



The Gabby Gardener

Volume 32, Issue 9



President's Corner

Summer will soon be here so it is a good time to review the year's highlights. What a busy year with two FFGC District VI events at

our Clubhouse with our hosting both the Fall District VI Meeting and the District VI Flower Show Judges' Busy Bee Flower Show in March.

At the General meetings there was a nice variety of speakers with lots to learn. Steve Crump talked about his Vo-LaSalle Farm, Stetson Professor Cindy Bennington talked about our DeLand Ridge and Eco-Systems, Stetson Professor David Griffis spoke on our soil, Wild Birds Unlimited gave us tips on bird feeding, Brittany Council-Morton, UF/IFAS Volusia County Extension Urban Horticulture Agent, spoke about Freeze Protection, FFGC Flower Show Judge and Floral Designer Extraordinaire Penny Decker demonstrated a variety of designs for pure pleasure, an ego-buggy tour of Longleaf Pine Preserve accommodated the flower show's use of the Clubhouse, member Carol Grigas described the Firecrackers' Less-Mow Spring and Carole Gilbert talked about the Dark Sky Initiative. We ended with a field trip to Stetson's Gillespie Museum with a tour and program on "Florida Formations: a Geological History of Florida."

Our volunteers and financial support give back to our community- caring for the iconic Downtown Planters that help define DeLand, maintaining the

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Sensory Butterfly Garden, supporting the Seed Bank at the DeLand Library, celebrating Arbor Day with bald cypress seedling giveaway, landscaping the house built by West Volusia Habitat for Humanity and presenting Monarch Magic festival for families or helping with the Clubhouse gardens. Our donations help underwrite Penny Pines, Wekiva & SEEK youth camps, FFGC college scholarship fund and Habitat for Humanity.

What else makes the Garden Club so special? Have you tried Creative Corner activities - Origami, Collage or Fun with Flowers? Have you participated in the monthly Book Club? Have you shared your garden for others to visit? Did you help show our spirit at the City Parades? Did you attend DeLand's Wildflower Festival and purchase caladium bulbs from our booth? Did you propagate and/or purchase garden additions at our successful Fall Plant Sale? There are so many ways to participate!

I am especially thankful for the strong Communication teams – GCD website, The Gabby, Facebook pages and emails to the membership that keep us well informed. I especially want to thank the Executive Board and the Governing Board for their support, hard work and gift of time to the Garden Club of DeLand.

Gardening for the Future

Circle Around

- **Firecrackers** enjoyed a presentation on "Pressed Flowers: Their History and How to Create Them."
- **Magnolias** were scheduled for a fieldtrip to Mac's Fernery.
- **Marigolds** visited the Yard Stop Nursery in Mount Dora with lunch and a visit to Peddler's Wagon in Eustis.
- **Milkweeds'** speaker canceled at the last minute, but their meeting and discussions carried on.
- **Roses** visited the Ag Center to tour the Master Gardener's demonstration gardens.
- **Wild Coffees** worked at the Sensory Butterfly Garden.

This is the last column until the October Gabby – all the circles will be celebrating the end of the year in May!

2024 GCD Fall Plant Sale

It's time to start thinking about the Fall Plant Sale. We did a fantastic job raising money last year and this year is going to be no different! This is our largest fundraising event and it cannot be done without you and your support! The goal this year to make \$10,000 is no small feat, but we are more than capable of pulling this off. For more information, please contact Plant Sale Chair, Lance Harding, wildcoffeecircle@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATES:

May 21st Pick Up Potting Soil at Garden Club (5 BAGS MAX!!) 10am

October 8-11 The plants need to be at clubhouse

October 11 Yard carts and wagon to GCD

October 12 THE PLANT SALE 8-3 PM

PROPAGATION TIPS:

Start cuttings in small pots, gradually move to larger pots.

Propagate a lot of one plant, not a little bit of everything.

Keep cuttings in shady areas until roots establish and gradually move plants into more sunlight.

Put 3 cuttings in each pot, we want the pots to be full.

Use Rooting Hormone on cuttings.

After roots have begun to form, begin using a granular slow-release fertilizer (10-10-10)

The sooner we can get those cuttings into the soil, the bigger the plants will be in October.

SUGGESTED PLANTS TO PROPAGATE?

Florida Native plants should be priority.

Stick to hardy, woody, perennial plants, not annuals.

Lowe's has clearance racks, buy from there - Pot them up and keep them alive.

Colorful Plants - GREAT LEAVES, GREAT BLOOMS

Colorful Leaves and Variegated Plants, such as Caladiums, Bromeliads, Cannas, Crotons, Hibiscus, Jatropha, Ti Plants, "Wandering Dude," etc.

