "Florida Native Animals with a Guided Nature Walk" will highlight local wildlife with live animals, along with hands-on exhibits. First, we will explore these unique animals and habitats indoors, and then we will step outside to experience the upland and freshwater habitats.

The nature walk is approximately a half mile on paved and shell-lined pathways with numerous benches available to find the perfect spot for observing and appreciating the natural world and wildlife, including a deer overlook and pollinator garden. (walker friendly, restrooms, gift shop)

Afterwards, we will drive back to Cracker Barrel for lunch (separate checks available). Okeeheelee Park and Nature Center is located at 7715 Forest Hill Boulevard, West Palm Beach, FL 33413. The Nature Center is located at the back of the park. Follow the blue signs to the nature center driveway, about one mile from the entrance.

Cost: \$5 per person, due day of trip.

DEADLINE for Sign-up: Sunday, October 12

Any questions or to RSVP, please contact Shelly Johnston, via text or email, at 914-384-2847 or victorthecat@yahoo.com.

District X Fall Meeting in Vero Beach



The Garden Club of Indian River County is hosting the District X Fall Meeting, "Barefoot in Paradise", Thursday, October 16, at the River Walk Center, Vero Beach Country Club, 800 30th St., Vero Beach. Registration and Continental Breakfast are from 8:30 - 9:30 a.m., with the meeting, luncheon and program running from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

You will have the opportunity to meet and hear from Christy Linke, the new President of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs (FFGC), as well as the First, Second and Third Vice Presidents, Mary Whisler, Leticia Gunn and our own Maria Wolfe (former District X Director), respectively. In addition, there will be a presentation on, "Going Native".

The cost of the event is \$50. To register, go to **DistrictX.org**. Click on "Upcoming Events" to locate the interactive registration form. The deadline for registration is Wednesday, October 8. Pre-registration is required. Walk-ins cannot be accommodated.

Those of us who have attended these meetings in the past always enjoy ourselves and learn something new to share with other club members. I hope you will consider attending.

As mentioned above, you must register online. If you are planning on attending and are interested in carpooling, please contact me, via text or email.

Linda Anderson



New Member Experiences Check Washing Firsthand

This Spring, a new member unfortunately was a victim of check washing. (That's why we are including this accompanying article as a cautionary tale.) As is customary, the new member, who is a snowbird, mailed her dues check to our Membership Vice President Pat Inturrisi, who then handed it off to Treasurer Ingrid Moore for depositing, which she did after making a copy of the check for recordkeeping on the club's end.

About a month later, Pat received a call from the Sheriff's Department in the new member's city, concerning fraudulent activity on the dues check from the new member. We had records showing that the check was deposited as \$45 on our end, so the fraud, i.e., check washing, happened after the check was sent to the clearinghouse. The perpetrators had "washed" the dues check to read \$4500. instead of \$45.

According to the member, the individual must have sold the checking account number to a larger criminal organization and they attempted to steal more funds, but the account was closed down, thankfully. Even so, the member was held accountable for \$1500 of the fraudulent activities. Moral of the story: Try to limit your payments by check. Fortunately, the club purchased a credit card reader, which should cut down on the number of checks received. And, there is always cold, hard cash!

Three easy steps you can take to help ensure your check isn't involved in a scam:

Use the right type of pen. Pigment-based (as opposed to dye-based) inks are harder to remove with readily available chemicals. Look for black or nonerasable gel ink, which soaks into the paper and is more difficult to remove than the ink from your typical ballpoint pen.

Go to the post office. Don't leave outgoing checks in your curbside mailbox or other unsecured areas. Instead, drop them in a secure USPS collection box or the mail slot inside the post office.

Monitor your payments. When you send checks, confirm they've arrived at their intended destination. If a check appears to have gone missing, contact your bank right away to request a stop payment order. If a forged check clears your bank account, quick action is even more critical: Report the fraud to your financial institution so it can investigate and credit the stolen funds back to you.

Root for the Cause - Start Propagating Today!

Our annual plant sale will be offered at the **"Fashion Show" on Thursday, March 12th, 2026**. This gives us growers plenty of time to develop our botanical creations. We want the donated plants potted in beautiful pots: ceramic, terra cotta, colorful, creative or whimsical.

