

NAPLES  
BOTANICAL  
GARDEN

# Cultivate



WINTER 2022



**IN SEASON** | The sun sets over the Garden's Preserve, dipping below the Gulf, and with it, the horizon.  
For more details on soaking up sunset in the Garden, see page 7.

OUR MISSION

*Conserve & Discover. Engage & Inspire.*

To develop and conserve collections and habitats representative of the flora and cultures between the 26th latitudes.  
To discover, research, and share knowledge about these plants and their gifts to us of beauty, tranquility, sustenance, and well-being.  
And to engage and inspire everyone to care for the plants around them and become stewards of the environment.

ON THE COVER

Patrick Dougherty's *Sea Change* in the Kapnick Caribbean Garden

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CULTIVATE WINTER 2022

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*The holidays may be behind us, but I think holiday spirit pervades Southwest Florida straight through spring. There are so many seasonal friends, so many special activities, so many postcard-perfect days.*

Right now, our visitors' faces seem especially joyful. I love to watch guests enter the Kapnick Caribbean Garden and discover our *STICKWORK* exhibition—a monumental, interactive sculpture made of willow saplings. It's a child's delight, worthy of endless exploration and make-believe, though I argue the grown-ups have just as much fun. You can learn more about Patrick Dougherty, the artist behind it, and the creative process—which included nearly 100 volunteers—on page 27.



special textile exhibition, *Woven: Fiber Arts Now*, which features five local artists and their intricate designs. Learn more on page 15.

There's much more to see and do. I'm delighted to say that favorite events, including Naples Ikebana International #160 Show, the Naples Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale, and Naples Flower Show & Garden Market, return this season. Hats in the Garden, the Sustaining Leadership Council's

premier fundraiser, moves to March this season, and we know these ardent Garden supporters will outdo themselves yet again. See pages 5-10 for a listing of upcoming winter and spring events.

In this issue, we also take you on a botanical adventure to an uninhabited island where two members of our staff join Puerto Rican conservationists on a special mission to save cacti species that are threatened by two invasive pests. Turn to page 19 to discover the lengths we'll go to protect imperiled plants!

Thank you, as always, for your support. See you in the Garden!



**Donna McGinnis**  
President & CEO  
Naples Botanical Garden

# What's happening



## Naples Ikebana International #160 Show

**February 18–20**

The possibilities of plants are endless, and there's nothing quite like the philosophy behind the centuries-old practice of Ikebana to bring this attribute to light. Whether you want to enhance your surroundings with a touch of nature, or you're interested in learning more about this form of flower arranging that is as meditative as it is artistic, inspiration awaits.



## Naples Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale

**February 25–27**

The orchid takes center stage during this annual event at Naples Botanical Garden. Behold these beautiful plants with prize-winning displays of container and cut orchid arrangements representing myriad species and hybrids. Shop the blooming plants and care supplies of orchid vendors on site all weekend long.



## Naples Flower Show & Garden Market

**March 18 & 19**

Immerse yourself in the natural world as you take in the spectacular creations of the Naples Flower Show & Garden Market. This annual event, a longtime partnership between Naples Garden Club and the Garden, has bloomed into the largest juried flower show in Southwest Florida, and includes floral designs, botanical arts, unusual plants, educational displays, and interactive demonstrations. Stroll through the beautiful setting of the Garden, and before you leave, peruse a number of vendors for the opportunity to take a piece of the experience home.

Access to the Garden's flower shows is included with general admission, 9am–5pm.

 Members enjoy exclusive access from 8–9am.



### Sensory-Friendly Saturdays

For families with members on the autism spectrum or who have other sensory processing needs, Sensory-Friendly Saturdays offer free opportunities to enjoy the peacefulness of the Garden. Disturbances are minimized, which means time and space to relax, take a deep breath, and enjoy your surroundings. Engage in hands-on activities for the whole family, and cool off in an air-conditioned take-a-break space should you need it! Free admission between 4–6pm only. Last admission at 5pm.

**Upcoming dates**  
**March 26, April 23, May 21**



Registration required.  
 RSVP at [naplesgarden.org](https://naplesgarden.org).

Naples Botanical Garden is a certified Autism-Friendly venue through the Center for Autism & Related Disabilities (CARD) at the University of South Florida.

 For pre-visit materials, go to [naplesgarden.org/visit](https://naplesgarden.org/visit).



### Savor the Sunset During Sunset Wednesdays

There's nothing like the golden hour to set the backdrop of the Preserve and the Garden's tropical collections. The Garden is open every Wednesday from February 2 through April 27 until 8pm. Enjoy an evening stroll, a bite to eat and half-priced bottles of wine in Fogg Café, and shopping at the Berger Shop in the Garden. Admission is free for Members.

 See [naplesgarden.org](https://naplesgarden.org) for details.



### Music in the Garden

**March-May | 2-4pm**  
**June | 12-2pm**

Pull up a lawn chair, stretch out on a blanket, and soak up the sounds of Music in the Garden, the second Saturday of each month through June. Included with general Garden admission; free for Members.

**Upcoming dates**  
**March 12:** Reckless Saints  
**April 9:** Sarah Hadeka Trio  
**May 14:** Gypsy Sojourn  
**June 11:** Havy Rodriguez & the Miami Splash Band



**W.O.N.D.E.R.**  
 Walk. Observe. Navigate. Draw. Explore. Read.

### W.O.N.D.E.R.

Learning opportunities for families abound in the Garden, with in-person sessions daily at 10:30am on the Performance Lawn. Before you even step foot off the Smith Entry Prow, be sure to pick up a W.O.N.D.E.R. Activity Pack, available in English or Spanish, filled to the brim with kid-friendly activities centered around that month's theme. Continue to explore the relationships between plants, people, and the world around us with Tangled Trail materials, which focus on the Garden's *STICKWORK* sculpture, and our season theme, "Intertwined."

