



The Garden Club of the Upper Keys

News & Notes

November

General Membership Meeting via Zoom

Please join us at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, November 17 for our monthly General Membership meeting. Page 12 of this newsletter (Members Only Edition) provides the meeting link (url), Meeting ID, Passcode and some basic instructions.

Meeting Agenda

- **Call to Order and Welcome:** President Kathy Janco will welcome members to our November meeting.
- **Guest Speaker Presentation:** Program Director Laura Hartner will introduce our guest speaker Dr. Alan H. Chambers.
- **Guest Speaker Presentation: Growing Vanilla in Florida: From Native Species to Commercial Opportunities.** Our speaker, Alan Chambers, will discuss growing vanilla orchids. A brief description of his presentation is provided below.
- **Business Meeting:** Presiding over the business meeting, President Janco will share recent Board actions and decisions. She will introduce members of the Board to provide highlights of the work accomplished in the past month.

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Growing Vanilla in Florida:

From Native Species to Commercial Opportunities

Did you ever wonder if there was a way to grow vanilla in the Keys? And to use it for culinary delights at a reasonable cost? If so, please join us on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 11:00 AM on Zoom. The speaker at our General Membership meeting is Dr. Alan Chambers, Ph.D., pictured right. Dr. Chambers, an Assistant Professor at the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences in Homestead, is a tropical plant geneticist. The primary objective of his plant breeding program is to use modern molecular and genomics tools to increase value to growers and enhance the consumer experience. He is passionately interested in superior agronomic performance, enhanced sensory and nutritional quality, and optimized sustainable production through plant breeding. Although he was asked to focus on vanilla for this presentation, Dr. Chambers' core plant species also include mango, passion fruit and papaya.



As residents of the upper Keys, determining what vanilla beans to grow and when and where to plant them would be valuable for personal use or a "cash" crop. As a spice, vanilla is the second most expensive and is the world's most popular flavor.

This program is for GCUK members only but the link may be shared with friends.



We might think we are nurturing our garden, but of course, it's our garden that is really nurturing us

—Jenny Uglow

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From the desk of President Kathy Janco ...

I would like to wish you and yours a happy, healthy, and joyous Thanksgiving. Our family Thanksgiving will be quite different than in years past as I know most of yours will be. I will give thanks for the blessings I have and pray everyone stays well.

I know you have been reading about the adopt a plant bed in our garden. The idea came from the knowledge I gained over the past 16 years that I have been a member. All our directors need the support of the general membership, but the property director needs the club's membership physically behind them most of all. We are the stewards of our garden club property that was bestowed to us by Dr. Bond, and digging in the dirt and caring for our club's garden should be at the forefront of our minds.

I am looking forward to seeing this new idea grow and prosper as our valued members make the garden into a more manageable sanctuary. Feel free to join up! If you would like, we can partner you with someone. I so look forward to seeing who signs up for adoption. The more the merrier, and the results of our combined efforts will be rewarding and something that we can be proud of!

Please send a message to gardenclubupperkeys@gmail.com if you can help! Several members have signed up so far; thank you very much for your support!

"We might think we are nurturing our garden, but of course, it's our garden that is really nurturing us"

—Jenny Uglow

Stay safe and be well!
Kathy

The GCUK Board of Directors gratefully acknowledges the following generous charitable gifts:

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- Linda Jones
- Patti Graham

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Make a difference this holiday. Shop for gifts at smile.amazon.com/ch/46-1027108 to generate donations for Garden Club of the Upper Keys Inc.

A note from the editor...

This month's *News and Notes* is all about vanilla (well, mostly). Our speaker this month is going to tell us all about growing vanilla orchids. He has been researching and field testing vanilla orchid production for UF/IFAS for several years. I look forward to his presentation!

Our Plant of the Month article, written by Laurie Brooks, features the vanilla orchid and includes a variety of interesting tidbits about the plant rather than focusing primarily on cultivation data.

The Resource Links page provides links to several interesting articles and publications about vanilla orchids as well as some other topics of interest.

One of the most enjoyable and rewarding aspects of being the editor for our club's newsletter is that it requires me to do some research and fact-checking to help provide accurate information about our featured topics. I always learn something new (quite a few things, actually).

