



# Garden Quarterly Winter Edition



Photo from KWBGS File—Saw Palmetto

January, 2019

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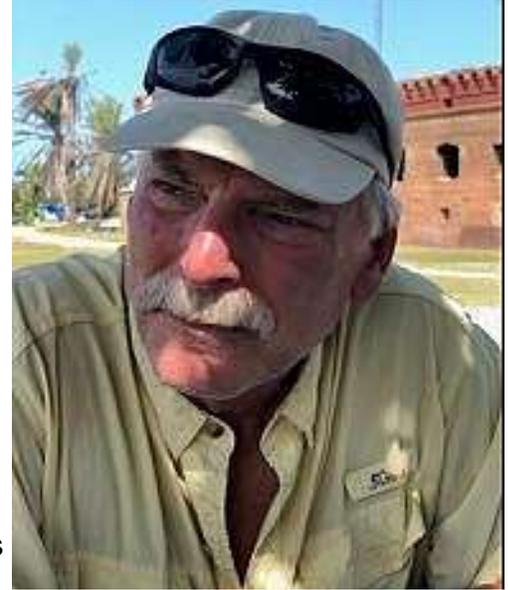
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**Executive Director:** Misha D. McRAE  
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**Asst. Education :** Robin Sarabia  
**General Manager:** Karen Frank-Noll  
**Visitor Center Greeters:** Mary Nelson /Donna Krull  
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**CONTACT**

Key West Botanical Garden Society  
5210 College Rd.  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-296-1504  
www.keywest.garden

The Studios of Key West is hosting the Tom Majors Wood Art Invitational. This is a month-long, island-wide celebration in March of the creative potential of wood, and by extension, Key West, in addition to serving as the hub for the invitational, will host With the Grain, an exhibition of contemporary wood artists from across the country.



As a part of the Studios of Key West island wide Wood Art Invitational, Perry Arnold is working in the Tropical Forest and Botanical Garden to create an art piece out of our “Champion” Black Olive that was felled during Hurricane Irma in September. The work is a 3-month project and will be a beautiful piece of art when completed. Please come out to the garden and watch Perry create this art piece.

Also, we are still waiting on our FEMA reimbursement from the State of Florida for our cash outlay in restoring the Garden



after Hurricane Irma. Because of this, our operating funds are very low and any contribution you could make at this time would greatly help the garden until our FEMA money comes through.

*Perry Arnold making first cut on Black Olive*

*Happy New Year.*

Ed Cunningham, Board President  
305-295-7800

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Dear Friends of the Garden,

Happy New Year and best of wishes for 2019! We are all aware of the struggles we have endured over the past 16 months and I thank you all for your support of the Botanical Garden. This year heralds the 83<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Key West Botanical Garden and the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Botanical Garden Society's stewardship of the property. I've stated the obvious repeatedly: 'in the culture and climate of heads in beds, hotels, condos and pavement, that is no small statement.'

Hurricane Irma recovery efforts have hit a milestone and a wall. I have learned that after every big storm there is a great rebirth and this storm proves it again. The transformation over the past 6 months has been remarkable and inspirational. To date we have been successful in renovating the damages to and estimated 70 % of the Garden, leaving about 4.5 acres to clear, clean, replant and reopen. Not a small task. To date, there is \$570,000 of documented repairs with over \$400,000 paid on necessary renovations.

Our efforts with renovations have shown amazing results but have costed the organization in turn. We have exhausted all opportunities from Foundations, Trusts, Grants and private funding. Now there is a time where your donation can do more, twice as much. An anonymous donor has provided a dollar to dollar (1:1) donor match challenge up to \$50,000.00 to the Society at the most appropriate time. I ask for you to consider your donation to match the challenge and help us achieve our goal. Go to <https://www.keywest.garden/make-a-donation-today/> and notate Donor Match Challenge to mark your financial aid.

What the Garden Society has proved is history matters. The future of the Garden relies on protecting that legacy. From east to west, Desbiens Pond to the Western Loop, the Historic Botanical Garden protects 3 areas of critical concern: habitat for threatened and endangered flora and fauna of the keys. Being listed on the 6 Areas of Critical State Concern Program would add legitimacy to our efforts, garner needed recognition and assist the organization in grant opportunities. In as much, being listed on the National Register of Historical Places would put an explanation point (!) on it. Finding the means and applying to each is paramount. It is important that we establish our place in both programs.

To ensure that, the Key West Botanical Garden Society, Inc., must renegotiate the current 10 year lease with the City of Key West to 99+ years, like the other organizations leasing city property. This continues to be a restrictive issue on our Master Plan, major grant applications, capital projects and depreciation of current assets.