More information on the Plant Sale fundraiser will be given at our Member's General Meeting on Tuesday, October 28.



“ Creatures in the Garden ”

The **Boynton Beach Parade** is scheduled for **Saturday, December 6, 2025**. This year's theme is “Creatures in the Garden”. If you would like to help create the float for the parade and/or walk/ride in the parade, please contact Bonnie Paton at bonniepaton69@gmail.com. This year our members will NOT wear costumes, we will be walking as gardeners and will wear gardening gloves, aprons, jeans, and carry gardening tools/equipment watering can, etc.



If you plan to help create our beautiful float, you need to save Saturday morning (December 6) at 8:30 am to prep (putting the float together). The parade participants need to be at the parade route in the afternoon.

Additional Information regarding our participation in the Parade will be mentioned at the General Meetings.



DYK: When the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs (FFGC) conceptualized the State Wildflower license plate to support their dream that Florida's native wildflowers would be valued not only for their ecological importance but also celebrated as part of Florida's cultural heritage, the first step was selecting a native state wildflower! They chose the genus *Coreopsis*, of which Florida has 12 native species. Commonly referred to as Tickseeds, they bloom vibrantly across our landscapes in spring through fall.

In 1991, FFGC successfully lobbied the state Legislature to make *Coreopsis* the official state wildflower, paving the way for the plates to become a reality. After another 9 years of dedication and hard work the first plate hit the road in June 2000 and this year we celebrate 25 years of native wildflower outreach and conservation.

A BBGC Game Day Fundraiser

Rustic Retreat fundraiser was held on June 12, 2025 at the Sandhurst Clubhouse. This event was attended by 18 Club members and friends who played Canasta, Mahjong, Scrabble, or Rummikub. Prizes were given to winners at each table. It was a fun afternoon for everyone!

Game Day good news: \$110 was collected for Rustic Retreat!

Communication with the Rustic Retreat Director was made by Evelyn Maciag regarding their needs/wishes because the BBGC had held a fundraiser and would be able to purchase something for them. Rustic Retreat requested a night blooming jasmine because of its lovely smell.

On August 30, 2025, a beautiful butterfly bush and 3 night blooming jasmine were presented to Rustic Retreat from the BBGC. The residents and employees are ecstatic to know that they will see butterflies and have sweet smelling plants!

So nice to do good!

Linda Schrader



Institute for
Regional
Conservation



CITY OF
BOYNTON
BEACH

Help Needed

**REVIVING
URBAN
NATURE**

Volunteer Day

**AUG
2ND**

Galaxy Sand Pine Scrub Preserve
461 Boynton Beach Blvd, Boynton Beach, FL
8:00AM TO 10:30AM

REGISTER NOW

www.regionalconservation.org

*We will be installing native plants and removing nonnative vegetation from the nature preserve.

BONNIE PATON, TONI CVETKO, JUDI LIEBERT AND DEBRA NASTASI REPRESENTED THE GARDEN CLUB AT AN EVENT (SEE LEFT) TO CLEAN UP THE SCRUB. BBGC WILL HOLD A NATURE WALK AND TALK AT THE GALAXY SCRUB, (NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC) ON NOV. 5.



Florida Friendly Picks & Leafy Reads A Book Review by Maria Freed

Wild At Home, a book by Hilton Carter, is a lush invitation to turn your living space into a botanical sanctuary. With over 200 plants in his care, Carter blends design and horticulture like a true artist—layering textures, shapes, and stories into every vignette. His apartment becomes a living gallery, and his advice is both practical and poetic: from propagating succulents to styling a fiddle-leaf fig beside a monstera, each page pulses with green inspiration. Lots of practical advice too. The chapter on propagating plants in water is excellent with a guide on estimated times for a selection of cuttings to grow. Whether you're a seasoned plant stylist or just flirting with fronds, this book is a leafy love letter to indoor greenery—for your reading pleasure and soul. The book makes an ideal gift for beginning plant collectors, those dreaming of decorating with more foliage or for those silly people in your life who think you have too many plants. Available at AMAZON, on sale for \$11.68