**February:** Super Plants  
**March:** Fabulous Flowers  
**April:** Bamboo-zled  
**May:** Celebrate the Earth

### Plus, new this spring! Family Wonder Days

**May 28 & 29**  
 The Garden becomes nature's classroom with a weekend full of games, activities, and scavenger hunts the whole family will enjoy!

 See [naplesgarden.org](https://naplesgarden.org) for details.



## Beer Lovers, Rejoice

**April 16 | 6-10pm**

**Admission:** \$35 Garden Members / \$50 Non-Members / \$15 Designated Drivers

Proceeds benefit Naples Botanical Garden's conservation efforts.

Returning again for 2022 is Blooms & Brews, our second celebration of the plants that make beer happen. Sip craft brews with friends, enjoy live music, and learn more from local microbreweries about the role of plants in their fermented refreshers.

### Unearth more on the botany of beer with our Dig Deeper drop-in program just for adults!

One subject we explore during select sessions is the integral role of plants in these "brewtanical" concoctions. Discover more about the time-honored techniques in brewing beer, how plants work together to make beer, and the fruits and spices native to our region that give these bubbly drinks a tropical zest.

*Topics vary at these twice-daily drop-in sessions (11:30am and 1pm). Check the schedule during your next Garden visit to see what learning opportunities await that day.*



## Tours Galore

Daily in-person tours depart from the Smith Entry Prow several times a day. You'll find yourself marveling at the possibilities of plants, and you'll learn a thing or two about the Garden in the process.



### Current tour offerings include:

- Most Valuable Plants
- Art in the Garden
- Water Features & Aquatic Plants
- Orchids & Epiphytes
- Natural Areas
- Soil to Spoon
- Intertwined
- History & Highlights

**Check [naplesgarden.org](https://naplesgarden.org) to see daily tour themes and times. Included with Garden admission; free for Members.**

### Want to connect with our tropical surroundings and each other in a whole new way?

Consider booking a private group tour for you and your friends, family, co-workers, or neighbors. These staff-led offerings allow you to enhance your botanical knowledge together as a group, with lunch options available. Plus, Members save 10% on group tour rates! For questions and to book your private group tour, email [groupinfo@naplesgarden.org](mailto:groupinfo@naplesgarden.org).

### Can't make it to the Garden in person?

Listen to one of our many recorded audio tours, available at [bycell.co/bsgit](https://bycell.co/bsgit). When you do return, allow these educational offerings to enhance your Garden stroll.

### Conservation and Stormwater Solutions

Among the ebb and flow of environmental concerns in Southwest Florida, water quality and stormwater management have remained a constant. The Garden's very design showcases the possibility of integrated stormwater treatment systems, with its Rain Garden, parking lot bioswales, and Smith River of Grass, but it doesn't stop there. A second year of grant funding from the Andrew R. and Janet F. Miller Foundation has enabled our team to further educate community members on sustainable landscaping practices, partner with environmental organizations on plant-based solutions, and empower residents with the knowledge base they need to build healthy littoral zones and ecosystems surrounding neighborhood retention ponds.



**New!** Discover the Journey of a Raindrop with our new audio tour detailing the Garden's stormwater treatment system. Sponsored by Marilyn & Brit Bartter.

**Follow along at <https://bycell.co/cyxed>.**

# RULES OF DIVISION

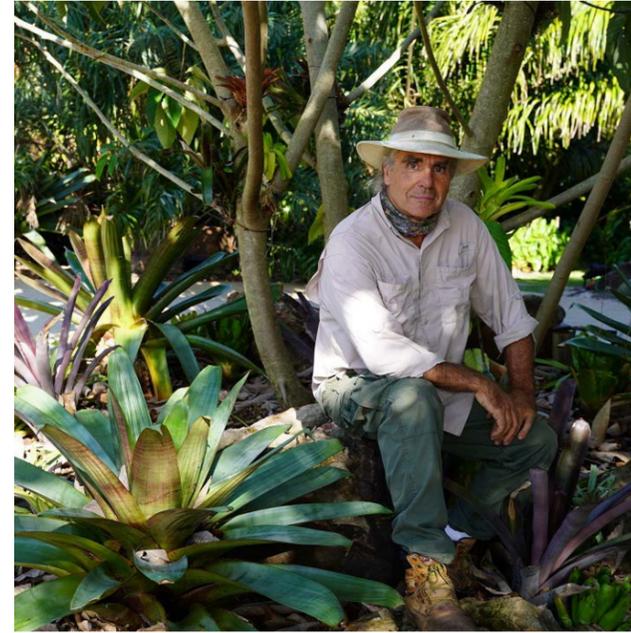
*Horticulturist David Chadwick breaks down how to separate distinctive tropical bromeliads and expand your collection*

**H**ow many bromeliads does it take to satisfy an enthusiast? 3,500 and then some.

That is an approximation of how many species of bromeliads there are in the world. A good 95% of them are found in Central and South America. But no matter which ones you prefer, eventually you may want to enlarge your collection from the bromeliads you already have at home.

Well, there's good news, and there's bad news.

