

**KEY WEST  
BOTANICAL  
GARDEN  
SOCIETY**

**JULY 2011**

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Photography by Beryn Harty unless otherwise specified



**Garden Guardians of the  
Key West Tropical Forest  
& Botanical Garden**

Hi all, welcome from Key West! The Garden Guardians miss you and hope to see you back in the Nursery and out in the garden as soon as you return this fall!

In the nursery, we are happy to report that many of the blue butterfly rescue plants are thriving! We've had a few more issues out in the garden with predation by iguanas. We're looking into some measures to limit the population and/or make the plants less palatable to them.

Speaking of invasive exotics, we're excited to be in the running for a grant to remove exotics on our property. The Florida Fish and Wildlife grant would be used to remove these invasives along our perimeter, in the back 40 and/or on the cow key channel border across College Road.

Have fun this summer! We'll look forward to seeing you back at the garden in the fall!

**Mary Chandler**

It has been a busy month at the Garden. Even though it is "Off Season" there is LOTS to keep us busy.

Audrey Thompson has headed north but did extensive work mapping the Garden irrigation system prior to leaving. Thank you, Audrey. Job well done!

We have a new Garden Guardian. Lori Highsmith has joined the Guardians and also works several shifts at the Visitor Center. Lori is much like the rest of us and truly enjoys the beauty, the peace, and magical qualities of the Garden. She has made a special effort in keeping the Courtyard looking its best.

Josefina Reif is back working with the Guardians and the VC. Welcome back, Josefina. Jo worked hard this Saturday, removing weeds from the nursery. Garden work appeals to Jo – she wants our garden to be as beautiful as it can be.

The Saturday GGs, including our community hour kids -Erin & Liz Czerwinski, Sawyer Redding, Paul & Sean LaFere, and Frank Edge - Lori Highsmith, Jo Reif and myself, have been working on maintenance duties. Erin and Sean head up nursery duty/ Sawyer, Paul, Lori and Jo work with Garden-boardwalk maintenance/ Liz and Susie work in the newly repaired Shade House. Susie also fills in with other projects as needed.

Harry Kelly is still our dependable Wednesday Guardian. He has been joined by Lori and Susie. There is continuing cleanup on the nursery itself, with a likely reorganization, because of expanded use.

There have been several weddings held at the Garden. The Garden Guardians have helped prepare the Garden for these events. Thank you, Guardians. We received many compliments from the participants and guests.

The Saturday GGs have started several experimental flats of seeds. We are especially pleased with the success of Florida Keys Blackbead, (*Pithecellobium keyense*). The blackbead flower is a globe-like puff, which is generally a soft light pink in the keys, though often white on the mainland. A reddish twisted pod forms, turning brown as the black seeds ripen. Per the IRC (Institute for Regional Conservation): "It is the **Larval host plant** for Cassius Blue (*Leptotes cassius*) and Large Orange Sulphur (*Phoebis agarithe*) butterflies. **Nectar plant** for Cassius Blue, Florida Duskywing (*Ephyriades brunneus*), Florida White (*Appias drusilla*), Giant Swallowtail (*Papilio cresphontes*), Great Southern White (*Ascia monuste*), Hammock Skipper (*Polygonus leo*), Large Orange Sulphur, Mangrove Skipper (*Phocides pigmalion*), Miami Blue (*Hemiargus thomasi*), Palatka Skipper (*Euphyes pilatka*), Southern Broken-dash (*Wallengrenia otho*), Three-spotted Skipper (*Cybaeus tripunctus*), Twin-spot Skipper (*Oligorio maculata*) & other butterflies." Birds eat its arils.

More information can be found at <http://regionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn/>

We had a group of 10 Navy volunteers last Wednesday. They accomplished a great deal of work, including completion of the mulching project in the Butterfly Garden and Western Loop, ongoing invasive plant and tree removal, and cleanup of the fence perimeter. A group of 10 Coast Guard volunteers will be joining us this Wednesday, with a goal of invasive removal, mulch pile cleanup and plant rescue in preparation for the Chapel renovation. Mary Chandler has been our guide for these projects. Thank you, Mary for helping it all run so smoothly AND successfully.

The Shade House by the offices is having a renaissance. With repair, identification, organization and watering, the plants – orchids, bromeliads, tillandesiads – seem to be flourishing. Come by and visit yet another garden treasure.

As you can see, the Garden is growing, with all your help, both this past month and during the "season". The garden is truly "your" garden. We can all be proud of all we have accomplished.

Thank You!