Looking forward: big plans, expensive projects, all necessary goals fueled by our mission and the facts of our times. Vision followed by action. To the point; 527 native species and flora, innumerable species of fauna including the remaining 38 species of native butterflies of the keys. This Garden is the only protective haven, home, for all. I hope I can ask your help for the rest.

Keep it green and best wishes for a great New Year.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Misha McRAE".

# OUR GENERAL MANAGER CELEBRATES YEAR ONE WITH US!

by Joy Taylor, VP, KWBGS

Hard to believe that it has been over a year since KAREN FRANK-NOLL joined our administrative team as General Manager! And it has been some eventful year, as Irma breezed through a mere 2 months after Karen arrived in her office. “Nothing I learned in those first 2 months prepared me for the job that faced us after Irma”, said Karen

Our GM arrived highly qualified to oversee the day-to-day operations of KWBG. Karen's experience encompasses both for and nonprofit business (you may have met her at either AH Monroe County or Island Home Care in Key West over the past 12 years). She is one of the busiest people on our island, actively pursuing her Mile Markers for SMART Ride fundraising, cycling, and volunteer work with AH Monroe, as well as supporting her partner, Jerry Hughes, and his activities as the local chair of the Wounded Warrior Project Soldier Ride.



Other than spending time with her family, which includes 2 daughters, 7 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren, Karen describes a perfect day as “starting with a long bike ride, and ending with a glass of wine and a good book in the comfort of my waterfront hammock”. The luxury of being able to live that perfect day 12 months a year is just one of the many reasons she moved here from the frozen tundra of her home state of Wisconsin.

When Karen applied for this position, her cover letter stated: “Since moving to Key West in August of 2006, I have been a regular visitor to the Gardens on 'locals' Sundays and have purchased native plants for my yard at your monthly plant sales. I've attended weddings and fundraising events on the grounds, and, as a member of Key West Comparsa, have danced there on many occasions. I can't imagine any place on the island I would rather work.” And we are so glad to have her!

## Speaker Series Schedule

<u>Month</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
January	Robyn Mayer	Birding in the Keys for Amateurs	1/19/2019	1:00PM - 3:00PM
February	Marjorie Townsend	Hydro-Culture and Organic Gardening in the Keys	2/16/2019	1:30PM - 2:30PM
March	Abbey Weiss	Beekeeping in the Keys/.	3/16/2019	1:30PM - 2:30PM
April	Karen DeMaria	The City of Key West Heritage Tree Program	4/20/2019	1:30PM - 2:30PM
May	Alison Higgins	Anticipated Affect of Climate Change and Sea Level Rise on Key West	5/18/2019	1:30PM - 2:30PM

## Growing The Living Lab:

The Education Team is always looking for ways to grow the Living Lab program! We welcome school field trips throughout the year, we have an active partnership with the Boys & Girls Club, and we



participate in outreach programs in the schools. This is all made possible because of the support of our community! The Education Team gratefully accepted a donation from Wells Fargo to use for future school field trip transportation. Due to their generous support, an additional 350 students will be able to explore the Garden and participate in the Garden's Living Lab STEM programs!



## Story Time Spotlight:

Our Seedling Scientists have enjoyed learning with leaves during the Fall and have jumped into our Winter themed activities with eagerness! Story time is offered for free every Tuesday morning at 10 am in the Waterfall Courtyard.



## Looking Forward:

The Education Department is excited to begin planning this year's Migration Mania in April! As always, this family friendly event will include booths throughout the Garden featuring educational activities, crafts, games, and live animals. We always have a great time during this event with our many community partners.

# Nursery News

By Susie Reutling, Nursery Manager

What a year it has been at the Nursery. Hurricane recovery, propagation of new species, expansion of our irrigation area, caring for 180+ native species and the heat, the heat! But, oh, so worthwhile. We have either sold or donated over 1000 native plants that will provide shade, beauty and habitat to our storm weary environment since last November.



Thanks to this year's grant from Stanley Smith, our irrigation extension is now complete. I should say, mostly complete; we still have more plants to move. Want to come "play" with us Wednesday and Saturday mornings? Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust, based in California, has provided funding for the Entry Gates and entrance enhancement and for the past two year has allowed for Nursery improvement. The Trust funds projects that further ornamental horticultural research, education, cultivation and distribution , and creation, preservation and care of public gardens. A big thanks

to the Trust.