The bad news is bromeliads are monocarpic, meaning they only flower once, and then they die. The good news is that before they die, the parent plant will start to produce what are known as "pups," small versions of themselves that grow from the base of the plant.



David Chadwick, Horticulturist

These pups are your ticket to ensuring the survival of your collection while increasing its numbers.

The object of this tutorial is to illustrate how to locate and identify the pups, when to harvest them, and how to plant and care for them.

Let's start by looking for young pups of various sizes. They can range from the embryonic to the almost harvestable.

As a rule, when a pup reaches a third of the size of the parent, it is ready for collecting. Care must be taken when removing the pup from the parent. It is sometimes better to cut the parent away from the pup rather than the pup from the parent. If possible, try to leave some of the original root attached to the young pup. But don't worry if you can't. As long as you leave a substantial amount of stem and allow it to form a callus, the pup can either be planted directly into the soil or attached to a tree where it will eventually put out roots and establish itself.

Because most bromeliads are epiphytes, the roots are mainly used for anchoring the plant in place rather than drawing up nutrients from the soil. So many of them will be quite happy finding a new home on the side of a tree, just as they are on the ground.



Here, we have a bromeliad well past its prime, but hidden underneath is a well-developed pup ready for transplanting.



## CUT

Taking a sterile knife, find where the pup joins the mother, and separate the two with a clean cut. If possible, try to take some of the original root along with it.



## WASH & DRY

Once you have separated them, you can wash the cutting in clean water to remove old soil. This will help prevent any fungal infection. Allow the cut to sit exposed to air for a day to form a callus.



## PLANT

Now you are ready to plant your bromeliad, or attach it to a tree. If you choose to attach it to a tree, make sure the roots have contact with a branch, and then zip tie the plant into place firmly and securely to prevent any motion that will stop the new roots from adhering to the bark.

To pot it or plant directly in the ground, plant no deeper than the root crown to avoid rot. Best to keep the leaves clear of the soil.



## WATER

Once planted, give the bromeliad a good watering to set the soil around it and to drive out any air pockets that might dry the roots. It's as easy as that.

**B**romeliads are very forgiving, provided you place them in the proper environment and follow some simple rules. Don't overwater them. As long as their tank—the hollow, cup-like structure at the plant's center—has water in it, they are fine. Keep the shade-tolerant species out of direct sunlight and the sun lovers out in the open for their best performances. A general rule: If the leaves are soft and delicate, they most likely want shade. If they are stiff, waxy, and thorny, then bright sunlight is in order.

We at the Garden hope that this has been helpful and wish you good luck with your divisions. Happy gardening.



# Forging Connections, Setting the Foundation

Katy Havlik,  
Director of Visitor Services

Are there snakes in the Garden? the little boy asked. Seeing he couldn't have been more than 7 years old, and making an educated guess at what he would want to hear, Katy Havlik, Director of Visitor Services, nodded. The boy's eyes grew wide.

"He's afraid of snakes," his mother mouthed. That's when Katy decided to take a different tack.

"You have to think on your toes," says Katy. And while non-venomous black racers are indeed one of the hundreds of animals that call the Garden home, and chances are slim the little boy would have even caught a glimpse of one, Katy's No. 1 priority—and that of the entire Visitor Services team—is putting Garden Members and visitors at ease.

"I said how there is a small black snake named George, he is our Garden friend and helper, and tell him I say hi if you see him," Katy recalls. The boy's expression eased, and he and his mother headed off on their Garden venture. Crisis averted.

"We'll go the extra mile to help a guest," says Katy. "If they come to Ticketing with a scooter or wheelchair, but we can tell it would really help to take it out to the car, we will follow them out. It's the same thing with the kiddos."

As the Garden enters its busiest time of year, Katy shares a bit more about her philosophies on customer service, relationships forged with guests, and what makes the Garden such an inspiring place to work.

My main job is to make sure we have a foundation set so Members and guests have the best experience possible. We are here to welcome you into the Garden. I am here to support the staff who support the guests. Whatever my team members need to do their jobs well, I will give them.



Having a background in behavior therapy has helped me to read people and figure out what they need. When a guest has a problem, we immediately let them know, "It's OK, we'll take care of you." We'll always find a way to take care of you.

One of the ways we enhance the guest experience is to ensure our staff knows everything that is going on in the Garden. I encourage our team to go out and explore the Garden. How can you tell people about what's in the Garden if you haven't experienced it? They get just as excited about it as the visitors.

We really love building connections with our Members.

Our staff all have their regulars. One of our regulars bakes. Another couple said that they come here to heal. They come for a safe, beautiful place to go. One woman has been bringing her grandkids here for years. Her one grandson has a tree that has been growing along with him. They always go and see the tree and see how much they have both grown. Our team knows these people.

**"It's OK, we'll take care of you. We'll always find a way to take care of you."**

That connection makes such a difference on both sides, and we try to foster that as much as possible.

We also must be prepared for everything. In Visitor Services, especially at gardens, you can't always predict which day will be busy and which won't. You have to be prepared. I like to say, "What's our backup to our backup? What's our Plan D?" Sometimes you have to figure it out in the moment. When you work in this environment, you must be good at problem solving.

It also helps to work in a beautiful place that wants to make the community and world around us a more beautiful place.

We have new faces on our team, and many who have been here for 10 years or more, since the beginning. It goes back to the fact that they love the Garden, and they love what we're doing.

As one Visitor Services Team Member, Jan Marcus says, "It just keeps getting better and better."