As I delved into the topic of vanilla orchids, I uncovered a wealth of information that I found fascinating. I shared a few fun facts in this month's edition of *News and Notes*. Now that I've learned a little about the intricacies of growing and producing

vanilla, it is no longer a surprise to me why good quality vanilla extract and vanilla beans are so expensive!

I've been wanting to buy a vanilla orchid ever since I saw one growing at one of the properties on our Member's Only Garden Walk last spring and finally ordered one from E-bay of all places. I hope I am as successful nurturing mine as Laurie has been with hers (You can find a picture of hers in the Plant of the Month article). The knowledge imparted by our guest speaker, combined with the other informative resources we included in this newsletter will certainly help!

With Thanksgiving coming soon, I wanted to wrap up this note by conveying how grateful I am for the friendship and collaboration of our GCUK members. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the **Holiday Greetings in the Garden** event that Laura is organizing (see page 4)! I usually make the traditional pumpkin pie for dessert on Thanksgiving but this year, maybe I'll make a vanilla custard instead, just to mix things up a little and give a nod to the world's most popular flavor!

Cordially,
Charlene Regenhardt



Notes from the Directors...

HOSPITALITY CO-DIRECTORS Betty Ann Gear and Fran Reig need volunteers for the upcoming club year once we are able to meet in the clubhouse again. Assistance includes helping set-up and clean-up refreshments at monthly General Membership meetings and special events. You can volunteer for specific months or for the entire club year. It's a great way for new members to connect with others and be active. If you are interested in helping out, please call Betty Ann or Fran.

HOUSE DIRECTOR Christine Hudson has set up a schedule for cleanup of the clubhouse and preparations for painting and setting up our recently updated kitchen. She currently has 9 volunteers lined up, but could use a little more help. Please contact her (or send a message to gardenclubupperkeys@gmail.com) if you can help!

Christine also announces that we will be getting internet services at our clubhouse! The internet services will be provided by Terranova Net.

PROPERTY DIRECTOR Beverly Middleton reports that work has continued on beautifying the front berm. The work and planning continues every Wednesday around noon at the garden. Our "heavy lifter" James Zebrowski is always there at that time so you won't be asked to strain or labor hard unless you so desire.

To date, all native plants have been donated by members and Deb McCoy of Seashore Seeds.

VICE-PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION Laurie Brooks has arranged upcoming Florida Keys Native Plant ID classes with Jim Duquesnel. The next class will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, November 17 from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. The speaker will again be Jimmy Lange of Fairchild Gardens who, after a great presentation on grasses last month, will teach us this month how to key out grasses using a number of different resources. Dates have been set through March of 2021 on the third Tuesday each month (no longer alternating Tuesdays and Thursdays).

(Continued on page 4)

Notes from the Directors...

(Continued from page 3)

The four ecosystem themed planters in front of Ocean Studies Charter School's new building continue to do well with the addition of an endangered Semaphore cactus. A specimen grouping of native palms at the front of the driveway swale has also been added, which include a Florida Thatch, a Key Thatch and a Silver Thatch (all endangered) as well as a Sabal (Cabbage) Palm which is our State tree!

Laurie is taking the current Master Gardener class. Only two classes and the exam are left. She is looking forward to exploring ways for our club to interact more with the program. If you have any thoughts on community outreach/inreach—particularly ways to partner with the Master Gardener Program—please email, text, or phone Laurie.

The next work day for the REEF butterfly, Connect to Protect and Ocean Unity display gardens will occur once the fish sculptures have been installed. Date TBD. We will be installing “sea floor” plants and seasonal flowers below the fish sculptures and doing general garden maintenance for the grand opening of the ocean unity sculpture display. “Sea floor” plants will include liriopse for sea grass, small round cacti sea urchins, some snake plant (in pots) for kelp beds and other imaginative creations! Charlene Regenhardt and Nancy Perez joined Laurie on October 24th to pot up flowers and add milkweed, a coontie and a semaphore cactus to the Connect to Protect and Butterfly Garden beds.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR Laura Hartner continues to line up events for our upcoming General Membership meetings. Did you miss our past two meetings? Franco

D’Ascanio of D’Assign Source gave us permission to share his presentation, “Hurricane Planting” on our website. Notes and photos from Ed Kattel, founder of the Islamorada Community Garden, will be posted on our website in the near future.