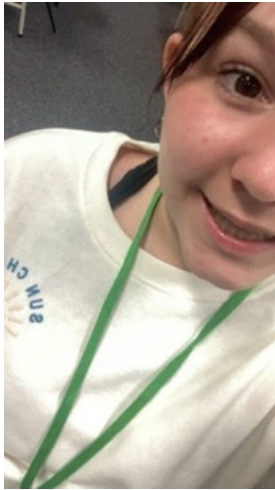
During the first week of June, commemorating **National Garden Week**, we had a succulent teacup planting event with seven ladies at the Boynton Beach Senior Center. Fun was had by all and even one of the ladies had her granddaughter participate. Thanks to Christine for supplying the succulents, Debra for the soil and rocks, teacups were donated by Ingrid, Debra N. and Debbie M.



Another way our Club celebrated National Garden Week was with a colorful posterboard display that was set up at the City Library. All events and activities of the Garden Club were posted and on display for the week. Thanks to Joyce Erato for creating such an eye catching and interesting display.

Teen Attends SEEK Conference August 2025 with BBGC Sponsorship

*Editor's Note: This summer, BBGC sponsored Shiloh Siegall, as our attendee to the SEEK conference coordinated by FFGC held this year at Withlacoochee Forestry Training Center, Brooksville, Florida, August 6 – 8. Previously, Shiloh was sponsored by the club for the last five years to attend Wekiva Environmental Camp. In the future, she hopes to return to Wekiva as a counselor. Obviously, she has an interest in the environment! Shiloh has shared her Wekiva experiences at meetings previously, but this year, we asked Shiloh to share the SEEK (Save Earth's Environment through Knowledge) experience with us in the debut of our newsletter, **The Grapevine**. The article was edited due to space restrictions, but we will post the entire article on the website.*



*Shiloh Wren
Siegall*
**SEEK Journal
August 6-8,
2025**

Day 1

My mom and I loaded the car with my luggage for SEEK. Because of the driving distance, my mom planned a mini vacation with my little sister in Orlando, I thought I would do my summer reading assignment on the way up to Brooksville, but my sister fell asleep, and I spent hours talking with my mom. We talked about some of the things I'd done at Wekiva and how this trip might be different.

Since Mom was driving, I was designated the one to Google everything. Neither of us had heard of Withlacoochee before so that was what I looked up first. I knew it would be a Native American name and learned that it meant crooked river. I also learned that Withlacoochee was an alluvial river and that makes it important to the aquifer and ecosystem and water management.

The Forestry Training Center looked nice. The grounds were pretty with pinecones scattered everywhere and modern-looking cabins. I was given a nametag and then a couple of the other girls took me to my cabin. It was air conditioned! I loved my summer experiences at Wekiva, but air conditioning is an awesome amenity. After I dropped off my things, we re-

turned to the main classroom where we all assembled to get started.

Back in the classroom, we were introduced to two forest rangers. They discussed the eco-conscious policies that we were expected to follow. These were simple things like shutting the A/C and lights off in rooms not in use and not running water excessively (short showers), etc. The rangers then led us outside to see the memorial site for fallen forestry firefighters. They said this site was to honor the sacrifice of thirteen who had fallen in service. In Florida, there are three memorial sites. This one at Withlacoochee, one in Ocala, and one in Tampa.

As a child, I'd heard of Smokey the Bear: "Only you can prevent forest fires." At Wekiva, we learned about Smokey the Bear and how the figure helped bring awareness to the need for caution in nature.

At SEEK, we learned that originally, he was symbolic of fire prevention in general and later became representative of preventing forest fires. However, some fires are beneficial (like controlled burns). So, as time went by, he became the representation of wildfire prevention. When I got home, I looked up Smokey the Bear



and learned that a bear cub was rescued from a New Mexico wildfire in 1950. He was sent to the National Zoo in Washington, DC where he became the mascot for fire safety as Smokey the Bear!

After the rangers left, it was time for dinner, so we all went to the dining hall. Then, we went back to the cabins to get to know our roommates. We spent time together and talked until it was time to shower and go to sleep.

Day 2

The plan for the day was to visit different springs and swim with manatees. We had to get up very early – like 5:45am. After a quick breakfast, we all got into the van that would take us to the manatees. The drive to Crystal River was about an hour and fifteen minutes.

