



The Garden Club of Coral Springs

COME GROW WITH US!

MARCH 2026

Member of Florida Federation of Garden Clubs (www.ffgc.org) and National Garden Club (www.gardenclub.org)

MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE THE 2ND THURSDAY DURING THE MONTHS OF SEPTEMBER THROUGH MAY FROM 10:30AM TO 12:30PM - ALSO SOME SATURDAYS TO ACCOMMODATE OUR WORKING MEMBERS - MEETINGS ARE HELD AT NORTHWEST REGIONAL LIBRARY (3151 N UNIVERSITY DR, CORAL SPRINGS) AND FIELD TRIPS ARE HELD AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS - PLEASE SEE THE SCHEDULE IN THE NEWSLETTER AND ALSO ON OUR

Editor's Message

Dear Members,

The May issue of our Newsletter will be my last as Editor. I will have been doing this for 6 years. It has been an enjoyable task, but I am now a snowbird. I get a lot of company both in Florida and in North Carolina, and it has been becoming increasingly difficult for me to allot the time required. Additionally, the computer program that we have been using is being phased out and I, frankly, don't want to learn another one now.

I am excited to know that Andy Warner has agreed to take over the position! With a new Editor and a new computer program, the Newsletter will have a whole new look and prospective! This is probably long overdue to keep things fresh.

I must thank the committee Mary Anne McKay, Jill Kareff, Lynn Rochelle, Caroline Steffen, Jeri Decker and Ken Decker for all their hard work. Thank you also to Luanne Betz and Carol Johnson for their contributions. I would like to encourage other members to join the group. It is interesting and you learn a lot when you are writing articles.

Last, but not least, thank you to the many of you for your kind words over the years about our Newsletter. We can all look forward to the new and exciting version under the guidance of Andy.

Appreciatively,

Dotty Molski

VISIT OUR WEBSITE - www.coral Springsgardenclub.org **OUR ADDRESS:** PO Box 773334, Coral Springs, FL 33077
What would you like to see in our newsletter? Please email suggestions to dmolski@bellsouth.net.
Membership in the Garden Club is open to all regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity or religious affiliation.

THE BENEFITS OF AVOCADOS: A NUTRITIOUS POWERHOUSE

By Jeri Decker

Avocados have earned a reputation as a superfood thanks to their creamy texture, versatile use, and impressive nutrient profile. Whether you enjoy them smashed on toast, blended into smoothies, or added to salads, avocados offer a range of health and culinary benefits. Here's a comprehensive look at why this green fruit deserves a prime spot in your diet.

1. Rich in Healthy Fats

Monounsaturated fats (primarily oleic acid):** Avocados are high in heart-healthy fats that can help reduce bad LDL cholesterol and support overall cardiovascular health.
Satiety and calorie management:** The fats, along with fiber, promote fullness, which can aid in weight management by reducing overeating.

2. High in Nutrients with Low Sugar

Vitamins and minerals:** Avocados provide potassium, vitamin K, vitamin E, B-vitamins (including folate), and vitamin C.
Low sugar content:** Compared with many fruits, avocados have a minimal sugar level, making them a good option for steady energy without sharp spikes.

3. Excellent Source of Fiber

Digestive health:** The fiber content supports regular bowel movements and gut health.
Glycemic control:** Fiber can help stabilize blood sugar levels, particularly when consumed as part of a balanced meal.

4. Powerful Antioxidants and Anti-Inflammatory Compounds

Lutein and zeaxanthin:** These carotenoids support eye health and may reduce the risk of age-related macular degeneration.
Glutathione and other phytonutrients:** Avocados contain compounds that help protect cells from oxidative stress and may reduce inflammation.

5. Supports Heart Health

Potassium hero:** Avocados are rich in potassium, which helps regulate blood pressure.
Healthy fats and fiber synergy:** Combined with their low cholesterol content, avocados contribute to a heart-friendly nutrient profile.

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6. Beneficial for Skin and Hair

Vitamin E and healthy fats:** These nutrients nourish skin and hair, helping maintain moisture and elasticity.

Antioxidants:** Protect the skin from oxidative damage caused by environmental stressors.

7. Versatile in the Kitchen

Creamy texture without dairy:** Avocados can replace dairy in some recipes, adding creaminess to smoothies, dressings, and sauces.

Meal versatility:** They pair well with sweet and savory dishes—think avocado toast, guacamole, sushi, salads, and grilled meats.

Point of customization:** Add lime, salt, chili, or cilantro to enhance flavor; blend with yogurt or plant-based milk for a decadent smoothie.

8. Easy to Include in Various Diets

Plant-based-friendly:** A staple in vegan and vegetarian diets.

Gluten-free and paleo-compatible:** Avocados naturally fit these dietary patterns.

Allergen-friendly:** Generally suitable for common allergens, though dairy-free and nut-free needs should be considered based on accompanying ingredients.

9. Potential Considerations

Calorie density:** Avocados are relatively high in calories due to fat content. Moderation is key if you're watching caloric intake.

Allergies:** Although rare, some individuals may have avocado-specific allergies.

Ridged skin and variability:** The ripeness and size can affect taste and texture; choose ripe but firm avocados for ideal use.

Quick Ways to Include More Avocados

Mash on whole-grain toast with a sprinkle of salt and pepper.

Swap mayo with mashed avocado in sandwiches or burgers.

Add sliced avocado to salads, bowls, or salsas.

Blend into smoothies with greens, fruit, and a splash of citrus.

Top with chili flakes, lime juice, and a drizzle of olive oil for a zesty snack.