Pollinator Attractors - INVITE THE BUZZ

Cigar Plants, Clerodendrum, Firecrackers, Pipe Vine, Passion Vine, Shrubs such as Beautyberry, Sweet Almond Bush & Wild Coffee, Native Wildflowers, such as Bee Balm, Blue Curls, Coreopsis & Spiderwort, HOST PLANTS, SEEDS, etc.

Edibles, Veggies, Herbs - EAT YOUR WORK

Bananas, Gingers, veggies such as Broccoli, Kale, Pigeon Peas & Tomatoes, Herbs such as Basil, Dill, Fennel, Lemon Grass, Mint, Rosemary, SEEDS!, etc.

Your Favorites - YOUR GARDEN'S VIPS

Begonias, Cat Whiskers, Gerberas, Ornamental Grasses, Pagoda Plants, Pentas, Salvias, Succulents, Vincas, 4 O'Clocks, African Violets, Jade Plants, Orchids, etc.



The Garden Club of DeLand



FUNDRAISER

TICKETS ON SALE EVERY FRIDAY IN MAY AT THE
ARTISAN ALLEY MARKET IN DOWNTOWN DELAND

\$20 FOR 25 TICKETS

Drawing will take place on Monday June 3, 2023

ALL FUNDS RAISED WILL GO TO THE GARDEN CLUB OF DELAND
BUILDING FUND TO HELP COVER THE COST OF REPAIRS AND
UPDATES TO THE GARDEN CLUB OF DELAND CLUBHOUSE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL TICKETS
PLEASE CONTACT GCD WAYS AND MEANS CHAIR CECELIA EARL,
CECELIAEARL@GMAIL.COM



SCAN ME

Contact Cecelia Earl

The Garden Club of DeLand Building Fund

Novice 101 - Wildflower Gardening by Carole Gilbert

With May already here and the Garden Club activities winding down for the summer, I found myself looking back at all that I've learned and the wonderful people I've met who are so devoted to beauty, nature, encouragement and sharing with each other and novices like myself.

First, I've learned it's perfectly okay to let the wildflowers come up in their own time. And it's also perfectly okay to let them pop up wherever they want or to transplant them to a better spot--a new garden view each year! The first year of my garden I wondered where the Stoke's asters were, and thought maybe they were just "lost." The 2nd year, I was delighted to see a few mixed in, but the 3rd year I had a bumper crop! This also happened with the giant iron weed, and I found myself uprooting some this spring. Last August I bought one blue mistflower as a companion plant to a swamp milkweed, only to find that it dried up a bit later and I thought that was the end of that. But this spring, what I initially thought was tropical sage, turned out to be at least 20 blue mistflowers! The swamp milkweed didn't do well at all, and I learned to pay attention to the name--swamp means swamp, not well-drained sand.

It's been such a pleasure to work at the Sensory Garden, weeding among new friends, not hesitating to ask if plant was a weed to be plucked or a wildflower to leave safely in the ground and seeing how the care allowed the garden to come to life! The compliments from those using the park are just icing on the cake!

I've also learned that as dedicated as all of us are to encourage native plants, we can listen to difficult options about protecting the health of our beautiful Monarchs, especially when that includes the decision to plant or not plant our native milkweed.

After our April meeting and hearing about OE, I wrestled with this. Is eradication the only way to "do no harm?" Is there a viable education option? Can our personal choice to not plant milkweed make a difference when the big box stores continue to sell it to the general public?

To begin, I found at least 5 descriptions with pictures of native milkweed flowers and went out to compare what I had in my garden. Descriptions of red, reddish orange, orange and yellow were not helpful as I tried to match my flowers to the pictures. It was not reassuring. Next, I searched whatever

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articles Google brought up re native vs non native milkweed and their differences. And I found the word "sap!" from <https://www.monarchparasites.org/milkweed-identification: Butterfly Weed> (Asclepias tuberosa) "The stems are distinct because they are very hairy; however, unlike other milkweeds it doesn't have a milky sap when broken."

[https://www.floridatoday.com/story/life/2020/11/06/growing-non-native-milkweed-cut-back-before-](https://www.floridatoday.com/story/life/2020/11/06/growing-non-native-milkweed-cut-back-before-thanksgiving/6193680002/)

[thanksgiving/6193680002/](https://www.floridatoday.com/story/life/2020/11/06/growing-non-native-milkweed-cut-back-before-thanksgiving/6193680002/): "The easiest way to tell the two species apart is to snap a leaf off to see if it has a milky sap. If milky sap begins to flow, the plant is the non-native tropical milkweed."