*What makes working at the Garden great?*

**"When I was a kid, I went to summer camp at the Garden every summer, and I absolutely loved it. Now I work here in Visitor Services. I love all the people here, and I hope we can give everyone the same experience I had!"**

– Dalila Hernandez,  
Visitor Services Associate

**"My co-workers are brilliant, supportive, and a lot of fun. I can't imagine working anywhere else."**

– Marie Gardella,  
Visitor Services Associate

**"The ability to share the passion for the Garden with visitors, whether it be their first time visiting or they come often, gives me the opportunity to see the Garden through a different lens every time. Every person connects to it in a unique way, and I get inspiration through those connections."**

– Darian Lee,  
Visitor Services Assistant Manager

**Interested in joining the Garden team?  
Visit [naplesgarden.org/employment](https://naplesgarden.org/employment) to view current opportunities!**



*Sea Grape Revisited*  
Cheryl Costley, 2021

# A TROPICAL TAPESTRY

The artists behind *Woven: Fiber Arts Now* give us a glimpse of what's to come in our upcoming exhibition. The Garden team curated this show, on view starting April 8.

The work of five local artists will be “woven” together in this synergistic exhibition featuring materials such as silk, pine needles, reed, and cotton. The result: a never-before-seen celebration of the possibilities of fiber, the beauty of the Garden, and the endless potential of the natural world.

## CHERYL COSTLEY

**CHOSEN MATERIAL:** Fabric.

### HOW LONG YOU HAVE WORKED WITH FABRIC:

My mother and aunts taught me to sew and instilled a love of fabric in me as a child. I remember playing hide and seek in boxes of fabric and as a teen would cut up my old skirts and make dresses for my baby sister. However, I had little time to play with fabric during the years of raising a family, earning a Ph.D., and being a career woman. About 20 years ago I was “itching” to do something creative with my hands, and thus the journey as a fiber artist began. It began by begging (literally) my way into a fiber art study group at a local art center, which was a jump start for me.

### WHAT GUESTS CAN EXPECT:

The pieces in this exhibit are centered around the seagrape (*Coccoloba uvifera*), which is my favorite native Florida plant. I honor it because of the work it does to preserve and protect our beaches. It is part of the interwoven ecological system that is necessary to our fragile environment.

## DUSTY HOLMES

### CHOSEN MATERIALS:

Pine needles, pottery, seed pods, and other materials found in nature.

### HOW LONG YOU'VE BEEN WEAVING PINE NEEDLES:

10 years.

### MORE ABOUT YOUR PROCESS:

Each piece of pine needle art is composed of hundreds of pine needles that are gathered right here in Naples, Florida. They are par-boiled, straightened, caps removed, and then while still moist, woven one by one into a coil to form the basket. Once the pine needles are woven, they are very stable, and the baskets will last for many, many years.

### WHAT DO YOU WANT GUESTS TO CONSIDER WHEN VIEWING YOUR WORK:

I want people to realize that in times past, people had to rely on the bounty of nature to provide them with a means to make vessels to carry water, winnow seeds, and dry meats.

## MUFFY CLARK GILL

**CHOSEN MATERIAL:** Hot wax, dye silk, FabricMate markers (primarily batik and rozome processes).

**HOW LONG YOU'VE WORKED WITH THESE MATERIALS:** Since I was a sophomore in high school.

**WHY DO YOU CHOOSE FIBER AND TEXTILES AS YOUR MEDIUM:** I like the effects of seeing the dye on silk and the vibrance the silk imparts to the image.

**WHEN YOU DISCOVERED YOUR MEDIUM:** I first saw batik at an arts and crafts exhibition at a gallery in Kampala, Uganda. I returned to the States interested in trying to experiment with it on my own. I have been pursuing this passion off and on ever since.

## ROSELINE YOUNG

**CHOSEN MATERIAL:** Handwoven wall hangings comprising natural materials, wools, cotton, and linen, woven on 4- and 8-harness looms, some further embellished with quilting and rug-making techniques.

**HOW LONG YOU'VE WORKED WITH THESE MATERIALS:** 30+ years.

**WHAT YOU WANT GUESTS TO CONSIDER WHEN VIEWING YOUR WORK:** I want guests to consider how the gardens generate emotional responses to their beauty in color interplay, endless textures, and unique patterns. My work is touchable, giving my individual response to these beautiful gardens and how they make me feel.



*Forms*  
Mary Day, 2022

## MARY DAY

**CHOSEN MATERIAL:** Rattan reed.

**HOW LONG YOU'VE WORKED WITH RATTAN:** 15 years.

**MORE ABOUT YOUR PROCESS:** The reed is dyed before it is woven, using a traditional twining technique. Each form has open spaces in the weaving to allow the original curve and bending of the vine from which it was milled. This consideration influences the final configuration. I discovered my medium organically, through a process of trial and error.

**SOURCE OF INSPIRATION:** Flora and fauna are the strongest influence in my studio practice. The rhythms of curving line and connecting points found in the natural world inspire me. I hope to use some of the Garden's plants to dye reed I will be weaving for the exhibition.

**Note:** As the majority of the pieces in *Woven: Fiber Arts Now* are new works, some were still in creation at the date of publication, so not all are pictured.

# WOVEN

## Fiber Arts Now

**Woven: Fiber Arts Now is on view April 8–June 26.**

Visit [naplesgarden.org](http://naplesgarden.org) for more information on the artists, and for details on how you can participate in a community weaving project opening weekend.

# Going to Extremes

Garden experts join a rescue mission to an uninhabited island to save cacti under siege



Christian Torres-Santana holds a newly collected cactus cutting.