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SAMPLE AVOCADO-FORWARD RECIPE: CREAMY AVOCADO LIME DRESSING

1 ripe avocado
2 tablespoons lime juice
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons water (adjust for desired consistency)
1 clove garlic (optional)
Salt and pepper to taste
Optional: cilantro or parsley for freshness

Instructions:

Scoop the avocado into a blender.
Add lime juice, olive oil, water, garlic (if using), salt, and pepper.
Blend until smooth. Add more water to reach your preferred consistency.
Toss with salads, use as a dip, or drizzle over grain bowls.

Conclusion

Avocados are more than just a trendy ingredient—they're a nutrient-dense fruit that supports heart health, digestion, and skin well-being, all while offering culinary versatility. By incorporating avocados into a balanced diet, you can enjoy their creamy texture, satisfying fats, and impressive array of vitamins and minerals.

Botanical & Growth Facts from AI Should You Wish to Plant a Tree

- **Fruit Type:** Botanically, avocados are classified as **large berries** with a single seed, rather than vegetables.
- * **Size:** In the wild, they can reach heights of **60 to 80 feet**. Grafted garden varieties are typically kept much smaller through pruning, often around 15 feet.
- **Flowering Peculiarity:** They exhibit "synchronous dichogamy," meaning flowers open as female at one time of day and male at another. They are categorized into **Type A** (female morning/male afternoon) and **Type B** (opposite schedule).
- **Pollination:** While some varieties like 'Hass' are partially self-fertile, having both Type A and Type B trees nearby significantly increases fruit yield.
- **Lifespan:** Healthy trees can live for **70 to 100+ years**; some wild trees in Mexico are reported to be over 400 years old.
- **Yield:** A single mature tree can produce about **60 pounds** (roughly 150–200 avocados) per season.

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Growing & Harvest

- **Hardiness:** They thrive in **USDA Zones 9–11** and prefer temperatures between 60°F and 85°F. They are sensitive to frost and high winds.
- **Time to Fruit:** Nursery-bought grafted trees typically produce fruit in **3 to 4 years**, whereas trees grown from seed can take **5 to 13+ years** and may produce unpredictable fruit quality.
- **Ripening:** Unlike most fruits, avocados **do not ripen on the tree**. They only begin to soften after being harvested.

Quick Tips & Warnings

- **Watering:** They have shallow roots and are extremely sensitive to "wet feet." Use well-draining soil and allow it to dry slightly between deep waterings.
- **Toxicity:** All parts of the tree—leaves, bark, and pits—contain **persin**, which is toxic to many animals, including horses, birds, and dogs.

Historical Name: The word "avocado" comes from the Aztec word *ahuacatl*, which also meant "testicle," likely due to the fruit's shape.



OUR MEMBERS

At the February meeting, Jill Kareff and Gail Gauthier taught our members how to make lovely plants out of old books.

Luanne welcomes Jill & Gail who show the members what they will be making.



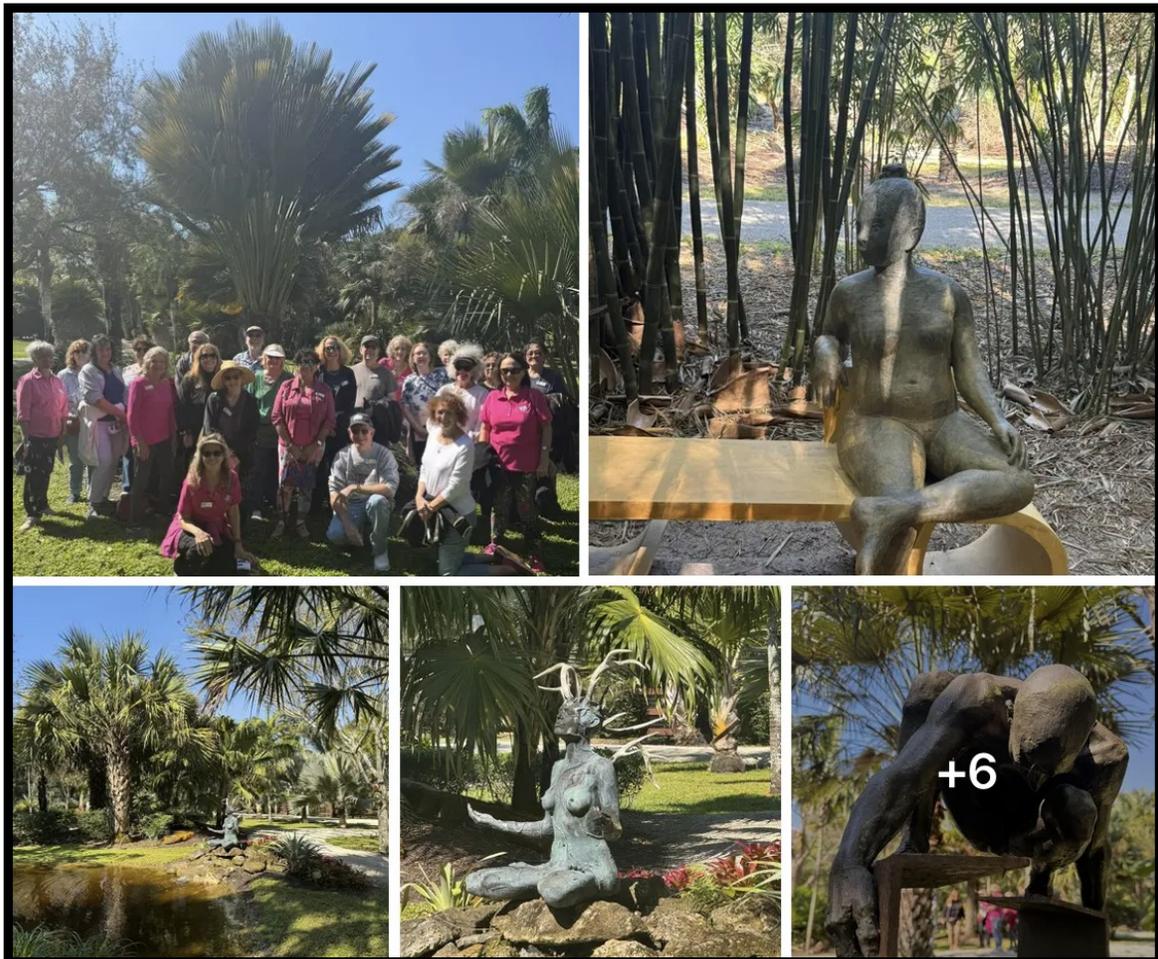
Working on the project.