Join us for our **November 17th** General Membership meeting at 11:00AM via Zoom. Dr. Alan Chambers will speak on growing vanilla in Florida. (See page 1 for information.) Our **December 15th** General Membership meeting will be *Holiday Greetings in the Garden*. See inset on this page for more information.

The results of our Member Survey found that members wanted more “hands on” activities in the garden. Two *Garden Get-Togethers* have been planned for November 18 and December 9. See page 10 for more information.

PUBLICITY DIRECTOR Patti Graham has notified the major publications we advertise with that the Garden Walk for February 2021 was cancelled. This notice is also on our website and Facebook page. As always, please follow our Facebook page for fun and interesting posts

FUNDRAISING DIRECTOR Kathy Holmes is pursuing fundraising options for the remainder of this year and getting a jump start on lining up properties for the 2022 Garden Walk. If anyone has fundraising ideas, please contact Kathy.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR Charlene Regenhardt is processing membership forms. So far, 40 individual members and 34 family members have replied. This includes 7 new members! We also have 7 honorary and 2 complimentary members. A big “Thank You” to those who submitted their dues!

Holiday Greetings in the Garden

Our traditional Holiday Pot-Luck Luncheon will take on a new look on December 15, 2020. This event, named “Holiday Greetings in the Garden,” will have club members **ONLY** get together in the Francis Tracy Garden at 11:30 AM. Final details have yet to be polished, but you will have an opportunity to greet fellow club members to share holiday greetings. Reservations, masks, and completion of a health questionnaire will be required so that we can follow safety guidelines. With that in mind, you will be asked to bring your lunch, drink, dessert and any utensils. More information will be sent to you through a special e-mail invitation. We hope you will join us as we celebrate the season and the fellowship of our club members.





Plant of the Month

Vanilla Orchid (*Vanilla planifolia*)

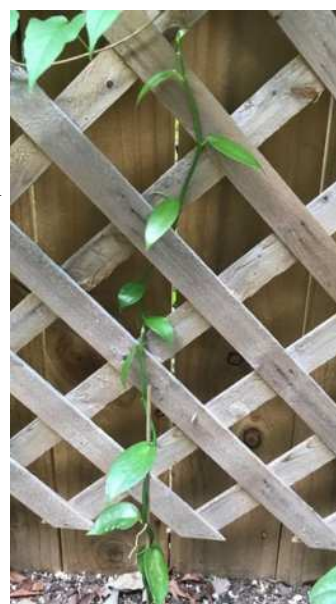
by Laurie Brooks

This issue's featured plant is a vine on a tree in the GCUK yard that survived Irma and is the topic of this month's General Membership meeting presentation. There will be no cultivation data this time as our speaker will be telling you all about *Vanilla planifolia* and how to grow it.

The vanilla orchid growing at the Francis Tracy Garden Center was thriving several years ago and its blooms were spectacular! That orchid, which is growing up one of our wild tamarind trees near the front driveway circle, was donated by Suki Bell who passed away a few years ago. The orchid was planted by Suki with help from Edna Waldorf, Richard Barreto, and Terry Estep. It was a 20-foot-long vine that was planted at the base of the tree and they needed to climb a ladder to attach it up the trunk. Although the orchid was severely damaged by Hurricane Irma, I noticed this past summer that it is making a comeback!



You can grow Vanilla in your own yard – I just bought one a month ago from Logees and it is doing quite well on a south facing trellis on my fence as shown in the picture to the right.



According to UF/IFAS, Florida's swamps are home to four native species, all of which are endangered: *V. barbellata*, *V. dilloniana*, *V. phaeantha*, and *V. mexicana*. All of these varieties of vanilla orchid are shown in the photo inset on page 7. The Keys native *V. barbellata*, the leafless wormvine

orchid, occurs in Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park.

I recently read a book that included many interesting facts about vanilla. The book is a mystery novel, *A Plain Vanilla Murder*, written by Susan Wittig Albert. She is one of my favorite authors and the book is one of her mysteries from the China Bayles series. China, a retired criminal lawyer and her friends run an herb shop, a café, and a "New Age" gift shop. Besides being great mysteries, Wittig's China Bayles series usually include informational quotes like the ones below on botanical topics and even recipes. Following are some excerpts and quotes all from *A Plain Vanilla Murder* unless noted otherwise.