Some of the other post hurricane changes at the Nursery include a new roof on the Nursery/workshop building, removal of over half a West Indian mahogany that dropped on the Nursery Anex as well as loss of other trees. The photo at right shows the extensive loss of canopy. But, like the rest of the Garden, we have moved on and taken the opportunity to make improvements and advance our propagation program.

We are happy to announce that we

have propagated enough Skyblue Clustervine, Jacquemontia pentanthos, to now be able to offer it for sale. Listed as an endangered plant by the State of Florida, it is a beautiful vine that blooms in the fall and winter. It is a nectar plant, particularly for the nessus sphinx, tantalus sphinx and tersa sphinx moths.



Visit us at the Nursery to see our improvements.

We encourage you to come volunteer in the Nursery and/or in the Garden,

Wednesday and Saturday mornings, 9:00 AM to Noon.

Plants sales are held the third Saturday of every month, 9:00 AM to Noon.

## The Lowly Buttonwood

Why, oh, why is the lowly Buttonwood (*Conocarpus erectus*) so, well, lowly?

Okay, it is common. It's easy to grow; it does grow in poor, pretty much non-existent soil. It is fairly drought tolerant. Oh, it's salt tolerant, too; it resides next to canals and the shore and acts as a soil stabilizer. It can be grown as a tree or trimmed to a hedge. It's propagated by seed or cuttings (wow, the branches can be used to make a "living fence"). As the tree ages the trunk becomes wonderfully twisted with rough, scaly and striated bark that make a great home for epiphytes. And it's a nectar source for butterflies, too!



It's used as a fuel for smoking fish in the islands and makes excellent firewood. Historically, it has been used in maritime construction, in the tanning process, and for medicinal purposes.

Whoa, boy, it's kind of a "racy" plant. It's dioecious; male and female flowers on separate plants – but some of the male flowers are bisexual. Talk about being variable! Being variable, you get a color choice; always the versatile green (a favored color in the garden) and the stylish silver for those with sophisticated leanings. The silver form is a variant, *Conocarpus erectus* var. *sericeus*, and occurs naturally; the color variation does not necessarily recur using seed so is propagated using cuttings. What a plant! Hmmmm. Maybe it's not so common and ordinary after all.



**Native Plants for Sale at the Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Gardens**

The Nursery in the Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Garden is open for sales the

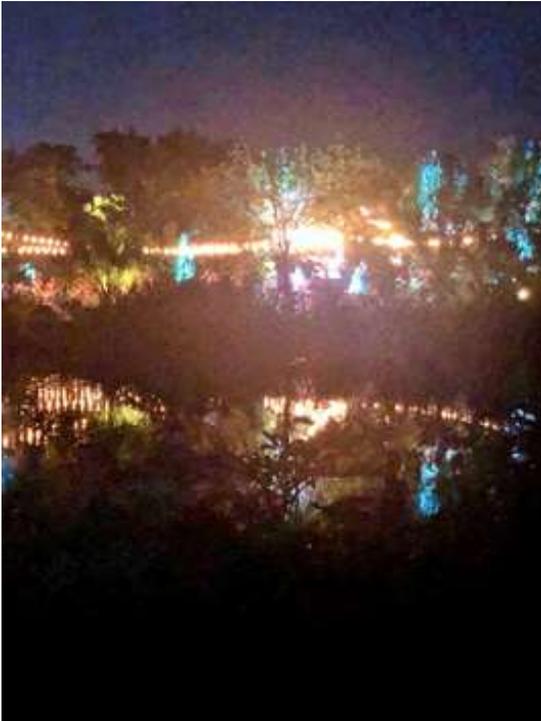
**3rd Saturday of each month, 9 am to 12pm.**

Over 150 species of trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants and vines native to  
The Florida Keys and parts of the Caribbean Basin are available.

Key West Botanical Society members receive a 15% discount.  
Memberships available on site.

*All proceeds directly benefit the Tropical Forest's conservation program*

I am so thrilled to be back in the Garden after my three-month vacation “Up North” and to greet our winter resident volunteers coming back into the Garden to pick up where they left off in May. It was good to see their smiling faces again and find out how they spent their summer in the “northern climes”.



Bob & Nancy Salvage have met and joined in with the full-year volunteers who were working all summer. Two of the areas we focused on were the Historic Butterfly Garden and the South Side of the Pond-Stage and Terrace area. These are two of the three areas where weddings are held. In late November 150 guests enjoyed a wedding celebration on the Terrace under the stars and a full moon enhanced by the new lighting.