The finished product!



Our field trip this month was lunch and a visit to Paradise Palms. A lovely day was had by all who attended!



End of Year Luncheon

May 14th 2026

11:30 - 2:30

\$40.00 members

\$45.00 nonmembers

payment due by: May 4th

Livello's Resturant
Coral Palm Plaza
2047 N University Dr,
Coral Springs, FL 33071

Pay on website

or

Mail check to:

The Garden Club of Coral Springs

P.O.Box 773334

Coral Springs, FL 33077



Family Style Service



Appetizers

Stuffed Fiochi pasta with roasted pears, walnuts in formage blanc sauce with micro herbs

Wagyu beef meatballs baked in San Marzano tomato sauce, Parmesan fondue, baby arugula salad and herb ricotta

Toasted ciabatta crostini with house made burrata, oven roasted heirloom tomatoes, Genovese pesto, prosciutto di Parma and aged balsamic

Salad

Romaine lettuce tossed with our house made Caesar dressing, garlic focaccia croutons and shaved Grana Padano

Entrees

Tagliatelle alla primavera

Hand cut tagliatelle pasta with oven roasted vegetables, roasted garlic, extra virgin olive oil and herbs

Pollo Al limone

Egg batter pan sautéed all natural chicken breast with wild mushrooms, cherry heirloom tomatoes, fiore di latte mozzarella in a Pinot Grigio pan sauce

Faroe islands salmon Positano

Wood roasted Faroe Islands salmon with capers and cherry tomatoes in a Pinot Grigio lemon butter sauce. Served with baby spinach

Dessert Sampler

Cookies

Cannoli

Tiramisu

Chocolate mousse

SQUIRREL BABIES ARE BEING BORN THIS WEEK

Right now, in your neighborhood.

THE TIMELINE:



If you see a squirrel moving slowly...
She might be a new mom.
Be kind. She's doing the hardest job in nature.

LANDSCAPING OPPORTUNITIES

By Luanne Betz

I imagine many of us are eager to prune our plants and repot our orchids after all the shuffling, damage, and dieback caused by our chilly winter. It was shared to me that March 5th is the ideal day to begin pruning, and it's also a perfect time to start the repotting process.

When moving my plants from indoors back to their growing areas, I tried to organize them by priority, placing those most in need of repotting first in line. I'm choosing to see the winter chill as a landscaping opportunity: a chance to observe which plants fared best and which ones we may want to reconsider for future "events." Maybe you have some room for that plant on your "list" now.

It is the time to stock up on potting materials, fresh medium, baskets, pots, growth stimulants, clips, wire, and all the essentials. The task becomes far more enjoyable when everything you need is within reach.

Enjoy this beautiful weather and the renewed energy of your garden.

Happy Spring!

- **Plant Now:** Focus on planting warm-season veggies and herbs before it gets too hot.

When selecting natives, consider:

Habitat (wetland, upland, coastal)

Light requirements (sun vs shade)

Water needs (dry drought tolerance)

Invasiveness risk and local availability from native plant nurseries

Thank you to Jeri for the prior two tips and be sure to have fun with the Native Plant Word Search she also submitted!

Florida Native Plants

NVPRBALDCYPRESSRELWUJTPPE
VAJSQYQIKXBEAUTYBERRYGZK
GCZCNAXNMEKBJCMNTRRMATLZP
NTAGFVZLCRZLYNLKNMCNVQUBK
LOAHIWGDLPOLASKHMMBITCRS
WHVVRCUYTBTECTNWVGBBBBVEQ
HMPFEOXRQUZHVMUYAJVSPAXAW
YPBMCOCFZXWVVNDAMARFEWDC
BYXFRNTDLMFMBVQMFEPXBVVS
EJPDATOMVKCOPQXOGIZBINBVU
MISICIOAUFDRGXVVDYGSATRYK
PIQEKEDNDNBURDPZNVXOTYSOR
QSGVEAOGLSFDOGWBTPIYVETS
QJAHRDQRYOILSUWILDCCOFFEEC
PQLDTMJOCMLOETYSXMTHZRNJO
VCGPDGGVDIURBURSLYZAKSKLC
ZWSHOIREQEMITVZAAQRVGM LCO
TJNEEKJASCODAWGDNBWHZNVVP
OMXCTQVFSZCARBZLQGALCAOAL
ISENYKAMESDMRBVWBILLTFLWU
LOAEKYMRVOSAZHXMOYREPZMYM
NJMGVNWHPEMPOUDXLNFBRAZJR
TUYPERCCORALVINERTTKGFLRB
TCZLRJDWNQJEKCHSVSNEJDIMM
QAXZVWYUTUNAJDQYKPPTQNXGS

Florida maple

Strangler fig

bald cypress

Red mangrove

Beauty berry

Might grass

Firecracker

Wild coffee

Sabal palm

Coral vine

swamp bay

Coontie

Sage

Cocoplum

AFTER THE FREEZE: What Homeowners Should Do

Sara MacDonald, University of Florida, IFAS
St. Lucie County Extension

Recent freezing weather can damage plants in our landscapes, but not all damage is permanent. Some plants may look worse before they get better. The steps below explain what homeowners should do after a freeze to help plants recover and avoid causing more damage.