Left to right: Eric Foht, Adierén Villanueva, Torres-Santana, Brian Galligan, and Armando Feliciano.



**NESTLED BEHIND** the display gardens, a section of our nursery serves as a bank vault, safeguarding 400 tiny cacti. They represent nine species that are in danger of eradication in their native Puerto Rico following the arrival and spread of two invasive pests. Our seed bank secures some 95,000 of their seed. Often, acquiring rare or endangered plants is as straightforward as obtaining seeds or cuttings from a collaborating botanical garden. Not so in this case. Let us take you to Mona Island, off the coast of Puerto Rico, to discover the botanical adventure behind this conservation effort ...



The journey was arduous before it had even begun: a trek across Alligator Alley to Miami International Airport, an early morning flight, an extended wait in San Juan, Puerto Rico, a car ride clear across the island, and a 5:30am departure by boat the next morning to Mona Island, a 22-square-mile natural reserve located 45 miles offshore.

“It’s a logistical nightmare to get to paradise,” the expedition’s leader, botanist Christian Torres-Santana, tells his companions as they cross the rough waters of the Mona Passage. “But then, once you get there, you don’t want to leave.” Two hours after leaving the dock, Naples Botanical Garden Vice President of Horticulture Brian Galligan and Natural Resources Director Eric Foht glimpse Mona’s cliffs emerging over the horizon.

“Breathtaking,” Foht thinks. “This,” Galligan says to himself, “is gonna be insane.” Foht and Galligan joined Torres-Santana, Armando Feliciano, and Adierén Villanueva from Effective

Environmental Restoration on a four-day expedition in June 2021 to collect native cacti at risk of succumbing to two invasive pests, the *Harrisia* cactus mealybug (*Hypogeococcus pungens*) and cactus moth (*Cactoblastis cactorum*), that showed up in Puerto Rico about 16 years and 58 years ago, respectively. They have infested the dry forests of the main island and Caja de Muertos, a smaller island to the south. This trip focused on Mona Island, with a brief jaunt to Punta Ballenas in the Guánica State Forest, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve where the pests are present and killing thousands of cacti.



The mealybug—the worst of the two threats—hasn’t appeared in Mona’s cacti, though Torres-Santana suspects it’s only a matter of time before they are imported unwittingly via a boot, a backpack, a tent, or a hurricane.

The mealybug, the project’s primary focus, distorts growth on the columnar cacti stems and kills the plants. The cactus moth, in its caterpillar stage, bores into prickly pear cactus pads, eating their flesh from the inside. Ironically, both were used as biological controls in Australia, where cacti in the *Opuntia* genus, prickly pear, and *Harrisia* genus are considered invasive. But in Puerto Rico, these cacti and others that the insects attack are native species. Conservationists are particularly concerned about the

**“Conservation projects are most successful when there are multiple partners working on shared goals. This is a great opportunity to ensure the cacti of Puerto Rico survive into the future.”**  
— Chad Washburn, Vice President of Conservation

fate of federally threatened *Harrisia portoricensis* and endangered *Leptocereus grantianus* in the wild as the pests have already killed those in cultivation.

Entomologists in the U.S. mainland, Puerto Rico, and at the Foundation for the Study of Invasive Species biological control laboratory in Argentina are seeking ways to control the mealybug—critical research that could save Puerto Rico’s cacti and keep the insects from further spread in the Caribbean and North America.

But could they find an answer before the mealybugs infested more cacti populations?

“Nobody was focused on safeguarding the cacti in case they continue to decline,” Torres-Santana says. “All of the studies are focused on mitigating the threat and studying its distribution and impacts.”

He wanted to conserve the species by collecting seeds for long-term storage and cuttings that could be propagated, grown to maturity, and shielded from the insects, thus ensuring the plants’ genetics are not lost even if they are eradicated in Puerto Rico. His plan was a departure from typical conservation projects that target one or two individual threatened species. Instead, the project will safeguard all members of a single family, *Cactaceae*, which are a backbone of many Caribbean dry forest ecosystems.

“We’re never going to get anything done one by one. We’ve got to start working by larger groups of species or by ecosystems, and this is an example of that,” Torres-Santana says.



Galligan collects a cutting of *Opuntia stricta* nestled cliffside.



They applied for federal funding through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Bill about five years ago, but the money went to the biological control research essential to constrain this pest. With backing from Hilda Díaz-Soltero, the Caribbean Advisor to the Administrator for the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), they reapplied in 2019, successfully.

“We have to keep the cacti from going extinct before the biological controls are identified and tested,” says Torres-Santana. “That’s how the two projects connect. They’re looking for a solution, and we’re looking for another alternative to keep the cacti species alive until the research solution is found and implemented.”

You can’t preserve plants in the same place where they are under siege. Díaz-Soltero had met Galligan and Vice President of Conservation Chad Washburn after Hurricane Maria struck the island in 2017, when the pair had come to help Torres-Santana and other colleagues in recovery efforts. She remembered the Naples Botanical Garden representatives, their offer to assist with future needs, and asked if they would house the cacti collection for this project.

“She’s like the rock star behind this project,” Torres-Santana says. “Without her, everyone would have given up.”

Torres-Santana, Díaz-Soltero, and Eduardo Ventosa, the Project Principal Investigator with EER, choose collecting spots in consultation with forest managers, seeking places where the invasive insects have not infiltrated. Mona, Desecheo, Vieques, and Culebra islands in the Puerto Rican archipelago are among the untainted regions to date.

