



# Native Notes

*The Native Nursery propagates native species for the garden, for restoration projects, and for sale to the public. Volunteerism is a great way to learn about native plants as well as helping us propagate and care for them. Join us at the Nursery Saturday Mornings, 9 AM to Noon.*

## The Keys! Island life! The tropics! The plants! The SALT!

Even if not directly on the shore or a canal, windborne, or airborne, salt affects us all.

What is windborne or airborne salt anyway? Due to wind and waves, air combines with the salty water to form bubbles and microscopic droplets. When they burst or evaporate the salt is suspended in the air as minute particles which is then carried by wind or in heavy humid air.

Living on islands surrounded by saltwater means that all areas are exposed to the salt air. Windy conditions increase the amount of exposure. Salt accumulates on the leaves and branches or plants, with increased amounts in windy conditions, as well as onto the

ground and into our soil. Flooding by saltwater or brackish water, also called inundation, exposes plant roots to salt and leaves heavy concentrations of salt in the soil.

So, what does this mean to the gardener? It affects our plants!

The salt causes the plant to dehydrate; the water moves out of the plant in a process called exosmosis. The tips and margins closer to the tip of the leaves will appear burned, looking brown or black and sometimes "crispy". Younger leaves may be most affected. Leaves may drop off. It can eventually lead to plant decline or demise.



Credit: lcsun-news.com

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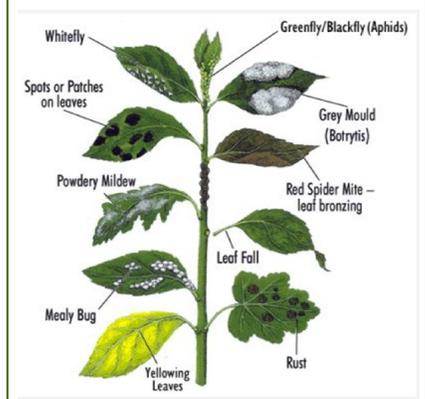
## What's wrong with my plant?

Our tropical environment, lack of soil, few nutrients, sea level rise all put our plants at risk. Plants "at risk" are susceptible to pests and disease.

There are often "clues" to help you discover what the cause may be. The sure way to get identification is to see one of the areas Master Gardeners to assist.

Treat the insects, using the least invasive treatments. Why—because we don't want to harm our beneficial insects, they are our friends.

With some insects, a harsh spray of water does the trick. Insecticidal soap and/or all-season horticultural oil is the next step. And just treat the plants that need it!



## Jamaica caper, *Quadrella jamaicensis*



Photo Credits: Kitty Somerville and Michelle Leonard Mularz

Low maintenance, a tall shrub or short tree, with attractive shiny leaves, showy and fragrant flowers, interesting seed pods, drought and salt tolerant, and wind resistant. Wow, what a plant.

The flowers open white then turn pinkish after a few hours. The leaves of the mature plant are leathery and mostly oblong while the seedlings leaves are more linear, or needlelike.

Attractive in the landscape, it can also be grown in a container.

Larval host plant of the Florida white butterfly, the plant is pollinated by moths, is a nectar source for honey bees, and is a food source for cardinals, blue jays, and mockingbirds.

For more information on our native Jamaica Caper see the UF/IFAS Extension document prepared by Monroe County Extension and Master Gardeners.

[https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/media/sfylifasufledu/monroe/docs/Jamaica-caper\\_final.pdf](https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/media/sfylifasufledu/monroe/docs/Jamaica-caper_final.pdf)

### Defining Salt Tolerance

Highly Salt Tolerant plants are highly resistant to salt drift and can be used in exposed environments.

Moderately Salt Tolerant plants tolerate some salt spray but grow best when protected by buildings, fences, or plantings of more salt-tolerant species.

Slightly Salt Tolerant plants have poor tolerance and should be protected by buildings, fences, or plantings of more salt-tolerant species.

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/media/sfylifasufledu/st-johns/horticulture/pdf/Hort-7---Salt-Tolerant-Plants.pdf>



*I'm working on updating our salt tolerant plant listings. Please be patient as this seems to be taking me a loooooong time. Watch for more information on salt tolerance in the next issue.*

*Always know that you can reach out with any questions to Monroe County Horticulture Extension, Master Gardeners at Plant Clinics, the Master Gardener Virtual Help Desk at [mastergardener@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:mastergardener@monroecounty-fl.gov), and with our staff at the Native Nursery. You can also reach us by email at [nursery@keywest.garden](mailto:nursery@keywest.garden)*

*Susie*

Mangroves are so essential to the coastal ecosystem that laws have been passed to protect these trees. The 1996 Mangrove Trimming and Preservation Act prohibits trimming or alteration of mangroves on publicly owned lands and sets specific limits for trimming or removal of mangroves on private property. Depending on the site conditions, a permit may be needed to trim or remove dead or living parts of a mangrove tree.

Contacting a [certified mangrove trimmer](#) will help you adhere to the law, or you can contact the Florida Department of Environmental Protection ([FLDEP](#)).

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/trees/mangroves.html>

## The Native Nursery at KWTF&BG

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Key West, Florida 33040

Phone: 305-296-1504  
Fax: 555-555-5555  
Email: [info@keywest.garden](mailto:info@keywest.garden)

**KWTF&BG is on the Web**

[www.keywest.garden](http://www.keywest.garden)

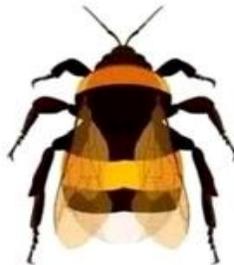
*The society preserves, develops, expands and maintains the historic Key West Botanical Garden as an arboretum, botanical garden, wildlife refuge and education center. The land is owned by the City of Key West.*

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### A helpful guide



Friend who makes wax and lots of honey



Friend who is extra fuzzy and really loves flowers



Friend who pollinates and eats pests but needs more personal space

## PLANT CLINIC SCHEDULE

### UPPER KEYS

**1ST Wednesday, 9AM – 12PM:**

Murray Nelson Gov't Center  
102050 O/S Hwy, Key Largo

**3RD Wednesday, 9AM – 12PM:**

Garden Club of the Upper Keys  
94040 O/S Hwy, Tavernier

**4TH Thursday, 10AM – 1PM:**

Island Home Nursery  
88720 O/S Hwy, Tavernier

### MIDDLE KEYS

**3RD Saturday, 9AM – 12PM**

Home Depot  
4555 O/S Hwy, Marathon

**Every Saturday, 9AM – 12PM**

Grimal Grove  
258 Cunningham Ln, Big Pine Key

### LOWER KEYS

**1ST Monday, 11AM – 2PM**

Key West Garden Club  
1100 Atlantic Blvd, Key West

**3RD Saturday, 9AM – 12PM**

Key West Botanical Garden Nursery  
5210 College Rd, Stock Island

[sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/monroe](http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/monroe)

Susan Reutling Editor

**UF** IFAS Extension  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