DO THIS

Check Water Needs

- Cold, windy weather can dry plants out
- Water plants to help thaw soil and rehydrate roots
- Container plants may need extra attention

Be Patient

- Some cold damage shows up days or weeks later
- New spring growth will show what's truly alive

DON'T DO THIS YET

Don't Rush Pruning

- Avoid heavy pruning right after a freeze. Cold stratify seeds before planting
- Cutting too early can remove living tissue and stimulate vulnerable new growth

Don't Fertilize

- Wait until warmer weather and active growth return

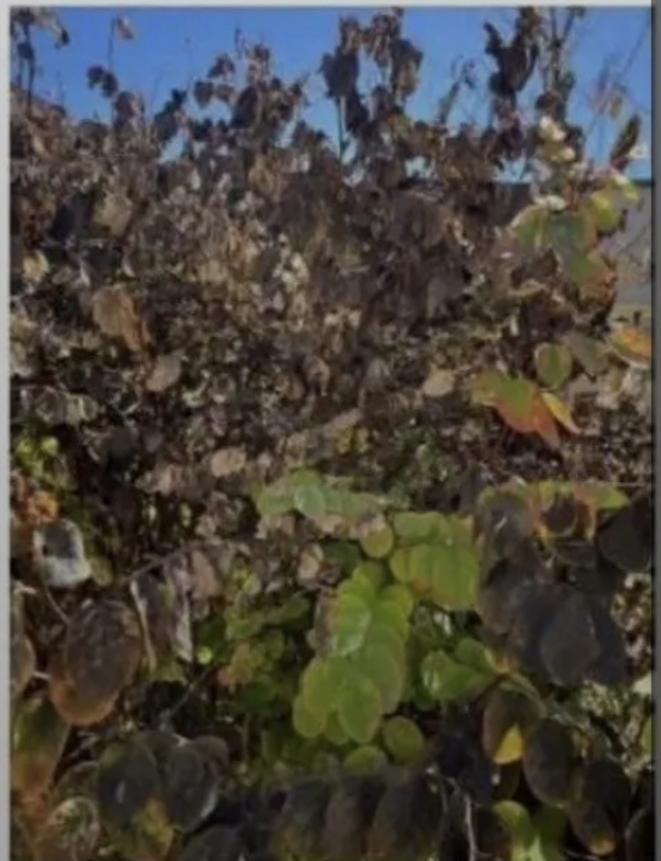
WHEN YOU DO PRUNE

- Scratch the bark lightly with a fingernail
 - Green = alive
 - Brown/black = dead
- Prune back only to healthy tissue
- Dead, brown leaves can be removed once fully dry

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Delayed or no spring bud break
- Weak or uneven growth
- Branch dieback over time

Some plants recover slowly after severe cold — patience is key!



Tropical evergreen after the freeze on Jan 31-Feb 2, 2026, at the St. Lucie County Extension Office

The FFGC Registration for the Convention is now open.

Check out the fun Workshops! www.ffgc.org

Register online today in 5 minutes and get free self parking once you register.

FFGC CONVENTION
Registration
is now open!



APRIL 14-17, 2026

Embassy Suites Orlando by Hilton

Lake Buena Vista South, Fl.

State Flower Show - "Once Upon a Time"



As part of the City's ongoing commitment to expanding and strengthening the urban tree canopy, the Residential Tree Subsidy Program helps eligible single-family homeowners plant new street trees at a reduced cost.

Residents may receive a \$250 rebate for planting an approved Florida Grade #1 street tree, measuring over 10 feet in height, on their property. Rebates are issued after the tree has been inspected, properly established, and confirmed to be thriving.

For additional information go to [Street Tree Program - City of Coral Springs](#) or contact our member Casey Lee, City Forester, at clee@coralsprings.gov or by phone at 954-344-1117.

Golden Bee Award Daisy Level

Nominated by members. Awarded to a member who goes above and beyond.



This month's winner is:

Maria DePasque

Maria joined our club on September 5, 2025, and in this short time she has already made an incredible impact. She designed the beautiful flyer for our May Luncheon, crafted lovely pottery and planted succulents for our volunteer appreciation at Sawgrass Nature Center, and has attended most of our field trips and meetings. Maria is also serving on the

planning team for our Scholarship Luncheon and has generously donated plants to our plant exchange. After our Holiday Party, she thoughtfully delivered toy donations to the hospital, further reflecting her generous spirit and commitment to service. Most importantly, Maria has stepped up to serve as our Treasurer for the 2026–2028 Board, a tremendous commitment and a true gift to our organization. Please make it a point to get to know this vibrant new member. Though she has been with us only a short time, she has already contributed so much to our club, and we are truly fortunate to have her.



IMPORTANT

If you wear your name tag to meetings and events, you'll have the chance to enter a drawing to win a beautiful prize. It's a simple way to show your participation and engagement, and who knows—you might be the lucky winner! Don't forget to wear your name tag for your chance to win!

Order a Garden Club Tee Shirt. \$15.00.



Polo shirts white for men , pink for ladies. \$25.00

One tee shirt is given to new members who work the garden fest. Anyone who previously received a shirt will need to purchase if they want an additional tee shirt.

Contact Ken 954-913-1617



We still have patches available for purchase that you can sew or iron onto a **pink** blouse, tee, hoodie, hat or garment of your choice.

Depending on your level of giving, you may be entitled to one for free. However, they are only \$5 each so it may be fun to get more than one for style flexibility! Please contact Mary Anne at mimi0113@gmail.com to purchase/pick up.

THE GARDEN CLUB OF CORAL SPRINGS
YARD OF THE MONTH
BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT



Please help us acknowledge the beautiful yards and gardens in our community of Coral Springs and surrounding areas. We are fortunate to be able to garden year-round due to our semi-tropical climate.

If you, or someone you know, would like to be nominated for our

Yard of the Month Award

contact

gardenclubs2020@yahoo.com

with name and address of property to be nominated

HAPPY GARDENING!!