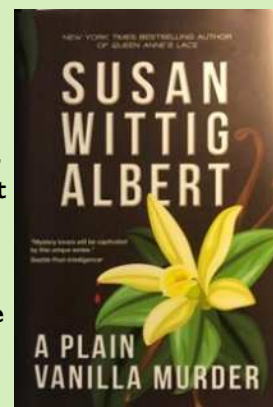
"Vanilla is a member of the orchid family, one of the oldest families of plants in the world, a family that probably evolved more than 90 million years ago. Orchids are the largest family of flowering plants, with over 25,000 species in the wild and more than 100,000 hybrids created in laboratories and greenhouses . . . Vanilla produces the only edible fruit in the entire orchid family. . . . [It] is the most labor intensive agricultural product in the world." From Patricia Rain – *Vanilla: The Cultural History of the World's Most Popular Flavor and Fragrance*

(Continued on page 7)

China Bayles Series

China Bayles is the fictional protagonist of a popular and critically acclaimed series written by Susan Wittig Albert. China solves murders using deductive reasoning, legal skills, and expertise based on her knowledge of herbs, which always figure in the titles and poisons used. The first book, *Thyme of Death*, was nominated for both an Agatha and an Anthony award, two of the most eminent mystery awards in the industry.

***A Plain Vanilla Murder* is the 27th book in the series and was published in 2019. An accompanying book that also might be interesting to gardeners is *China Bayles' Book of Days*, which is a personal calendar of the legends and lore of herbs.**



(Continued from page 6)

According to Wikipedia there are about 110 species in the genus *Vanilla* (little pod in Spanish) and many of them are derived from the new world (primarily Mexico and Central America). *Vanilla planifolia* are capable of producing vanillin, the main chemical responsible for the production of the world's second-most expensive spice after saffron.

"Thomas Jefferson is credited with vanilla's arrival in the United States. When he returned from his ambassadorship in France in 1879, he was dismayed to discover that no one in the States knew about vanilla, so he wrote his French attaché requesting that he send him fifty vanilla pods. Clearly Jefferson's personal passion was well received since soon it was used as a flavoring and a medicine, and – you're right – an aphrodisiac." From Patricia Rain – "*Sex, Love, and the Vanilla Bean*"

As you will hear from our speaker, vanilla has to be pollinated by hand, thus the expense of production.

"The problem with vanilla beans is that once they are ripe on the vine they are easy to pick, and hence

easy to steal. They grow on supporting trees in forest plantations where it is difficult to guard every vine. In a subsistence economy where even \$15 is worth having, desperate thieves are prepared to kill for vanilla." From Tim Ecott – "*Vanilla: Travels in Search of the Luscious Substance*"

Vanilla has many useful purposes, from cooking with the extract to using the seeds and pods to impart flavor and fragrance. I keep pieces of vanilla bean in my sugar canister. It keeps the sugar smelling fresh and tasty!



Flowers of *V. planifolia* (top left), *V. pompona* (top center), *V. phaeantha* (top right), *V. mexicana* (bottom left), *V. dilloniana* (bottom center), and *V. barbellata* (bottom right) growing in southern Florida. Credit: Alan Chambers, UF/IFAS

GCUK is on Plantsmap.com!

by Charlene Regenhardt



Our garden club is a registered organization on Plantsmap.com, a website community that hosts botanical collections. The website has customized tools for documenting, organizing, mapping, tagging and sharing information about plants. Visitors to Plantsmap.com have free and open access to explore and discover plants, collections, profiles, resources, and events.

We are in the process of creating a GCUK plant library to document plants throughout the Francis Tracy Garden. Plantsmap.com hosts a unique web page for each plant that includes our plant's story (such as information about the plant's use, and history), photos, notes, growing details, and reference links. We are creating a series of collections and sub-collections to help organize the various plants and gardens, primarily using the site map we created and published in our most recent *News Flash*. Our club's Plantsmap website can be found at: <https://www.plantsmap.com/organizations/garden-club-of-the-upper-keys>.

