



Punta Gorda Garden Club Garden Tales

Gardening Nourishes the Soul

www.pggc.org

Club News

- Carol Moore graciously agreed to be our Environmental Chair until May 2021. Carol will be in an acting position until the Board vote at the next meeting on Jan 13.
- The PGGC Flower Show planned for March 2021 is canceled and will be rescheduled for 2022. As a result of this change, the program for the January General Meeting will be revised.



President's Message

Hello Members,

I hope you are all doing well and keeping busy. This weather over the past few days has been so nice. Working in the garden is so much easier now that it is a little cooler in the mornings. Boy does mine need a workout! You may not know that I had carpal tunnel surgery back in June and was late being assigned physiotherapy. I am just getting my hand back to normal. Unfortunately, if I am not in the garden, my husband thinks it is approved time off for him. Never mind, we are catching up.

We had our Thanksgiving Candlestick Arrangement Program on November 18 which was organized by Vinita. It would have been even more wonderful if the wind was not so strong. Photos of our members designing their arrangements are included in this Newsletter. We all had a good time and really enjoyed seeing each other. Claudia, as usual, did an excellent job leading the workshop.

It is so sad to not be able to have our usual Thanksgiving plans and Christmas is also being affected. We have not accepted a kind invitation to Thanksgiving dinner from our neighbors as they and their friends are still working and we are thinking, we made it this far, we do not want to take a chance. Also, this will be the first time in nine years that we will not be able to spend the Christmas holiday with our Scottish/Canadian friends. The good news is that the vaccine should be available soon. I could not find any plans for distribution in Charlotte County, the closest site will be in Tampa. So, I contacted our Governor to ascertain if he had any information for all of us living south of Tampa and west of Miami. I did receive a acknowledgement receipt. When I receive a response, I will share that with you.

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Save the Date!

Holly Day
Home Tour
Canceled

Holiday
Luncheon
Canceled

General
Meeting
Jan 20

Garden Tales

Continued from page 1

We regret that PGGC will not proceed with the March 2021 Flower Show. It takes a very long time to get a Flower Show organized and, as we are unable to see into the future, we could not determine if our current health situation will change. Initially, we thought we could make a final decision at the January 2021 Board meeting. But that would not leave sufficient time for our team to meet all the demands of a flower show. In addition, our original plan was for all participants to have lunch at the Isles Yacht Club and, again, this virus situation affects participants' decisions. Just think, you will have an additional year to come up with fabulous designs to wow our judges, attendees and District members.

We have come up with the Punta Gorda Garden Club Arts and Crafts Sale fund raising event called "HOP'N INTO SPRING". We reserved the First United Methodist Church parking lot on February 27th, 2021 for this event. We want all of our members to use their many talents to participate in what may be our only fundraiser for this fiscal year. We will inform you of the details shortly.

I just keep reminding myself of how busy and exciting our lives will be when we return to normal, providing we remember what normal is! I want to wish you all a Safe and Happy Thanksgiving!

Carol Houston, Co-President

November 2020 General Meeting – Thanksgiving Candlestick Arrangement Program



PGGC 2021 Fund Raiser

Hop'N Into Spring!
At the Punta Gorda Garden Club Art & Craft Sale



Since our Holly Days Home Tour is cancelled, we are planning an alternative fundraiser for Saturday, February 27th to be held in the parking lot at First United Methodist Church from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, so mark your calendar! Hopefully this event will bring in enough profit to offer some of the donations and scholarships we have in the past, but we need your help!

Tables will be set up for the sale of plants and crafts. Please step up and spend some time either potting up plants from your gardens or creating crafts comparable to those sold at past Home Tours, although the theme will be Spring rather than Christmas. If you need ideas please reach out to Carol Houston, Sandy Bruglio, Joyce Stanley, Vinita Jones, or Mary Yeomans.

We have so many talented members in our club and are hoping that each of you can find a way to display that talent in some donated items to sell. Just as all members are expected to help with the Home Tour, we hope that all members will help with this event in some way. A committee will be meeting to plan and provide you with further details. Thank you in advance for your help so that we can help others!