YARD OF THE MONTH GUIDELINES

Nominations are made by members. PLEASE review the following rules and keep this in mind as you drive around our area.

Yard of the Month guidelines were determined by Ken, Mary Anne, Carol J, Nancy D, Casey and Jeri.

Nominations for Yard of the Month are for the front and back yards.

Areas covered are Coral Springs, Parkland, Tamarac, Coconut Creek, and Margate.

Anyone can nominate a yard to the club, even yourself. This nomination is sent to gardenclubs2020@yahoo.com.

No patios or condos are considered.

Pictures of said nominations are sent for approval and a google earth search is completed by Jeri.

Jeri will send photos of the nominations to the committee, but everyone wins unless the yard is not suitable.

After the nominations are approved, Ken or Jeri will call and set up an appointment around the 15th of every month.

Emails are then sent to the committee for presentation of the sign with a date, time and addresses of the winners. The garden is then visited by the committee and/or other club members and the sign is presented along with a laminated certificate.

Mary Anne makes up the certificate and there are 4 signs.

Nancy photographs the yard during the visit and then a collage is made and put on Facebook. Photos from Facebook are then sent to Mary Anne and Dotty to be added to the newsletter. Yard of the Month winners will also be uploaded to the club's web site.

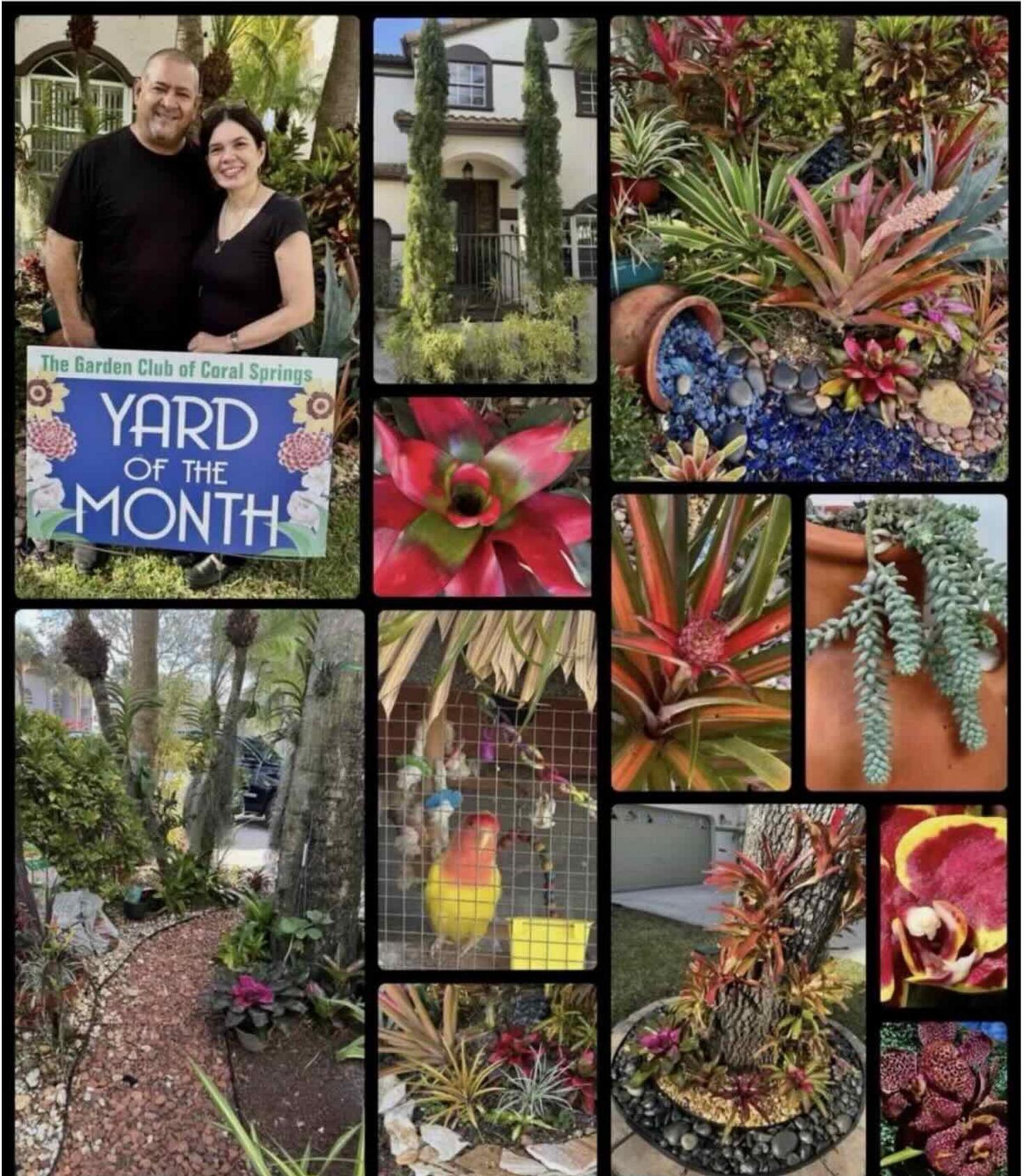
Thirty days after placing the sign in the yards, they are picked up and taken to the next winners by various committee members.

Any exceptions to the above guidelines are to be determined by the committee.



The Garden Club of Coral Springs

Our Yard of the Month Award goes to Edwin and Maria Rivera of Coral Springs for creating their own piece of paradise. Decorative stone pathways wind through gardens of tropical plants and orchids. At the heart of the garden is an aviary with lovebirds and parakeets. Everywhere you look, you will find examples of their love for their garden.