Registering on Plantsmap is part of a broader initiative to establish our property as an ecotourism destination. Last spring, GCUK applied for a “bricks and mortar” grant through Monroe County Tourism Development Center (TDC) to help pay for some property improvements including irrigation for the Peace Park garden, construction of a plant nursery/shade house structure, purchasing and planting additional native species, and purchasing and installing botanical markers like the ones shown in the photo to the right. We should find out if we are successful in receiving a grant sometime in December, and will publish an article with more details about the project if we are awarded the grant (most likely the January edition of *News and Notes*).



The botanical markers that we specified in the grant application include QR barcodes. On smartphones equipped with a QR reader (a free phone app), taking a picture of the barcode brings up a link to the Plantsmap.com webpage with the information and pictures of the plant. Even if we are not awarded a grant, we still want to develop and maintain our plant collections on Plantsmap because it aligns so well with our club's educational mission. We have documented about 30 plants on the website so far. Our goal is to document up to 200 species, so we have a long way to go! This task will facilitate the process of ordering the botanical markers and is essential to providing a QR barcode link. As a result, we are asking for some volunteers to help catalog our plants and enter information!

Signing up is fairly simple and straightforward. On the Plantsmap.com website, you will first need to sign up and create an individual profile. It's free to join! Just go to the signup page at <https://www.plantsmap.com/users/signup>, enter your email address, and create a password. You will then create an individual profile with a display name to represent your personal identity on Plantsmap. You can also add a picture or icon for your profile. The individual profile enables you to use a pseudonym rather than your actual name, allowing you to be an anonymous user/contributor if you desire. The only other step needed to be able to add plants from our gardens is to go to our organizational webpage and click on the green “CONNECT” button (see photo). A request will be sent to our Plantsmap webpage for approval to join our organizational network. Once approved, you will have the ability to add or edit plant information. Contact Charlene Regenhardt if you have any questions or would like to help enter plants into Plantsmap.

Once you join Plantsmap.com, you can also create plant profiles for your own personal garden (up to 24 plants and 4 collections for free).



Fun Facts About Vanilla

- Vanilla is regarded as the world's most popular aroma and flavor (even more popular than chocolate). It is widely used in both commercial and domestic baking, perfume manufacture, and aromatherapy.
- Vanilla, like chocolate, was originally cultivated by the Mesoamerican people and was popular with the Aztecs. Both were introduced to Europe by Spanish conquistadors.
- Spanish explorers arriving on the Gulf Coast of Mexico in the early 16th century gave vanilla its current name. Portuguese sailors and explorers brought vanilla into Africa and Asia later that century. They called it *vainilla*, or "little pod."
- Vanilla is the second-most expensive spice after saffron because growing the vanilla seed pods is so labor-intensive.
- Although vanilla vines were transplanted in other overseas colonies after their discovery, they would not produce fruit; the natural pollinators are euglossine bees. These pollinators only exist in the orchid's home range, and even within that range, vanilla orchids have only a 1% chance of successful pollination. Thus, the vanilla flower needs to be hand pollinated within 12 hours of opening, a labor-intensive task.
- To ensure the finest flavor from every fruit, each individual pod must be picked by hand just as it begins to split on the end. Each fruit ripens at its own time, takes up to 9 months after pollination, and requires a daily harvest (adding to the expense).
- Finally, curing vanilla is another labor intensive task and involves killing (stopping the vegetative growth of the pod), sweating (to develop the vanilla and aroma), slow-drying (reducing moisture to 25-30% to prevent rotting), and conditioning (storage for 5-6 months to develop the fragrance).



Vanilla Custard (Flan Patissier)

For the Crust:

- 1 C flour
- 1/2 C butter, cut in cubes
- 1 TBL sugar
- pinch of salt
- 3 TBL cold water
- 1 egg yolk

For the Custard:

- 4 C milk
- 1 vanilla bean
- 4 eggs
- 1 C sugar (less is OK if you like less sweet desserts!)
- 4 TBL cornstarch

Add the flour, butter, sugar and salt to a food processor with the blade attachment. Pulse until the mixture resembles a crumb. Mix the yolk and water and add a little at a time, pulsing until the dough comes together; toss any extra. Do not over mix. Roll out the dough between two sheets of parchment paper until it is large enough to cover a springform pan. (Use a 7-inch pan for thicker slices or a 9-inch pan for thinner slices). Chill dough for 10 minutes or more.