**Susie Reutling**



**Saturday, June 18 GGs: Frank Edge, Erin Czerwinski, Liz Czerwinski, Misha McRae, Jo Reif and Susie Reutling**



**Nickerbean in the Nursery**



**The Nursery**



## Our Iguana Buffet Table

**Nickerbean**



The Garden Guardians continue to grow. My thanks to all of you who have put your time and effort into the program and the garden. The garden shows its pride in all your efforts.

New guardian Lori Highsmith, along with Sean Lefere and Frank Edge stepped up to the challenge with not only regular maintenance around the Terrace, but in cleaning up the mulch path and adding landscaping stones on each side of the path. The wedding party of 135 that came to the garden that night exclaimed the garden was 'enchanted'. Great job everyone.

Susie, Liz, Erin and Paul each continue their efforts in the nursery. It is so green, vibrant and standing tall for all who visit it. With Susie's guidance, the High School Students have begun a propagation project that includes seed collection, sorting, storing and germinating. The results of their project are already 3 inches high. Go team Go!

The Garden Guardian team leaders continue to honor the garden with their dedication and professionalism. They have each stepped up to the tasks with unwavering confidence. The garden has been very blessed with the aid of the local Naval and Coastguard volunteer groups that come out to help. The team leaders split the group, direct and supervise each group in the varied tasks required. The historic butterfly garden trails have been mulched, Invasive exotics removed, debris clean out and many other tasks too big for our summer guardians to handle have been accomplished thanks to these hard working volunteer groups.

The Garden thanks you all for all your efforts and contribution to the garden and this program. It gives me great pride that I share with you.

**Misha McRAE**

Lori Highsmith, Sean Lefere, and Frank Edge of the Garden Guardian program proudly display their efforts on the Terrace Walk. The three of them worked diligently on fixing the walkway, weeding and lining the walkway with stones for the June 4, 2011 Gallagher wedding. The effort paid off and has been praised by all. Thank you's go to Sean, Lori and Frank for all their hard work and dedication..

Photos from Misha McRAE



Get your exercise by walking in the Garden! Then you can see what's blooming and fruiting for yourself!



Common Name	B/F	Common Name	B/F
American beautyberry	F	Lancewood	B
Anglestem Primrosewillow	B/F	Lignumvitae, Holywood Lignumvitae	F
Arjun almond	B/F	Limber Caper, Bayleaf Caper Tree	B
Bahama Manjack	B/F	Locustberry	B/F
Bahama Nightshade	B/F	Long Stalk Stopper	B
Bahama strongbark	B/F	Mahogany, West Indian	F
Bahama Tabebuia	B	Maidenbush, Bahama Maidenbush	B
Bahama Wild Coffee	B/F	Marlberry	F
Barbasco	B/F	Marsh Fleabane	B/F
Barringtonia	B/F	Mexican Primrose Willow	B/F
Baycedar	F	Miraguama Palm	B/F
Bay marigold	B/F	Mistletoe Cactus	B/F
Beach Verbena	B/F	Mouse's Pineapple, Cheese Shrub	B/F
Beach / Golden Creeper	B/F	Old Man Palm	F
Beggar's-ticks	B/F	Orange Geiger Tree	B
Bell Flower	F	Pearlberry, Tearshrub	B/F
Black Calabash	F	Pencilflower, Cheesytoes	B/F
Blacktorch	B/F	Pigeonplum, Tietongue	B/F
Blanketflower	B/F	Pineland Heliotrope	B/F
Blodgett's Wild Mercury	B/F	Pineland Strongback	B
Bloolly	B/F	Pond Apple	F
Blue Porterweed, Joee	B/F	Poor-Man's-Pepper	B/F
Borhidis Guano Palm	B/F	Powderpuff	B/F
Buttonwood	F	Pride-of-Barbados	B/F
Candlestick	F	Quailberry, Christmasberry	F
Caribbean Trumpet Tree	F	Rabbit bells	B/F
Cheesetoes	B/F	Rougeplant	B/F
Cinnamon Bark	B	Rough velvetseed	B
Coastal Plain yellowtop	B/F	Sabicu, Cuban Tamarind	B/F
Cocoplum	B/F	Saffronplum	F
Coffee Colubrina	F	Sapodilla	B/F
Common Dayflower	B/F	Satinleaf	F
Coontie, Florida Arrowroot	F	Satinwood	B
Coral Bean	F	Scarlet milkweed	B
Crabwood, Oysterwood	B/F	Scarlet rosemallow	B/F
Cuban coontie	F	Scorpionstail	B/F
Cure-for-All	F	Sea-lavender, Sea-rosemary	B/F
Dahoon Holly	F	Sea Ox eye Daisy	B/F
Darlingplum	B/F	Seven Year Apple	B
Duck potato	F	Shiny wild coffee	F
East Coast Dune Sunflower	B/F	Short Leaf Fig	B/F
Fakahatchee Grass	F	Shrubby False Buttonweed	B/F
Firebush	B	Silver, Brittle Thatch Palm	B
Florida Boxwood	B	Snow Squarestem	B/F
Florida Fiddlewood	B/F	Spanish Needles	B/F
Florida Hammock Milkpea	F	Strangler Fig	B/F
Florida Keys Blackbead	F	Swamp Bay	F
Florida silver palm	B/F	Swamp Lily	B
Frog Fruit, Turkey Tangle Fogfruit	B/F	Tickseed	B/F
Giant Milkweed	B	Twinberry, Simpson's Stopper	B/F
Golden Dewdrop	B/F	Water Hyssop, Herb-of-grace	B
Golden Polypody	B/F	White Indigoberry	B
Golden Shower yellow tabebuia	F	White ironwood	B/F
Green / Florida Thatch Palm	B	White Stopper	F
Gumbo-limbo	F	Wild Cotton	B/F
Havana Skullcap	B/F	Wild Dilly	B/F
Hog-plum, Tallowwood	F	Wild Sage, Buttonsage	B/F
Jamaica Caper Tree	F	Wild, False Mastic	B
Jamaica Dogwood, Florida Fishpoison	F	Wild, False Tamarind	B
Joewood	F	Willow Busic	F
Knotroot Foxtail, yellow Bristle Grass	B/F	Yellow Alder, Ramgoat dashalong	B
Lanceleaf Tickseed	B/F	Yellow Joyweed	B/F