The Garden Club of Coral Springs Schedule of Events 2025-2026
Meetings are held at Northwest Regional Library in Coral Springs
 (Events and Speakers are subject to change.)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
March 12 (Thursday)	10:30 AM to 12:30 PM - Meeting with a presentation by Doug Young - Plants for Birds
April 9 (Thursday)	10 AM to 12 PM - Field trip to Jesse Durko Nursery
April 18 (Saturday)	10:30 AM to 12:30 PM - Meeting with a presentation by Ashley Cocherham - Stream to Sea
April 25 (Saturday)	9 AM to 12 PM - EarthFest at Sawgrass Nature Center
May 9 (Saturday)	Field Trip to Wahoo Bay & Tour Old Pompano
May 14 (Thursday)	11:30 AM to 2:30 PM - Scholarship Luncheon - to be held at Livellos, 2047 N University Drive, Coral Springs

If you have a wonderful place to recommend for a field trip or a guest speaker you think we would all enjoy and learn from, please feel free to contact Debbie Strong with your suggestion at deb.bob@outlook.com.

We plant and maintain a vegetable garden at Sawgrass Nature Center & Wildlife Hospital to help feed the animals.

We planted and maintain a native garden at Whispering Woods Park.

We planted and maintain a Florida friendly garden at Veteran's Park in Coral Springs.

We will be hosting a series at Northwest Regional Library "Color Your World with Plants".

We have a plot in the Community Garden of Coral Springs to grow vegetables and flowers.

PLEASE CONTACT LUANNEBETZ@GMAIL.COM
TO VOLUNTEER FOR ANY OF THE ABOVE.



DO BE A DO BEE

DON'T BE A DON'T BEE

BECOME A QUEEN BEE

Become an active member and help our
CLUB BUZZ around town.

How to earn pins?

WORKER BEE PINS:



Complete 2 of the 3 items below:

Attend 5 out of 8 meetings or events;

Bring a new member or guest;.

Share a gardening tip at a meeting, in the newsletter or on Facebook.

QUEEN BEE PIN

Must receive 1 WORKER BEE PIN and complete 3 items from below:

Attend an additional meeting or event;

Volunteer at least 1 hour at the EarthFest Booth;

Help Youth Groups assemble kits or presentation;

Help with gardens at Veterans, Community, Sawgrass Nature

Center or Whispering Pines;

Help with Library Presentations

over the Summer.





MARCH

What to Plant

Annuals/Perennials/Wildflowers: Plant heat-tolerant flowering plants such as pentas, coleus, crossandra, gazania, vinca, gaillardia, caladiums, and zinnia that will last into fall.

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topics/>

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topics/>

<https://www.flawildflowers.org/>

Herbs: In addition to their culinary value, many herbs are ornamental and attract butterflies to the garden.

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topics/>

Vegetables: This is the last month to plant arugula, beans, cantaloupe, carrots, celery, sweet corn, endive, okra, radish, squashes, Swiss chard, and watermelon.

https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topics/vegetable_gardening

What to Do

Shrubs and trees: Prune when new growth begins after the end of the dormant season. Prune after the last flowers fade but before new flower buds set.

Mulch: Add mulch to plant beds to minimize weeds and conserve moisture during dry weather. A ring of mulch around trees will protect them from damage by lawnmowers and line trimmers.

Pests: Monitor landscape plants for insects, especially for the presence of aphids on tender new growth. Insects become more active during warm weather.

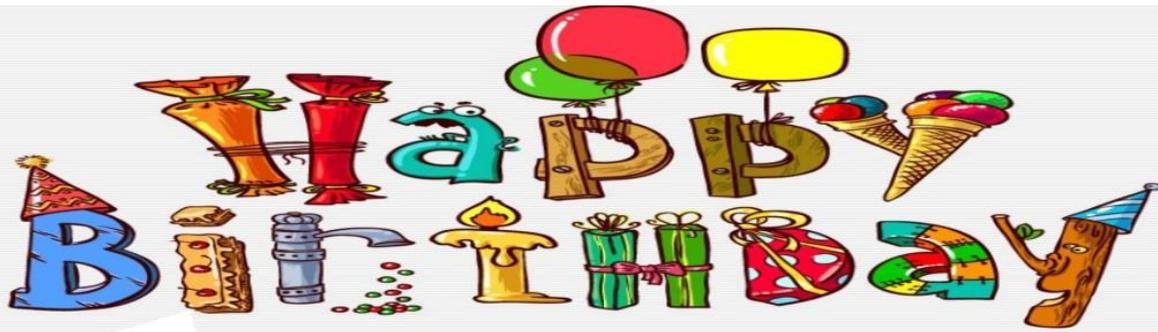
Fertilize: Fertilize lawns, palms, and ornamental shrubs if not done last month, but only if local ordinances allow

Lawns: Identify damaging insects and spot treat early to prevent widespread damage.

Apply a preemergence weed killer (not a "weed and feed") to lawns to prevent germination of warm-season weed seeds. Apply when temperatures rise to 65°F for 4–5 days. Timing is important for good control.

Tropical and subtropical fruits: Add variety and interest to the landscape and meals with exotic fruits.

Citrus: Squiggly lines in the younger leaves of citrus trees indicate Citrus Leaf Miner (CLM) insects, but there is seldom a need to manage them. Natural enemies in Florida usually keep them in check.



JILL KAREFF	03/06*
KAREN CORBIN	03/06*
DAVID THOMPSON	03/09*
KEN DECKER	03/20*
JAMES WEISS	03/22*
LUANNE BETZ	03/23*
MARCY DiMARE	03/24*
STELLA HUGHES	03/25*
THOMAS TAM	03/28*
JUNE BOOKAL	03/30 *



*Don't forget to check your ecard from Jacquie Lawson!

Beach Sunflower



South-Florida-Plant-Guide.com

This is one plant that doesn't like to be over-loved. A **native** plant, it likes our sandy soil and is nicely tolerant of dry conditions.

It flowers on and off year round, with a fast spreading habit.