We were shown a video on how to safely interact with the manatees. They said to move as little as possible, so we did not scare them. We were not supposed to reach out and touch the manatees, but it was fine for them to touch us. We should try not to swim over them, but if one rose up from beneath us, to just stay still and let it carry us up. Then when it went back



Continued on Next Page



down, we could gently swim away from them. No one got lifted by a manatee, but it was great to learn what they would do. I was shocked to learn that manatees have only 3-5% body fat. I had always been taught that they were sea cows. Here they told us they were more like beef cakes! Although they are slow moving and gentle, most of their bodies are solid muscles. The manatees migrate to Florida for the spring water temperatures. The water is very cold for humans, but warm for manatees. We also learned that algae collect on females because they are still for long periods. Male manatees tend to be more active and move more so they collect less algae.

After the video instruction, we went to put on wet suits. They provided one-piece wet suits with long sleeves and legs, and a zipper in the back. Getting into them was super challenging! Then, we all boarded a boat and rode around for about an hour while a Crystal Springs spotter looked for manatees. Suddenly, a dolphin sprang up out of the water. This was a big surprise because we didn't know there would be dolphins here. I only saw one bottlenose dolphin, and it happened so fast that I did not get to take pictures, but I will always remember it.

Once the spotter saw manatees, they anchored the boat and passed out snorkels and masks and then we climbed down a ladder into the water which was 72°F. Even though I was wearing a wetsuit it still felt freezing cold to me, but as I swam toward the manatees I got used to it. We reached the manatees and kind of made an arc around them to watch. When the manatees started moving, we followed. I moved to the front of the group to be closer, and

when one of the manatees turned, its back fin brushed against my arm. It was awesome! I think only one other person on the trip made physical contact with a manatee. We stayed in the water for about 45 minutes. There were two manatees and our group divided so that half followed one, and half followed the other. I think the one I was following was a male. Males are smaller than females and this one looked big, but they said it was a larger-than-normal male. Manatees swim using their tails and front flippers and can move at about 3-5 miles per hour. Ours moved much slower and we just followed as he drifted along. We were told to be as quiet as possible and not splash so we wouldn't startle or spook the manatees. We kind of used a slow breaststroke with our arms to move through the water and didn't kick our feet at all.

The boat didn't follow us so when it was time to leave, we had to swim all the way back. Once out of the water, I was freezing cold again. We returned to the dock and returned the wetsuits but kept on our swimsuits. Getting out of the wetsuit was a lot easier than getting into it!



We got back on the van and drove for about 30 minutes to another park to study wildlife. We were told about invasive and native species and their importance to the environment.

Then we did an activity where we would go around the park identifying plants. Whoever found the most species and could identify both its common name and genus species would get a prize at the end of the SEEK program. I took pictures on my phone and used Google to identify the species. I found seven which weren't the most but was still a fun experience. These are the species that I found:

1. Florida Pine (Pinus _____)
2. Eastern Cottonwood (Populus deltoides)
3. Florida Slash Pine (Pinus elliotii)
4. Dwarf Palmetto (Sabal minor)
5. Sweetgum Tree (Liquidambar Styraciflua)
6. American Beautyberry (Callicarpa americana)
7. Hypericaceae (Hypericum _____)

After the springs, we drove about 15 minutes to a waterpark. We learned that all the water for it was sourced from the springs and there were no chemicals or chlorine. They had some kind of filtration system that made use of the natural water and kept it clean. The water here was just like the springs with the manatees because the water was still 72°F. So, it was freezing at first and it took me a while to get in! There were slides and a lazy river and it was all really nice. Lots of trees. There was an area where you could walk down a ramp and there was sand, so kind of like a beach but with fresh spring water.

That night following dinner, we met to do an activity with newspapers and National Geographic magazines. We were in teams of two and needed to find articles having to do with water in either the newspaper or the magazine. I chose the National Geographic magazine, and my teammate chose the newspaper. We showed our partner what we found and then used our phones to Google the reliability of the sources and author and whether it was still relevant today. We found the newspaper articles were more relevant to local areas but the authors (if there was a byline) did not really have published credentials. National Geographic on the other hand had credible authors who submitted articles that were then reviewed by a panel before the magazine chose which to publish. So, their stories were both peer-reviewed and vetted.