<https://www.saveourmonarchs.org/blog/how-to-identify-milkweed-plants-quickly-and-confidently> "For instance, plants in the milkweed family, Asclepiadaceae, (don't let the name intimidate you), secrete a milky sap (except for Butterfly Milkweed) and opposite or sometimes whorled leaves. Milkweeds actually get their name from this milky sap that secretes when the plant is injured. Butterfly milkweed (Asclepias tuberosa) is the only species of Milkweed without this defense mechanism. If you think you have a Milkweed but are unsure, tear a piece off to look for the sap but try not to get it on your skin or in your eyes. This is the plant's defense mechanism against herbivory."

<https://www.xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/19-020.pdf> This PDF notes that Butterfly milkweed lacks milky sap.

[https://www.floridatoday.com/story/life/2023/10/14/how-to-bring-monarch-butterflies-to-your-yard-with-](https://www.floridatoday.com/story/life/2023/10/14/how-to-bring-monarch-butterflies-to-your-yard-with-milkweed/7118301007/)

[milkweed/7118301007/](https://www.floridatoday.com/story/life/2023/10/14/how-to-bring-monarch-butterflies-to-your-yard-with-milkweed/7118301007/) "If you are growing a solid yellow milkweed, your plant could be a yellow flowering form of our native butterfly weed, Asclepias tuberosa. There is also Asclepias curassavica Silky Gold tropical milkweed that produces yellow flowers. The easiest way to tell the two species apart is to snap a leaf off to see if it has a milky sap. The plant is a non-native tropical milkweed if milky sap begins to flow."

So after learning about sap, I felt more reassured that I could recognize my native milkweed from non native.

I thought about other possible education options.

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The Garden Club of DeLand



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Locally: Any successful education effort has to include children. In addition to our Sensory Garden, we could increase our efforts to educate and propagate native butterfly weed to perhaps support local nurseries who can't keep natives in stock, as a fundraiser for us; write letters to the editor re native plants. Yesterday, when I went to A Place in the Sun nursery, I learned they have made the decision to only have native milkweed available!

Volusia County: Ask other garden clubs to join our education efforts or we could join theirs in this ongoing project.

State: What about a legislative effort to ban the selling of non-native butterfly weed in FL? Petition big box stores to no longer sell non native milkweed in Florida voluntarily or, at the very least, to distinctly mark non-natives with a warning label as "contributing to OE leading to the deformity and premature death of our beautiful and critical pollinators."

National: Encourage all federation garden clubs to actively promote only their specific native milkweed in their regions using our efforts as an example.

I'm looking forward to next year with the Garden Club to continue my wildflower education!!

Article by:
Carole Gilbert

Photo by:
Shanda Hebert



"Less-Mow Spring" is a new initiative of the **Garden Club of DeLand and its Firecracker Circle**. "Less-Mow Spring" is inspired by the "No-Mow May" British environmental effort and now widely adopted across the U.S. But Central Florida's climate is unique and "Less-Mow Spring" better aligns local climate conditions, and supports early spring pollinators – like bees --by refraining from mowing lawns. Scientists have discovered that mowing every two weeks optimally benefits pollinators while also reducing pollution from gas-powered lawn equipment. Mayor Chris Cloudman and the DeLand City Commission have officially endorsed the "Less-Mow Spring" initiative, encouraging residents to nurture our native pollinator species. Join in by displaying a sign on your lawn. Signs are available for a suggested \$10.00 donation at The Nest, the Muse Bookstore, the office of the West Volusia Beacon, and by contacting Carol Grigas at carolgrigas@gmail.com.

Classes and Events

Habitat House Monday, May 6, at 9:00 am. The address is 1432 2nd Avenue, DeLand.

Tuesday, May 7, 1PM, **Master Gardener Plant Clinic**, (1-2:30) **Jennifer Condo, speaker, Topic: Florida Butterflies**, DeLand Library Auditorium, *No Seed Packaging*

Saturday, May 11, 7:30 AM, **Downtown Planters and Pedestals REPLANTING** **Contact Persons:** Margaret Gillen mgillen@cfl.rr.com and Julia Neumann julianeumann2@proton.me

Wednesday, May 15, 10:30, **Creative Corner Origami Class** at the Clubhouse, 865 S. Alabama Ave. Presenter: Maureen Miller-Calamo. \$5 donation for supplies.

Contact Person: Maureen Miller-Calamo 516-445-2338 or mocalamo@aol.com

Thursday, , May 16, 1 PM, **GCD Book Club:** *The Signature of All Things* by Elizabeth Gilbert **Contact Persons:** Cindy D. cindy@davenportmail.com or Sara Z. sarazollinger@att.net