Lightly grease and flour the springform pan. Remove the parchment paper from the dough and gently fold it down to line the pan. If the crust breaks, patch it with pieces of dough. Trim any excess on the top and refrigerate while you prepare the filling.

In a medium pot, warm the milk and vanilla bean (with seeds scraped into the milk) until almost boiled (180 degrees F). In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs and sugar until it becomes lighter in color and sugar is incorporated. Add the cornstarch and whisk to combine. Slowly drizzle the milk through a strainer into the egg mixture while mixing with a whisk to combine. Rinse off and save the bean for vanilla extract!! (see below)

Pour the mixture back into the pot and whisk continuously over medium high heat until it thickens lightly and starts to coat the bottom of the pan. Remove from heat and pour into the springform pan.

Place springform pan on a cookie sheet and bake at 350°F for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until the filling is thickened and the surface is browned. Rotate the pan for even browning.

Remove from the oven and let cool for at least 3 hours in the refrigerator (best overnight) before serving.

Vanilla Extract

The good news is you only need two ingredients: vanilla beans and 70 to 80 proof vodka. The bad news is you need patience; it takes 2 months to infuse but is better if you wait 6 months.

Various recipes call for different ratios, but the consensus is generally 4 to 6 beans per 8 oz of vodka. (If you scrape the seeds out for baking and are using pods with most of the seeds removed, you'll want to increase the ratio.)

Cut vanilla bean pods open lengthwise and place into an airtight container (a jar or bottle is best). Cover with vodka. Make sure the pods are fully submerged (cut them into pieces if necessary). Store in a cool dark place like a cabinet. Shake the jar daily for the first week or two, then occasionally thereafter.

This "brew" can continue for years by just adding more vanilla beans and vodka as it is used. Some people opt to use uncut beans and pull one out of the jar to use for seeds when they have a recipe that calls for vanilla seeds. The vodka preserves the pods; however, the uncut pods will take longer to infuse.

Notable Dates and Birthdays

A warm birthday wish to our members with November birthdays!

November

- M. Schmitz
- L. Franz
- R. Barreto
- L. Carrera
- M. Smith
- R. Quanbeck
- B. Cook
- K. Cook
- E. Stoner



Upcoming meetings and club activities:

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

10	GCUK Board Meeting (10 am)
17	GCUK General Membership Meeting (11 am via Zoom)
17	Florida Native Plant ID Class (Zoom, 5:30 pm)
18	Pumpkin Container Garden Centerpiece (10 am and 1 pm at the clubhouse, reservations required)

Notes:

- Stop by the clubhouse on Wednesdays at noon to help with property maintenance chores

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

8	GCUK Board Meeting (10 am)
9	Making Vanilla Extract (10 am and 1 pm at the clubhouse, reservations required)
15	Holiday Greetings in the Garden (11:30 am)
15	Florida Native Plant ID Class (Zoom, 5:30 pm)

Notes:

- Stop by the clubhouse on Wednesdays at noon to help with property maintenance chores

Looking Forward...

- **Board** meetings at 10 am on Dec 8, Jan 12, Feb 9, Mar 9, Apr 13, May 11
- **General Membership** meetings on Nov 17, Dec 15, Jan 19, Feb 16, Mar 16, Apr 20, May 18. Meetings begin at 11 am; If held at the clubhouse, doors open at 10 am for social time.
- **Special Events: Members Only Garden Walk** – Mar. 23, 2021.

NOTE: The **Gingerbread Craft Market** scheduled for Nov. 28, 2020 and **Garden Walk** scheduled for Feb. 13, 2021 are CANCELLED.

Out & About at Francis Tracy Garden Center

I wanted share some photos of plants in bloom. A few weeks ago, I noticed that the muhly grass is starting to bloom. The pinkish, wispy blooms remind me of cotton candy. We only have two muhly grass-plants at our clubhouse but if you drive south on Overseas Highway, a place called Bungalows at MM 99 has a large swath of muhly grass plants that are quite striking!

I also wanted to give an update on the Arizona Star Agave plants, and Laura shared a few pictures she took when was there yesterday. They aren't in full bloom yet, but they are getting close and their candelabra blooms are starting to fill out.