You need a Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources permit to venture onto Mona for research purposes (and 10 state and federal permissions to collect plants). Since the COVID-19 pandemic started, the island has been closed to the public; only scientists and technical staff are allowed to visit. Aside from natural resources rangers protecting the island, the collecting team would be alone, the solitude adding to the mystique.

Torres-Santana likens Mona to the Galápagos—a place where botanists, environmental scientists, biologists, and horticulturalists can observe ecosystems only minimally impacted by humans.

“Many things are endemic,” Torres-Santana says, referring to plants and animals that appear nowhere else in the world. He ticks off a few examples: anole lizard (*Anolis monensis*), boa snake (*Chilabothrus monensis*), Mona coqui frog (*Eleutherodactylus monensis*), rock iguana (*Cyclura stejnegeri*), orchid (*Psychilis monensis*), and cactus (*Harrisia portoricensis*).

“It’s just a magical place,” Foht says. “It was a window into how things would occur on their own and on their own timescale.”

The landscape offers Galligan, who directs the design and maintenance of our display gardens, a chance to study soil types, growing conditions, and the

**“The more we learned about the cactus, the more we learned how they were interwoven into the history of the island.”**

– Eric Foht,  
Natural Resources Director

configurations of plants in nature. The knowledge will help him manage plants and create authentic experiences.

“We try to make realistic settings, such as what would you see on an island in the Caribbean,” he says.

But the cacti, naturally, consumed most of their attention.

The dry forests of Mona are almost extraterrestrial in appearance. The wind sweeps across vast plains. The earth is rocky and arid. Cacti are everywhere—both the smallest and largest plants in sight. Galligan says at times it felt like they themselves were the overstory, the tallest figures in the landscape.

In spite of the abundance, conservationists cannot simply take multiple samples from a single location and consider their work done. They

take one cutting or fruit per plant and seek specimens from numerous areas to ensure they have a sample of the genetic diversity. For four days, the team combs the island, venturing out after breakfast, sometimes so consumed that they forget to break for lunch.

The team climbs into a utility vehicle lent by the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources. They cross the 7-mile island and follow Torres-Santana on foot through the cacti forest. The team dodges cacti spines and poisonous plants. They pick their way over uneven terrain; the limestone bears “dogtooth rocks,” as sharp and jagged as their name implies.

In the distance, they spy a strangler fig (*Ficus citrifolia*) and make their way toward it. Mona Island is a limestone plateau with little soil suitable for deep-rooted trees; the fig’s presence indicates a cavern or sinkhole where organic matter amassed, allowing roots to sprout. Some sinkholes lead to caves, and some caves open onto cliffs where one of their targeted species, *Opuntia stricta*, is known to grow. It is missing from their collection.

They step into cool darkness.

Galligan is torn between exploring and his better judgment.

“Within eyeshot, you could see dozens of sinkholes,” he says. “You really had to watch your footing.”

They find firm ground and take in their surroundings. Mona is among the world’s most cavernous regions per square mile, according to *American Archaeology*, a geological wonder as well as an anthropological one. Stalagmites and stalactites jut from ground and ceiling. Etchings abound, telltale signs of Native inhabitants and European explorers from centuries past. The island was once used for mining guano—bat excrement—valued as a fertilizer in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Foht finds himself contemplating the history of the place.

“It wasn’t just a botanical exploration to get these cacti; the more we learned about the cacti, the more we learned how they were interwoven into the history of the island.”

The cave opens, like a window to the sea, several hundred feet below. Galligan looks out. Birds swoop by—at eye level.

He laughs.

“I remember the frigatebirds looking at us like, ‘Huh?’”

They step onto the cliff, survey their surroundings, and spy the large elliptical pads of *Opuntia stricta*. One plant is within reach.

Torres-Santana lays on his stomach. Barbecue tongs and clippers in hand, he reaches over the edge. Foht hits “record” on his cellphone.

“It’s no wonder they call it ‘tuna del mar,’ ‘sea tuna,’” Torres-Santana narrates. “It grows right next to the ocean. This species is susceptible to *Cactoblastis cactorum*. It is present in Mona, and we want to safeguard them, and we’re going to collect samples of it and send it to Naples Botanical Garden for *ex-situ* banking.” He wiggles closer, extends the tongs, and grasps a pad. “There,” he says, lifting the sample in triumph, “collection done.”

Adventure aside, the days are hot, long, and grueling. The team struggles to stay hydrated under the blazing sun. Nighttime tasks are arduous, too. Back at camp, they have to clean each specimen to ensure no pests hitch a ride to the United States. Horticultural history is rife with devastation caused by insects exported from their native ranges into other countries. The downfall of the American chestnut tree, the die-offs of laurels, and the sweeping losses in Florida’s citrus industry are tied to pests caught up in global trade.

To prevent such an occurrence, the team spends hours each night cleaning cacti.

“Some of these cacti have hair on their spines,” Torres-Santana explains. “We have to use a brush to clean them hair by hair.” Each specimen is washed multiple times, too, in soap and water, a diluted bleach solution, isopropyl alcohol, and neem oil before the USDA-APHIS entomologists go through the plants, spine by spine and hair by hair under microscopes. A single insect could contaminate the batch. Once cleared, the team labels everything by species and location found, wraps each specimen, and ships them to the Garden. The team sleeps a single hour the night before departure readying and packing the specimens—504 plants, cuttings, and fruits from 19 sites.