Mary Yeomans, President

Remembering Elise Haymans

An inspiring funeral for Elise Haymans was held at the First United Methodist Church on Tuesday, November 10, 2020 and afterwards folks were invited to the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center for the dedication of a bench purchased by PGGC in her honor, Sarah Corey provided a brief ceremony that included an article written by Elise a long time ago about the landscape maintenance (or lack thereof) at the Punta Gorda Library which drew a few chuckles. Elise was a strong yet gentle woman whose personality was shared by her sons and others through stories told at the meal offered after the dedication. The rain from Tropical Storm Eta was actually timed well to permit all to enjoy this celebration of her life. Thanks to everyone who attended to honor her memory!

Mary Yeomans, President



Plant Profile: Mexican Sunflower (Tithonia rotundifolia)

The Tithonia or Mexican sunflower is a spectacular annual flowering plant that does well in Southwest Florida. Easy to start from seed, this brilliant orange-red flower will impress you.

Tithonia rotundiflora is an old-time annual flower favorite not to be confused with a perennial relative called Bolivian or Mexican Sunflower (*Tithonia diversifolia*). *Tithonia diversifolia* is an aggressive plant and easily takes over an area if you aren't careful and considered invasive. On the other hand, *Tithonia rotundiflora* is easily controlled and a pleasure to have in your yard. Growing from 5-6 feet tall, this annual has fuzzy, soft leaves and stems topped with 3 inch, bright orange-red flowers with yellow centers that remind you of a daisy or a zinnia. Direct seed in a full sun location in late winter/early spring for summer and fall flowers. Be prepared to stake your Tithonia as they can get floppy and fall over.



The cultivar called 'Torch' is perhaps the most common selection and has an All-America Selection designation. There is also a yellow version. Both of these cultivars are tall, so you may want to look at some dwarf varieties. Only growing to 3 feet tall, 'Goldfinger' and 'Fiesta Del Sol' provide a more compact version of this plant. Both heat and drought-tolerant, Tithonia do well in our summer weather.

Besides being a colorful bedding plant, Tithonia lends itself to the production of great cut flowers that keep producing. This flowering plant is also a magnet for butterflies. Butterflies love to perch and sip nectar from the high vantage point provided by the Tithonia. This plant may also supply seed for birds at certain times in the year.

Once an individual flower is spent, it will set seed which will likely drop to the ground, germinate, and may provide another set of Tithonia to flower in fall and early winter. A frost will likely finish off the plants, but many seeds will self-sow and become 'volunteers' for next year. As such, Tithonia can naturalize a bit wherever it is grown. Also, look to pass some extra seeds to a friend as Tithonia makes an excellent "pass-along" plant.

Jane Hayse, Horticulture Chair

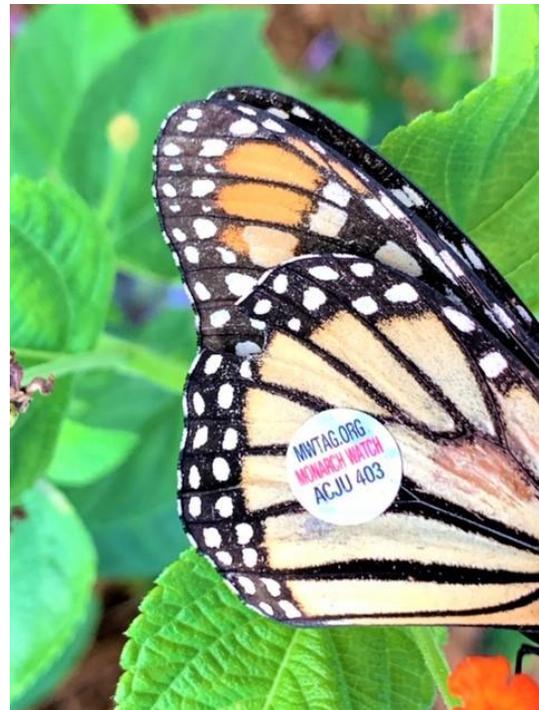
Source: <https://charlottecountyextension.blogspot.com/2015/11/top-of-morning-tithonia.html> Any suggestions for the Plant Profile? Contact me at jhayse59@hotmail.com