Garden Get-Togethers

The results of our member survey found that members wanted more “hands on” activities in the garden. Two events are planned for November 18 and December 9 with two sessions each day at 10:00 am and 1:00 pm. Sessions are limited to 9-10 members. Reservations are required with first come, first served for this activity and time. Masks and completion of a health survey are required and social distancing protocols will be followed. Attendees will be asked to bring certain supplies--the list will be sent to you after you register. The projects are:

- **November 18: *Pumpkin Container Garden/Centerpiece.*** The club will provide the pumpkins, oasis floral foam and our garden offers foliage for greenery. You will need to bring flowers and other items from the list.
- **December 9: *Making Vanilla Extract.*** The club will provide vanilla beans and bottle labels. You will need to bring alcohol and other items from the lists.

For more information or to register, call or text Laura or send an email to gardenclubupperkeys@gmail.com.

Resource Links

Topic: Florida Keys Native Plant Workshop

Description: Laurie Brooks is hosting the Zoom meeting on November 17 at 5:30. James Lange from Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden will be presenting on how to key out grasses.

Link: Zoom Meeting [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4526147402?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4526147402?pwd=RCtIMU5pbENhZk4yd1VvaHRpMG50QT09)

[pwd=RCtIMU5pbENhZk4yd1VvaHRpMG50QT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4526147402?pwd=RCtIMU5pbENhZk4yd1VvaHRpMG50QT09)

Meeting ID: 452 614 7402

Passcode: 123456

Topic: *Vanilla Cultivation in Southern Florida*

Description: Paper written by our Guest Speaker and other contributors

Link: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/HS/HS134800.pdf>

Topic: Growing Vanilla: How to Plant, Grow, and Harvest Vanilla Beans Successfully

Description: Provides general growing information, varieties of vanilla beans, caring for, and pollinating the flowers.

Link: <https://morningchores.com/growing-vanilla/>

Topic: Vanilla Cultivation: A Practical Guide for the Tropical Homestead

Description: Guide on growing vanilla orchids for the home gardener

Link: <https://www.permaculturenews.org/2019/02/23/vanilla-cultivation-a-practical-guide-for-the-tropical-homestead/>

Topic: The Vanilla Bean Orchid

Description: *Fine Gardening* article on the vanilla bean

Link: <https://www.finegardening.com/article/the-vanilla-bean-orchid>

Topic: Vanilla (general)

Description: Wikipedia link about Vanilla

Link: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vanilla>

Topic: Vanilla planifolia

Description: Wikipedia link about *Vanilla planifolia*

Link: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vanilla_planifolia

Topic: Vanilla Article by UF/IFAS

Description: Article by UF/IFAS, Gardening Solutions webpage

Link: <https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/vanilla.html>

Topic: Is it worth the trouble to grow vanilla?

Description: Fact-filled story about growing vanilla from the Jacksonville Times

Link: <https://www.jacksonville.com/story/lifestyle/home-garden/2020/01/10/garden-qa-is-it-worth-trouble-to-grow-vanilla/112142686/>

Topic: How to care for and plant Vanilla cuttings

Description: Article on Carter and Holmes webpage about growing and propagating vanilla orchids

Link: <https://www.carterandholmes.com/pages/vanilla-planifolia-care-sheet>

Topic: Institute for Regional Conservation (IRC) and Natives for Your Neighborhood

Description: A private non-profit organization, the IRC is dedicated to the protection, restoration, and management of biodiversity, and to the prevention of regional extinctions of rare plants, animals and ecosystems. Natives for Your Neighborhood provides a wealth of information about natives in the Keys and South Florida. Links to both the IRC and Natives for Your Neighborhood are listed below.

Link: <https://www.regionalconservation.org/index.html>;
<https://regionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn/default.asp>

Available on Amazon:

- Vanilla: The Cultural History of the World's Favorite Flavor and Fragrance (2004) by Patricia Rain
- The Vanilla Chef (2002) by Patricia Rain (2004)
- Pure Vanilla: Irresistible Recipes and Essential Techniques by Shauna Sever (2012)



Imagine what your pumpkin will look like with your floral touches! Join the November 18 Garden Get-Together to make a seasonal decoration for outdoors or the Thanksgiving table (see page 10).