**6/1/11 – Wednesday** :Present: Leaders: Susie Reutling, Audrey Thompson GG: Lori Highsmith  
Shade House: Watered.

Garden: Courtyard- Watered bromeliads and epiphytes; South of Lake/path to stage & chapel path-Trimmed deadwood on shrubs, trees and palms, removed grasses growing into mulch path for wedding; checked irrigation in zones I, J, K,; Audrey walked garden with Susie and discussed TO DO list;

**6/4/11 - Saturday**: Present: Leader: Misha GG: Sean LaFere, Lori Highsmith, Frank Edge  
Lesson: Discussed the meaning of conservation of native species, and the distinction of non-native and non-native exotic plants and species. Reviewed and discussed the Jamaican Dogwood and the Satin Leaf as native species and the many species of sand burr as the non-native exotic species.

Garden: Watered courtyard bromeliads and epiphytes; continued cleaning & prep for wedding later that day. Trimmed deadwood on plants in the Courtyard, walkway to Nature Chapel and the Terrace area. Pulled sand burrs in Terrace area, additional weeding and removal of dead and brown out as necessary. Prioritized the mulch trail to the Terrace, weeded, removed brown out, pulled in mulched walkway area where it was too broad and installed white rocks as a border. Removed all collected debris to recycle pile.

Nursery: Hand watered plants as many plants in walkways quite dry.

We have just completed our second "season" of the Garden Guardian program With help from the Misha. the Garden Docents and Sharon Agee, we began the 1st year with big plans and set up the foundation of the program. Several members who had previously worked on maintenance and some new volunteers were recruited and although small, it was an exciting beginning.

Our 2nd year took off with bang with many new volunteers recruited by Misha (the motivator). As the leader for Wednesday mornings I was thrilled to have so many new people who wanted to learn about our Garden's native collection and help to propagate and maintain it. We begin each day with a brief lesson about one of our native plants and one of our invasives. Then it's hands-on work in the nursery and/or out in the Garden. The work (or labor of love which I like to call it) involves not only maintenance, but plant installation & as well. Although we have an endless "To Do" list we have accomplished a great deal.

The wonderful thing about helping in the Garden is that all of our Garden Guardians end the morning with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. They can come back year after year and see how the tree or shrub that they planted has grown, how the shrub that they trimmed is blooming, how the plants that they watered by-hand are thriving, and overall, how beautiful and cared-for the Garden looks.

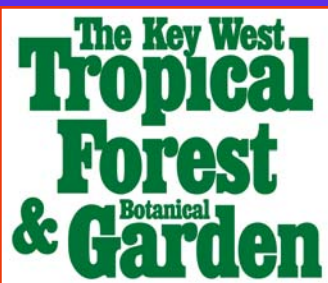
Although I am gone for the summer I am looking forward to returning in October and working with all of our wonderful Garden Guardians.

Audrey Thompson, Docent

## Invasive Exotic Alert

**Common Dayflower  
*Commelina diffusa***

*This pan-tropical, prostrate herb creeps along the ground, branching “diffusely” & forming a thick layer, as it spreads. It roots at its nodes. It has three blue petals. The White Mouthed Dayflower, *Commelina erecta*, our native species, has two large blue petals and one smaller white one.*



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