Then we all went outside to a firepit to make s'mores. Louis (the other counselor) showed us how to build a fire. We gathered wood and twigs and stuff and then had a real fire to roast marshmallows with chocolate and graham crackers.

Continued on Next Page

Day 3

On our last day, after breakfast we returned to the classroom. Our leader discussed how the Garden Clubs were looking for ways to recruit younger members. For us, we talked about an online group with Zoom meetings. I'm not sure if this will take off but it could be interesting to do across the year.

Then we got to meet with firefighters. Some were there for training, but others were there as instructors. They gave us a tour of their equipment that they use to "face the forest" and discussed some of what they did for controlled burns. They showed us a drone that can reach altitudes of over 100' in the air and had cameras that could see 450' in different directions. The drones were equipped with pellets that had chemicals that could be dropped into areas to create very small, controlled fires that would slowly spread. They used sand and water to create a perimeter and contain the fire within the controlled area. When they need to fight fires, they also have giant bulldozers to move huge amounts of sand. This is used to stop an advancing fire and can also be



used to plan the stopping point for a controlled burn.

After meeting with them, it was time to wrap things up and get ready to leave. Souvenirs were given to everyone and then my mom and sister arrived to pick

me up. I said my goodbyes and pointed things out to my little sister as we walked back to the car. She was fascinated by the pinecones all over the ground, so we collected some to take home.



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The 99th Annual FFGC Convention
"Sharing Our Knowledge
Plants the Seeds of Tomorrow"
40th Biennial State Flower Show
"Once Upon A Time"
APRIL 14-17, 2026

Wednesday Evening Program
"Gardening is Murder"
Neal Sanders

Thursday Evening Design Program
"Emotions"
Jacob McCall

CONVENTION INFORMATION
WWW.FFGC.ORG/CONVENTION

Rustic Retreat visit

On July 15th, several club members paid a visit to Rustic Retreat with a plan to bring something different to the residents. Not the usual, donuts, magazines and books, which are always appreciated, but a new, fun activity - Bingo! When we arrived, ten residents were seated around the tables ready to play. Everyone had so much fun; the residents, staff and volunteers.

Our jobs were to call the numbers and help the residents correctly identify the numbers on their card. The staff at Rustic Retreat provided the prizes. Five games were played, and one resident won four times. The staff was so happy we came with an activity the residents could participate in. One of our new members, Harriet Samuels, organized and chaired this event.

Harriet is planning to bring this fun activity to the residents again on October 21, 1 pm. In order to do so, volunteers are needed. Please contact Harriet at hiswpbwh@gmail.com if you would like to help.



**We are looking for volunteers
who would like to write
articles for
The Grapevine!**

**Please contact me at
debran4638@gmail.com**

UPDATES AND CORRECTIONS

**Yearbook page 16:
Janet Grant - new address
1801 Ocean Drive
Boynton Beach FL 33426**

**Correction on p. 34 of the yearbook under
Wekiva/SEEK committee:
SEEK is the acronymn for Save the Earth's
Environment through Knowledge.**

THE GRAPEVINE

**Debra Nastasi, Editor
Linda Anderson, Co-Editor
Contributors
Bonnie Paton
Pat Inturrisi
Maria Freed
Linda Schrader
Carol Cloud Bailey
Toni Cvetko**

Thank you 

**Horticulture Hacks.
CCB by Carol Cloud Bailey
Gardening season will be here soon!*



Here in the Palm Beaches, September is a hot and brutal month, but it marks the beginning of the heart of the gardening season. The changing economy has prompted many people to try their hands at veggie gardening, expanding landscape plantings, or plant parenting an indoor jungle. Welcome to the newbies; gardening is an endeavor that will bring a lifetime of enjoyment. Here are a few ideas, tips, and tricks to get ready to grow.