When the plants arrive in Naples, conservationists sort and pot the cacti cuttings and prepare the seeds for long-term storage. Eventually, once conservationists grow duplicates to the collection, some will be put on display in the Garden and shared with other botanical gardens.

“We partnered on this project because it really takes the special expertise of many people and organizations to conserve plants,” says Washburn. “Conservation projects are most successful when there are multiple partners working on shared goals. This is a great opportunity to ensure the cacti of Puerto Rico survive into the future.”

**The Garden’s capacity to take on conservation projects like this one is about to amplify with the Evenstad Horticulture Campus. The \$15.5 million project adds more than 66,000 square feet of greenhouses, nurseries, and laboratory space, as well as state-of-the-art equipment for horticulture and conservation work. Construction will begin in early 2022 and is expected to last about a year.**



# Garden in the Sky

To enjoy some of our most distinct collections, look overhead

**S**top. Look up. Repeat.

Much of Naples Botanical Garden exists overhead, entwined in the trunks and branches of trees, climbing arbors and trellises, reaching toward the sun.

We think of it as a “sky garden,” this collection of epiphytic plants and vines. Unique to the tropics and subtropics, these plants are among our most defining features and help give the Garden its trademark look—lush, abundant, multilayered, a little untamed.

Vines are like the aerial highways of the jungle, a means for canopy-dwellers such as primates, toucans, and sloths to move about their habitat.

“It’s the network that holds everything together,” says Director of Collections Nick Ewy. “The vining plants are interwoven, binding all the plants together.”

Epiphytes, which include some vines, are plants that grow without soil. They pull water and nutrients through other mechanisms, including aerial roots, special structures called pseudobulbs, and tiny hair-like coverings, known as trichomes.

You might think trees are suffocating under the weight and pressure of all of those plants. But epiphytes are not parasites. Instead, they and the plants on which

they live co-exist peacefully—sometimes even mutually benefitting one another. The word “epiphyte” comes from the Greek, “epi,” upon, and “phyton,” plant.

“They are completely interwoven on the tree,” says Vice President of Horticulture Brian Galligan. “You look at a tree in the Amazon, and there’s a whole network growing up it.” Epiphytes are foreign to those who hail from temperate and cold climates, where they typically are limited to mosses and lichens. In the tropics, however, many familiar ground-dwellers, including orchids, bromeliads, cacti, ferns, and vines, have epiphytic forms.

A single tree at the Garden might host several epiphytic species. Ewy counts at least seven on one particularly hospitable verawood (*Bulnesia arborea*) outside Kapnick Hall, a combination of ferns, bromeliads, and orchids. Enter the LaGrippe Orchid Garden, and the number and diversity of epiphytic species is simply too high to count.

“It’s such a significant part of the guest experience,” Galligan says. So, let’s tilt up our chins, and explore the aerial Garden.



**Name:**  
Shingle plant  
(*Raphidophora* sp.)



**Name:**  
Staghorn fern  
(*Platynerium bifurcatum*)



**Name:**  
*Dendrobium* hybrid

**“It’s the network that holds everything together. The vining plants are interwoven, binding all the plants together.”**

**-NICK EWY, DIRECTOR OF COLLECTIONS**



**Name:**  
Vandaceous hybrid with  
*Tillandsia usneoides*, or Spanish moss

## ORCHIDS

Some gardens “paint” their landscapes in flowers. We like annual flower displays, of course. But we’re better known for showcasing color at eye level, creating an element of surprise as you round a bend, and find yourself face-to-petal with a sprig of blooms.

Usually, these are orchids, and for good reason: Epiphytic varieties abound. *Bulbophyllum* alone has 1,500 epiphytic species, the most out of the Orchidaceae family. *Phalaenopsis* orchids—beloved for their color—boast 83.

We’ll call your attention to one unusual orchid—distinct because it is semi-epiphytic (it starts in the ground but later may detach), and because it produces one of the world’s most ubiquitous flavorings.

Vanilla beans come from the vanilla orchid, a vining plant that produces seed pods. The curing process gives them their one-of-a-kind flavor. We grow numerous species, including *Vanilla planifolia*, the type most often used in cooking. You can find vanilla vines on the trellis behind the Pastore Family Caribbean House in the Kapnick Caribbean Garden and scattered throughout the campus on trees, including a mahogany in the Kapnick Brazilian Garden, a soapberry tree in the Caribbean Garden, and a raintree in front of the Orchid Garden. Vanilla blooms in spring and early summer.

## VINES

Speaking of vines, we can’t fathom how many photos of our vines have wound up on guests’ social media feeds—especially the queen’s wreath (*Petrea volubilis*) and sky vine (*Thunbergia grandiflora*) adorning the Caribbean Garden pergola.

Vines abound within Irma’s Garden at the Chabraja Visitor Center. They include: jade vine (*Strongylodon macrobotrys*), New Guinea trumpet vine (*Tecomathe dendrophila*), Indian clock vine (*Thunbergia mysorensis*), Medusa flower (*Strophanthus preussii*) and an unusual Chinese hat plant (*Holmskioldia sanguinea* f. *citrina*) that blooms yellow instead of its typical red. Towering over the Visitor Center is the *Bauhinia aureifolia*, with golden leaves that gleam in the sun.

As if those flowering vines aren’t exotic enough, we have a couple of palm trees that behave like vines. They’re rattan, the tubular, furniture-making material. Rattan includes 13 genera and 600 species. Most originate in Southeast Asia, though they are found in other parts of the tropical world as well.