Are you aware that during the summer the plants grew like they were on steroids? Apparently still feeling the effects of Hurricane Irma they put extra survival efforts into growing, flowering and fruiting. Spreading over the paths and boardwalks, there still is much trimming to do. I tackled the Hog Plum, *Ximenia Americana*, in the



Historic Butterfly Garden which had spread 4 feet into the path making it impassable. Although it only grows to 15' or 20' tall it has a sprawling habit and some nasty one inch thorns. I did have some shoulder length heavy rubber gloves to protect me but I still have the scratches and scrapes to show for my efforts.



Kathy Nowaczyk (Keeper of the Courtyard) is back and has begun her work to keep this “formal” area of the Garden looking like someone’s (perhaps her own) private backyard. Her attention to detail is much appreciated. In addition to the Southside Pond Terrace and the Historic Butterfly Garden, the Courtyard is a perfect area for parties and smaller weddings.

## Garden Guardians cont.'

By Audrey Thompson, arborist

Dick Rezba and Mary Lou Desmaris returned for the winter and have been focusing on getting the Chug Exhibit cleaned up in the Cuban Palm Garden. With Cuba being the closest island to the Keys, its people and the plants that inhabit that island have an important and long history with Key West. I also want to thank them for their efforts in matching funding to replace and create more than 90 signs throughout the Garden that describe the herbal and historic medicinal uses of our native plants. These signs, originally created by Constance Miller, enhance our visitors experience and fulfill our mission of educating visitors on the importance of our rare ecosystem.



Herbal/Historic Medicinal Sign



Chug from the Mariel Boatlift

The Garden Guardians are the guardians of the forest. We meet every Wednesday and Saturday morning from 9am to Noon. We've come a long way, but still have a ways to go. Please join us for a few hours whenever you can. Leave the world, yourself and the Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Garden a little bit better for your efforts.

Happy New Year and we hope to see you all  
at our Annual Meeting in late January, 2019.

## Yoga Key West

Yoga is held on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays

From 10am to 11:15AM

Prices for Yoga are:

\$15.00 drop in

\$125 for a group of 10 (members can have a group of 11)

Yoga fees support the Garden and include all day admission to the Garden. Go to [www.yogakeywest.org](http://www.yogakeywest.org) to register by credit card, or mail a check to Monica Haskell, 2819 Harris Avenue, Key West Fl. 33040.

Please make checks out to Monica Haskell.

YOGA



Membership can now be paid [online via credit card](#).

Don't forget to renew; your membership & helps support the Garden so we can continue to GROW for another 80 years!

You can also support the Garden by sponsoring our community events. The Garden needs and counts on you!  
Contact [staff@kwbg.org](mailto:staff@kwbg.org)



**STORYTIME  
IN THE GARDEN**  
Tuesdays at 10:00 AM  
in the Garden Courtyard

Bring your 2-4 year old and join us for books, songs and crafts!

A parent or adult caregiver must be present

Story Time is Free

You are encouraged to enjoy the Garden after.  
Regular Admission prices to the Garden will apply  
Children under 12 & Botanical Garden Members are always FREE!

5210 College Rd. Key West FL 33040  
305-296-1504 [kwbg@keywest.garden](mailto:kwbg@keywest.garden)

The Key West Botanical Garden Society, Inc. is a registered 501 (c) 3 nonprofit corporation. The Garden is publicly owned and operated as a passive, natural resource-based public outdoor recreational site. It is the policy of the KWBG/S to comply with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please call 305-296-1504 or e-mail the ADA Coordinator Mishia McRAE: [mmcrae@keywest.garden](mailto:mmcrae@keywest.garden) at least five business days in advance for special assistance, assistive listening devices, or materials in accessible format.



## **BOTANICAL GARDEN EVENTS 2019**

**Jan 23 – Annual Board Meeting**

**Feb 16-17 Gardenfest & Speaker Series**

**March 16 – Nursery Native Plant Sale & Speaker Series**

**April 13: Spring Migration & Egg Hut**

**April 20 – Nursery Native Plant Sale & Speaker Series**

**April – July – Art in the Garden**

**May 18 – Nursery Native Plant Sale & Speaker Series**

[www.facebook.com/keywestbotanicalgarden/](https://www.facebook.com/keywestbotanicalgarden/)  
[www.keywest.garden](http://www.keywest.garden)



5210 College Rd.

Key West, FL 33040

Open Daily 10am-4pm

### **Holidays & Special Days**

Christmas Eve—Closing 1pm

Christmas Day—Closed

New Year's Eve—Closing 1pm

New Year's—Closed