Butterfly season and gardening season are coming into full swing in Boynton Beach. There are approximately 100 species of butterflies that call Florida home. A good butterfly garden provides a home for all stages of the butterfly life cycle. There should be nectar plants for the adults, larval plants for the caterpillars to chew on, and shelter for the chrysalis. Pentas are among the best butterfly nectar plants for Florida gardens.

Inspect tools, sharpen edges as necessary, and make them easier to locate. Dip the handles in brightly hued rubber to extend the life, increase visibility among the plants, and encourage a secure, safe grip. There are also wraps available for accenting and protecting the handles. A clever way to store tools is to take a pallet, turn it on its end, and screw it to the wall of the storage area. Pop long-handled tools in the open for a clutter-free storage bin.

Start or review your veggie garden and landscape journal. Make or revise a garden plan. In the journal, record what failed, selections that thrived, and any pests that invaded the garden. Be ruthless in removing poor performers or those riddled by problems; it is easy to try something new. Over dinner, discuss the family's favorite veggies for inclusion in this year's garden.

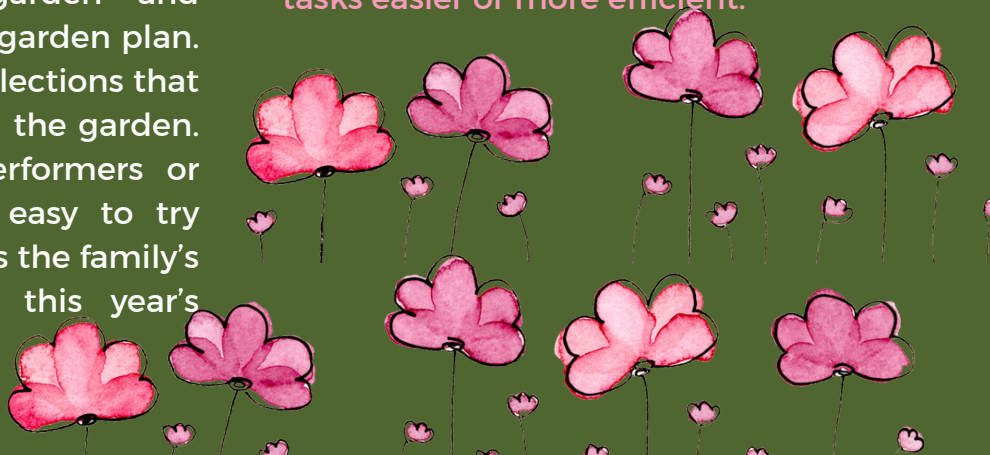
For the landscape, make a sketch of the design and start or continue a list of plants, correctly identified. Take a picture with your phone and consult the design and plant list whenever you stop at a nursery.

Start seeds and be eco-friendly too. Early September is the ideal time to plant seeds for fall vegetable gardens and annual beds. Seed starting is easy; any container with drainage can be used. Good ideas for reusing items for seed growing include paper cups, egg cartons, and pots made from tightly rolled newspapers.

If planting a few veggies for family and friends, garden generously and sow a few extra rows, take some of the abundant produce to local shelters and food pantries. Fresh veggies are sometimes challenging to come by and are always very much appreciated.

It is the start of bird migration season; take a few minutes to look and listen. A flock of swallows was sighted feasting on dragonflies and other abundant flying insects last week. Their antics were fun to watch, and insect control habits in the garden were welcomed.

**In slang, "hack" means a clever trick, shortcut or solution to a problem making tasks easier or more efficient.*



Cooking with Herbs

By Pat Inturrisi



Basil, basilicum, or better known as basilico BA-sil e-co in my Italian family's dialect, is a mainstay in Italian recipes. Basil originated in Africa and Asia, and this culinary herb is actually a member of the mint family, Lamiaceae. Basil is a warm weather fragrant herb that "shivers" in the cold. In the northeast, the plants I had in my herb beds came from nurseries that cultivated them in greenhouses ready to be planted in May when hopefully all danger of frost had passed. So I followed the same practice when I moved to Florida.. going to nurseries for my basil plants. Until that is when I spied a rack of seeds on my way out of the nursery section in Home Depot. So I thought I'd give them a try. Well, they flourished in the Florida heat like they never would in my northern herb beds, sprouting almost overnight.