Beach sunflower is very effective as a lush, front of the border planting. It also makes a great surround for a palm, lamppost, fountain or bird feeder.

It's best used in a casual landscape for its cottage garden appeal. The blooms attract butterflies, and make pretty cut flowers for the dinner table.

This groundcover is a fast grower and gets about 18 inches tall. It needs full to part sun to flower the most.

Zone 10 is best, where it will flower year round.

Occasional trimming may be necessary to keep it in bounds, but a spring pruning is vital.

Cut plants back in late March or early April to encourage new full growth.

Water on a regular basis but with enough time between waterings for the soil to dry out.

Make sure the planting area drains well or this plant won't be happy.

Fertilize twice a year - in spring and late summer - with a good quality controlled release fertilizer.

Place these groundcovers about 3 to 4 feet apart. Come in from walks and drives at least 3 feet.

This plant will work in a container but is at its best in the ground.

by Chase Landre

Crowding Plants Too Close Together

By [Clarence Wimberly](#)

January 20, 2026

It's tempting to fill every inch of garden space with color and greenery. Plants look fuller when they're close, and bare soil feels like wasted opportunity.

But tight spacing creates the perfect environment for **aphids, whiteflies, scale, and spider mites** to move from leaf to leaf without ever being noticed.

Florida's humidity makes crowded plantings even riskier. Moisture lingers between leaves, and pests multiply quickly in the warm, still air trapped inside dense foliage.

In South Florida, where bugs never take a break, crowded beds become pest nurseries. Central Florida gardeners see surges during spring and fall.

Even in North Florida, summer heat and humidity can make tightly packed plants more susceptible to pests.

Proper spacing allows air to circulate and leaves to dry after rain or irrigation. Follow the spacing guidelines on plant tags, even if it feels like too much room at first.

The plants will fill in, and you'll be able to spot pest damage early before it spreads. Thinning overgrown beds might feel drastic, but the payoff is healthier plants and far fewer pest outbreaks throughout the year.





Aphids along a plant's new growth. UF/IFAS

Aphids

Aphids are small, soft-bodied insects that use their piercing-sucking mouthparts to feed on the sap of living plants. There are thousands of species of aphids and, though many are green, they can come in a variety of colors. Aphids are round to pear-shaped and generally about 1/16th to 1/8th of an inch long (2-4mm).

Mites

Mites are tiny home and garden pests with two body segments and sucking mouthparts. Adults have four pairs of legs, making them *arachnids* (relatives of spiders). They are very small, almost microscopic, so gardeners generally recognize them by their damage or webbing rather than their physical presence.



Two-spotted mites, a major pest on more than 200 species of plants. UF/IFAS

SCALES



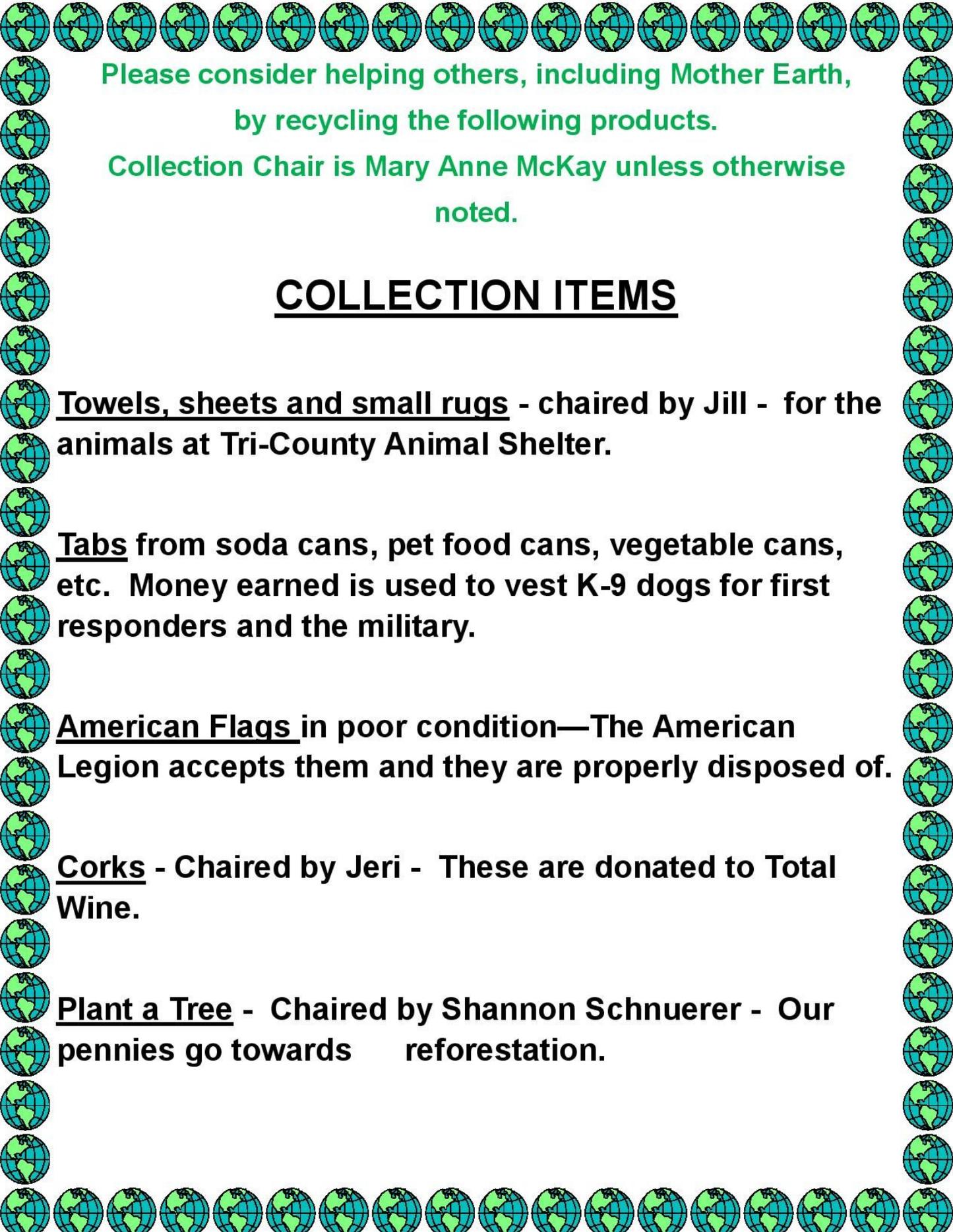
These sap-suckers are tiny flat, brown bugs that appear as oval bumps on your plants. The adults have a hard shell-like structure which makes it difficult to kill them.