PGGC Members "Parent" Butterflies

Many members of PGGC were involved in raising butterflies this summer and they have been very busy finding eggs and caterpillars, raising them, and then releasing them. Joyce Stanley, Bonnie Rehling, Martha Cloran, and Dorrit Tompkins, among others, were involved in this "hobby." Dorrit had quite an operation going with five habitat enclosures containing caterpillars at all stages of development, both monarchs and gulf fritillaries. She has released over 140 butterflies since August 8th, sometimes 20 in one day! She found and photographed one with a Monarch Watch tag on its wing and reported it on their website in October. Maintaining gardens in your yard with both nectar and larval plants benefits all sorts of butterflies.

Consider including native plants when you plan and plant your gardens! And if you want to learn more about keeping butterflies, just ask these fellow members, or go to the Butterfly House at the Peace River Botanical Garden where the volunteers are very knowledgeable.

Mary Yeomans, President





December Birthdays Wishes

Mercy Triana	12/4
Louise DiNino	12/5
Debbie Engel	12/5
Maggie Rogers	12/7
Pat Cavanagh	12/8
Bonnie Rehling	12/9
Linda Krippendorf	12/21
Bobbie Kratt	12/26
Susan Forman	12/27
Vinita Jones	12/30

And many happy returns!

Membership and Yearbook Update!

Please update the following information in your yearbook:

Dorrit Tompkins' new email address
newshoesdorrit@gmail.com

December Gardening Tip

Protect: Protect tender orchid, impatiens, and tomato from falling temperatures. See Cold Protection and Chilling Damage of Landscape Plants:
http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscapes_and_cold

Help Needed!

In keeping with our commitment to the First United Methodist Church to decorate in return for use of their facility, the Club will decorate the Sanctuary, Life Center and Gazebo on Tuesday, Dec 1st at 9:30 am. If we have fifteen volunteers as requested, it makes it so much easier on everyone involved and gets the job finished sooner. We will wear masks, take temperatures and keep six feet apart so we will all be in adherence to CDC guidelines. We hope you can help out, thank you!

Please contact Caroline, at 941-505-1708 or fcwooters@yahoo.com.



December Events



Dec 5 Lake Placid Garden Club Holiday Home & Garden Tour

Sat 12-4 pm. Several beautifully decorated homes and meticulously maintained gardens will be featured on this tour. The Holiday Café opens at 11:30 and will offer complimentary refreshments and several unique gift items. This event is Covid-19 compliant, please wear a mask and practice social distancing. If you choose, bring an ornament for our “Giving Tree” that will be donated to a needy family for Christmas. For more info, call Julie (702-994-9739) or Brenda (561-201-2130). The Café is located at the Women’s Club, 10 N. Main Avenue in Lake Placid. Tickets \$15.

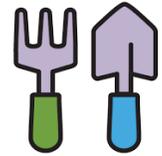
Dec 11-13; 18-20; 22-23; 29-30 Peace River Botanical Garden “Gardens Aglow”

Holiday lights and music and featuring photos with Santa on select evenings, S’mores roasting over the fire pit (for a small fee), and story time for children. 6-9 pm Tickets \$8 Members, \$10 Non-Members. Punta Gorda

Dec 12-23; 26-31; Jan 1-2 Selby Gardens “Lights in Bloom”

Open-air Light Show with over two million lights will illuminate the gardens and walkways will be transformed into sensory light tunnels. 6-9 pm Tickets \$20 Members, \$25 Non-Members. Sarasota

Garden Workdays



For new Work Day volunteers, please contact Carol Moore to confirm schedule. Volunteers should arrive by 8 am. Bring gloves, pruning shears, and bottled water. Usually finished in less than 2 hours!

Dec 7 - History Park

Dec 14 - PG Old Library

Dec 16 - PR Botanical Garden

Dec 21 - Women’s Club

The January newsletter deadline is Dec 20. Submit items and/or photographs to Mary Hanrahan (mahamherst@gmail.com.)