My Italian Nonna showed me that pruning basil to promote growth is the easiest and best way to have an unlimited supply. Aggressive pruning! Chop the main stem where two nodes of leaves join the plant. This forces each node to branch out and create a bushier plant. And causes the plant to avoid flowering so the basil will say.. oh let me keep sending out more vegetation!

There are many varieties of basil aside from the common sweet basil that is familiar to most of us. Leaf colors span from rich green to deep purple.

You will find that the varieties offer... aromatics packed with flavors running the gamut from anise/licorice to cinnamon, from spicy to peppery.

Lime basil is sweet, citrus taste & lime scent that works well in dressings & even desserts.

Greek basil has tiny leaves, with a strong aroma and a mild flavor. It grows in a dome shape which makes for a beautiful ornamental plant although this basil pairs nicely with tomato dishes.

Cinnamon basil, with purple flowers and slight cinnamon scent originated in Mexico.

Lemon basil has a slight citrus aroma and is especially suited to pesto.

Thai or opal basil, with its rich and heady scent has a touch of spice. Strong burgundy leaves make this a beautiful standout in the herb patch working well in salads as well as a stunning ornamental.

Pick basil early in the morning for maximum oil content.

To preserve your bumper crop of basil, it can be dried in the microwave and surprisingly keeps its vibrant color. You can whirl basil with olive oil and put it in ice cubes. Perfect for dropping into soups and sauces.

Japanese beetles, slugs and aphids are some of the pests to assault basil. These enemies can be gotten rid of naturally with soap and water and vinegar and water. Spray tops and bottoms of the leaves and try to do this early in the day or in the evening.

Finally, Here is a family favorite which marries well with basil's ... no not basil's dear companion, the tomato... but corn!! The calendar has turned to Fall and I automatically think of soup. Here is a corn chowder that's perfect for our warmer climate here in Florida and enjoys the addition of fragrant basil.

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### **Summery Corn and Zucchini Chowder**

**1 tablespoon butter**

**2 strips bacon, diced**

**1 cup yellow onion, diced**

**2 cloves garlic, minced**

**1 pound russet potatoes, washed, peeled, diced into half inch cubes**

**4 cups chicken broth**

**One medium zucchini, diced into half inch cubes about one and a half cups**

**Four ears of sweet corn, kernels cut from cob about 2 1/2 cups or**

**Two cans of corn drained**

**One cup, heavy cream**

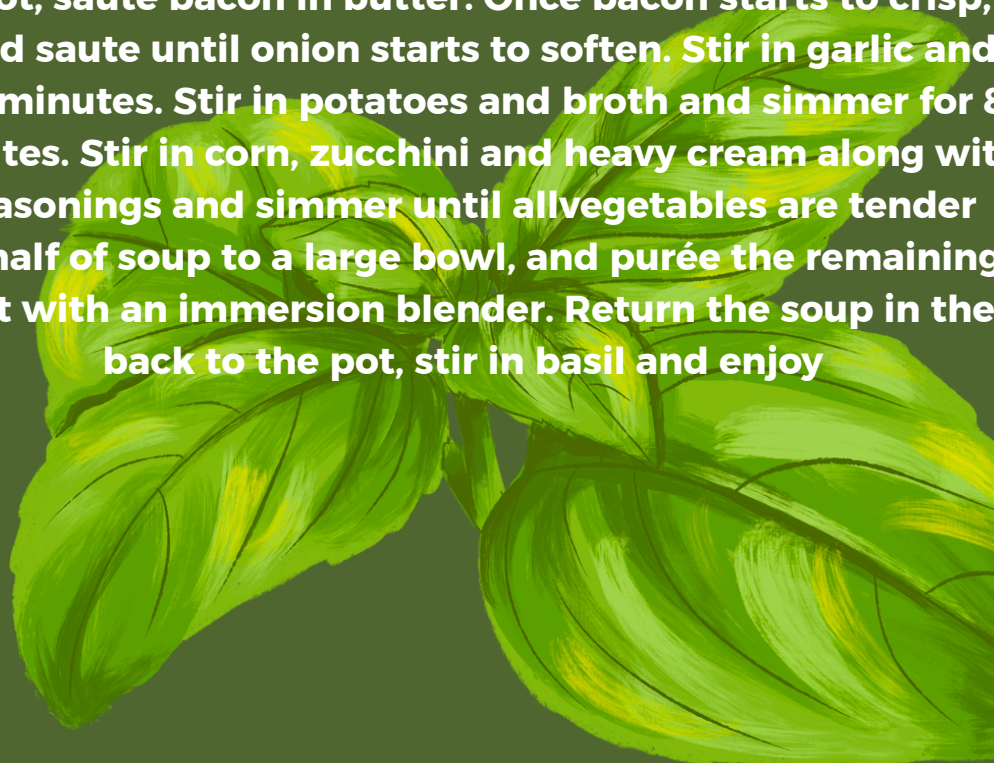
**1/2 teaspoon of 1/8 teaspoon black pepper**