WHITEFLIES



These flies look like white moths and are seen to roam in the underside of the leaves. They fly up whenever you water the plant.

Adult flies lay eggs on the underside of the leaves, and such infested leaves become yellow or stunted.



Please consider helping others, including Mother Earth,
by recycling the following products.

Collection Chair is Mary Anne McKay unless otherwise
noted.

COLLECTION ITEMS

Towels, sheets and small rugs - chaired by Jill - for the
animals at Tri-County Animal Shelter.

Tabs from soda cans, pet food cans, vegetable cans,
etc. Money earned is used to vest K-9 dogs for first
responders and the military.

American Flags in poor condition—The American
Legion accepts them and they are properly disposed of.

Corks - Chaired by Jeri - These are donated to Total
Wine.

Plant a Tree - Chaired by Shannon Schnuerer - Our
pennies go towards reforestation.

WEB SITES FOR MORE INFORMATION:

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA:

<http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Native aquatic and wetland plants in Florida

<http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/>

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Pattern Book:

http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FFL_Book_Zone_10_081610.pdf

Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Plant Selection Guide:

http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_v090110.pdf

NATIVES FOR YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD—SOUTH FLORIDA

<http://regionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn>

Find out how to turn simple gardening into habitat restoration by using plants native to your specific area

<http://www.plantfinder.com>

<http://www.floridanativenurseries.org>

<http://www.fnqla.org/>

www.floridata.com

<http://flawildflowers.org>

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT:

www.sfwmd.gov

PUBLISHERS:

<http://upf.com>

(the scholarly publishing arm of the State University System of Florida)

<http://www.pineapplepress.com/>

NATIVE PLANT & OTHER BOOKS:

NATIVE FLORIDA PLANTS, Revised Edition

Robert G. Haehle & Joan Brookwell
(Amazon.com, Borders, Barnes & Noble carry this)

A GARDENER'S GUIDE TO FLORIDA'S NATIVE PLANTS

Rufino Osorio, University Press of Florida

FLORIDA'S BEST NATIVE LANDSCAPE PLANTS

Gil Nelson, University Press of Florida

THE GUIDE TO FLORIDA WILDFLOWERS

Walter Kingsley Taylor/ the book is color coded—very useful
(Amazon and possible Barnes & Noble)

FLORIDA WILDFLOWERS: A Comprehensive Guide

This is the 2013 update from Walter Kingsley Taylor and includes the newest scientific information about Florida's wildflowers. (Amazon and possible Barnes & Noble)

EVERGLADES WILDFLOWERS

Color coded. A great field guide
Roger L. Hammer, The Globe Pequot Press

FLORIDA KEYS WILDFLOWERS

Color coded—companion to **Everglades Wildflowers**
Roger L. Hammer, The Globe Pequot Press

ATTRACTING HUMMINBIRDS & BUTTERFLIES IN TROPICAL FLORIDA

Roger L. Hammer, University Press of Florida

NATIVE PLANT LANDSCAPING FOR FLORIDA WILDLIFE

Very well written and informative,
Craig N. Huegel, University Press of Florida

NATIVE FLORIDA PLANTS FOR SHADY LANDSCAPES

Craig N. Huegel, University Press of Florida

BRINGING NATURE HOME

How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife In Our Gardens
Douglas Tallamy: Timber Press

FLORIDA GARDENER'S GUIDE (REVISED EDITION)

Tom MacCubbin & Georgia Tasker
Cool Springs Press/ <http://coolspringspress.com>

NATIVE BROMELIADS OF FLORIDA

Harry E. Luther & David H. Benzing, Pineapple Press, Inc.

WILD ORCHIDS OF FLORIDA

Paul Martin Brown/A more compact update & field guide of the work of Carlyle A. Luer, University Press of Florida

FLORIDA'S FABULOUS BUTTERFLIES

Includes special chapter on moths &

FLORIDA'S FABULOUS INSECTS

2 separate oversize publications in the FLORIDA FABULOUS series. WORLD PUBLICATIONS/ www.allfloridabooks.com

FLORIDA BUTTERFLY GARDENING

Marc C. Minno & Maria Minno
University Press of Florida

ATTRACTING BENEFICIAL BUGS TO YOUR GARDEN

Jessica Walliser: Timber Press

ATTRACTING NATIVE POLLINATORS

Protecting North America's Bees & Butterflies
The Xerces Society: Storey Publishing

ATTRACTING BIRDS TO SOUTH FLORIDA GARDENS

James A. Kushlan & Kirsten Hines
www.kirstenNatureTravel/publications

THE BOOKS OF PAMELA CRAWFORD:

<http://pamela-crawford.com/pamela-crawfords-books/>

A Garden Diary:

A Guide to Gardening in South Florida ©

by Robert G. Haehle and M.E. DePalma
De Palma Enterprises

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA OF HERBS & THEIR USES

The Definitive Guide to the Identification, Cultivation and uses of Herbs
Deni Bown: Dorling Kindersley Publishing Staff