

All About Air Plants

Air plants are popular in homes and gardens everywhere! Come and learn all about air plants and solve the mystery behind these trendy plants! Learn how to cultivate, care for, and even decorate with Tillandsia and discover how they thrive without soil.

Botanical Battles

Animals aren't the only organisms that have evolved to defend themselves. Over time, plants evolved to fight back against predation. While they can't use a "flight" reaction, plants can engage with a "fight" reaction!

Botany of Brewing – Beer Edition

We owe quite a bit to plants, especially when it comes to making popular fermented beverages. Wine, beer, gruit, mead, and cider are brewed beverages that involve a variety of botanical ingredients, time, and creativity. Come discover the plants that make beer possible!

Botany of Brewing – Cider Edition

"An apple a day keeps the doctor away" is an aphorism that originated in Wales in 1866. But apples have been enriching people's lives for centuries, from food to folklore to fermentation. Cider was the first alcohol made from apples, one which people have been consuming for more than 2,000 years. Come explore the history and evolution of cider to discover just how far apples have traveled.

Bounty of Bromeliads

Bromeliads are a bold, eye-catching staple within the Garden and landscapes across Florida. The variety of size, color, and shape builds the diversity of the bromeliad family. In the air or on the ground, inside or outside, the simple care and array of Bromeliaceae will inspire you to incorporate them into your own garden or homes and if you choose one in particular – onto your plate.

Cacti, Succulents, and Spines, Oh My!

Cacti and succulents have become quite the craze in the gardening world, due to their hardy nature and diversity. Stop by and learn what makes these plants so tough, and how to care for them at home.

Feeling Hot! Edible Pepper Varieties

Whether it be a soup, burger, taco, salsa, or pasta, you can rely on peppers to add a hit of heat. From ancient origins in central Mexico, to modern laboratories and even the Nobel Prize, peppers have been shaping history for thousands of years. Come learn what chemical is responsible for that famous heat and test your knowledge of pepper heat and identification.

Funky Fruits

Pineapple, mango, papaya, bananas—these are a few of the tropical fruits that can be found in the produce department of the supermarket and at the Garden. But they are just a small fraction of the edible fruits that grow in tropical and subtropical regions. Here in the Garden, you can find more than a few fun funky fruits from the tropics you are probably not familiar with.

Ghost Orchid Encounter

Have you ever wondered what a ghost orchid looks like up close? This elusive and endangered orchid will be on display for a limited time only. Discover the ghost orchid's story that inspired a book and a movie and learn how we work to conserve these rare plants.

Herb Crash Course

Generally, when we use the word “herb” we use it to refer to a leafy plant that is aromatic with savory or medicinal characteristics. But what is an herb and is it the same as a spice? You'll learn the answer to this question as well as find out which herbs grow in the Garden and how they can benefit the health of your own outdoor green space.

I Bought an Orchid – Now What?

Learn the basics of growing orchids and the first steps to caring for and keeping your new plant.

It's a Sign! Understanding Plant Labels in the Garden

Unlock the secrets of a plant label! The signs by our plants may seem intimidating at first, what with all of that Latin, but they are packed full of information—like a plant's origin, its relatives, and even scientists involved in its history. Learn a few Latinized terms that describe plant characteristics and find out how different plant tags help us track our collections.

Kitchen Scrap Gardening

Did you know you could create a whole edible garden just from vegetable and herb scraps? Why not get the most out of your produce and grow more of what you buy at the store! Many produce items are easy to grow at home. You don't even need soil.

Mangroovin'

Discover the incredible adaptations that allow mangroves to live in salty coastal environments and learn how important these hardy plants are to the health of coastal ecosystems worldwide.

Monarchs of Mexico

In Mexico, monarchs are a natural wonder and celebrated cultural symbol. They migrate thousands of miles to overwinter, inspiring people along the way. Learn about this incredible insect, threats to its population, and how you can support it, including here in Florida!

Myth Busters: Orchid Edition

Many common assumptions and ideas about orchids may not be completely accurate. Whether it's orchid care or simply what an orchid is, a little shake-up of our understanding may save our plants!

Myth Busters: Palm-spiracy

Palms are as ubiquitous in Florida as humidity and hot weather. Whether you are a palm expert, or new to these tropical plants, we're here today to bust some common myths about these tropical icons!

Oh, My Gourd!

Learn about the origins of gourds and squashes and find out how the pumpkin became so popular.

Oh Wow, Cacao!

*Chocolate candy. Brownies. All these delicious treats are thanks to the fruit of one plant, *Theobroma cacao*. Though chocolate's uses are well known, the cacao plant, its habitat, pollinator, and other botanical aspects aren't. Learn all about cacao and see for yourself that it's more than just chocolate.*

Preserving Plant Specimens

Did you know that the Herbarium of Southwestern Florida is the sixth largest in the entire state? At the Garden, we house over 40,000 plant specimens in the herbarium. Herbaria are great places for plant scientists, or botanists, to preserve and study plant specimens from different periods of time and from around the world.

Seeing is BeLEAFing

There's more than meets the eye when you look at a leaf! Learn about the determining factors for leaf size, shape, and texture as plants strive to adapt for maximum efficiency in their native environments.

The Buzz on Pollen

Pollination is one of the most important processes in the natural world. Pollinators are responsible for every one in three bites of food we take.¹ This is an opportunity to learn more about how pollination works and how we can better support our pollinators!

The Buzz South of the Border

Pollinators are vital to the survival of plants, people, and animals. Take a few moments to learn about pollinators that call Mexico home and what plants they interact with.

The Spice is Right

Spices provide our food with an exciting array of flavors. They shaped the culture of many civilizations, and the quest for spices drove early exploration, trade routes, and even wars. Test your knowledge of spices by matching their smell to their original plant form and learn about their history.

The Spice is Right – Spices of Mexico

Mexican cuisine is irresistible for many of us, and you can thank spices for that! There is an array of spices that not only flavor food, but also have cultural and medicinal importance in Mexican culture. Let's spice things up and test your knowledge of the various spices of Mexico!