**Dash of Cayenne pepper, optional**

**1/4 cup basil leaves torn in small pieces**

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In large pot, sauté bacon in butter. Once bacon starts to crisp, stir in onions and saute until onion starts to soften. Stir in garlic and saute for a few minutes. Stir in potatoes and broth and simmer for 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in corn, zucchini and heavy cream along with seasonings and simmer until all vegetables are tender. Remove half of soup to a large bowl, and purée the remaining soup in the pot with an immersion blender. Return the soup in the bowl back to the pot, stir in basil and enjoy



Share Your Knowledge, Inspire Our Club!
We Want to Hear from You

How to Contribute

It's easy to participate! Simply reply to Carol Bailey, she is organizing this new way for our horticulture part of the program, at ccb@yard-doc.com, with your topic and the month you would like to present. We need one presenter each month, October through May. For the December meeting, we will need 3 or 4 presenters to highlight holiday plants.

For your presentation, please bring a live plant specimen or a relevant tool. If not available, a picture will be sufficient. If you have the means and are willing to part with your treasure, let's offer the item during the raffle. If you do offer the item, please let Roberta know in advance that you will be bringing something for the raffle table.

At the heart of the Boynton Beach Garden Club is a wealth of experience, creativity, and expertise. We believe that everyone has something valuable to contribute. That's why we're inviting you to share what you know and love as our monthly Horticultural Moment during our meetings this year.

Why Share?

Whether you have a favorite plant, a garden tip, innovative ideas, inspiring stories, or lessons learned from your professional or personal journey, your knowledge could help, motivate, or enlighten someone else. By sharing, you not only help others but also strengthen the bonds within our club.

What Can You Share?

We invite you to present a brief talk (5 minutes) about what gives you confidence and joy in the garden. Some ideas include:

A favorite plant

Best practices from your garden

Success stories

Challenges you've overcome and how you did it

Helpful tools, resources, books, or techniques

Recipes (Don't we love to eat?)

Gardenware – hats, gloves, etc.

Let's Grow Together

We believe that everyone's voice matters. By coming together and sharing our knowledge, we can create a richer, more supportive environment for all. Don't hesitate – your experience could be just what someone else needs to succeed!

I would be happy to help put together your presentation and can send you an example of a cheat sheet to serve as a guideline, if you would like.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Save the Date

Thursday, March 12, 2026

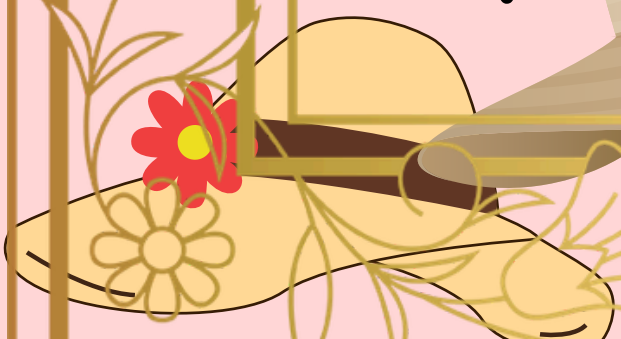
11:00 am to 3:00 pm

"Hats and High Fashion"

Join us for food and fashion.

We will have 50/50
raffles, baskets, a silent auction,
and vendors.

It will be held at
The Indian Springs Country Club.



Hosted by The Boynton Beach Garden Club