Like a vine, rattans grow slender and supple. Thousands of tiny, razor-sharp hooks allow them to latch on to other trees and amble toward the sun, sometimes stretching hundreds of feet. Fear not! We keep them well out of visitor pathways (one is tucked behind the ruins in the Lea Asian Garden). But pity the poor horticulturists who tend them!

## FERNS

Many epiphytic ferns have a neat adaptation in which their fronds capture debris—sticks, leaves, dust, dirt—and harbor rainwater.

“It forms like a mini compost pile,” Ewy explains. This debris not only nourishes the epiphyte, but it also provides habitat to ants and other insects, which in turn, carry in more nutrients. Two examples are bird’s nest ferns (*Asplenium nidus*) and staghorn ferns (*Platycerium bifurcatum*).

Bird’s nest ferns are often sold as houseplants, but in the wild, they implant themselves high up in trees. Extended, often crinkly, fronds emerge from a central rosette.

Staghorn ferns are majestic, oversized plants that upstage their hosts with fronds that resemble deer or elk antlers. The plant consists of shield fronds, small, flat leaves that collect the nutrients, and the antler-shaped ones that can grow to 3 feet or more.

## ANT PLANTS

We love the interconnectedness of epiphytes and trees (the Garden’s 2021–22 theme is “Intertwined”), but to examine an even more complex interdependence, we look to the Myrmecophytes, otherwise known as “ant plants.” Ant colonies make their homes in them. The plants and insects even feed each other. Many ant plant species produce “extrafloral nectaries,” specialized nectar-secreting glands that feed the ants. Ants carry in materials from the forest floor that provide nutrients to the plants, and further nourish them through waste products, such as excrement and decaying material in their nests.

Ewy points out one such specimen, *Myrmecophila brysiiana*, located just beyond the Smith Entry Prow at the Visitor Center.

“They have these fat pseudobulbs, but they’re all hollow,” he says. “If you look at the bottom, there’s a little opening that the ants enter in and out of. They end up developing huge ant colonies.” In exchange for providing housing, the ants protect and defend the plant from anything that could disturb it, such as leaf- and bud-munching insects or plants that encroach on the plant’s space and threaten to smother it.

## CACTI

The rainforest may be the last place you imagine cacti, but there are species that love wet and humid as much as other branches of their family savor hot and dry.

One example is *Strophocactus wittii*, found in the shadows of Kathryn’s Garden. The cactus originates in the Amazon and is perfectly adapted to its wet/dry cycle. Epiphytic seeds tend to be windblown or consumed by wildlife and spread in excrement. Not these. The heavy seeds drop to the forest floor and float in rainy season floodwaters. As the water evaporates, they latch onto the side of a tree, germinate, and climb their new host.

Another is *Rhipsalis*, a very un-cactus-like plant that looks like a thicket of wild grass. No spines here! Instead of pricklers, this species blooms greenish-white flowers and produces white seeds that look like pearls. You can see *Rhipsalis* along the lakeside trail in the Preserve.

## BROMELIADS

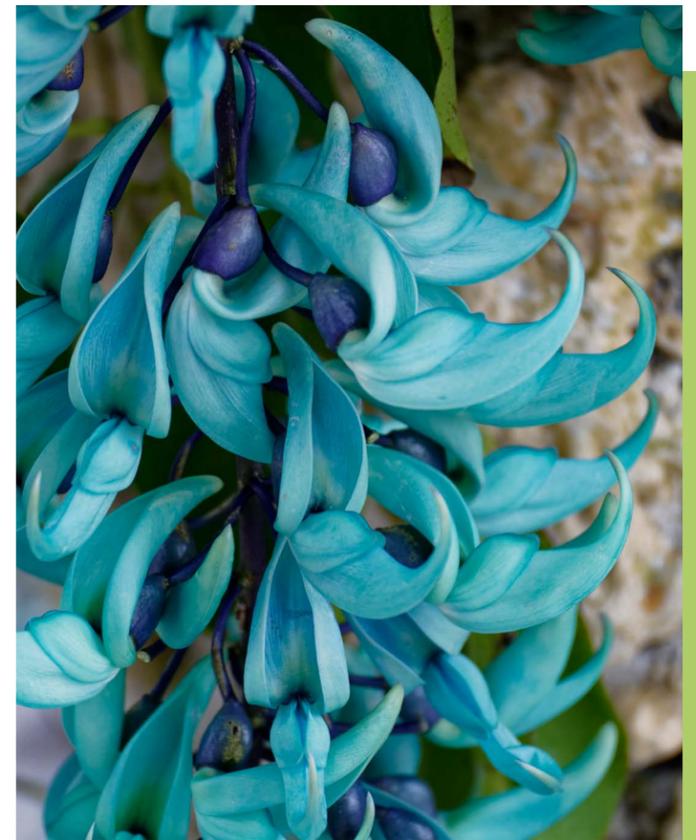
Look down, and you’ll see swaths of bromeliads lining the winding pathway through the Kapnick Brazilian Garden. Look up, and you’ll see these tropical plants adding pops of color and texture to the trees. One can’t-miss specimen is the *Aechmea floribunda*, an enormous bromeliad living high in the branches of

a silk floss tree at the base of the Brazilian Garden.

A particularly interesting epiphytic bromeliad is Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*). Synonymous with the South, this plant’s long, silvery tendrils drape from tree branches. It is entirely misnamed, however. As a bromeliad, *Tillandsia usneoides* is more closely related to pineapples than it is to moss. (The name has a few origin stories: One that the French dubbed the plant “Spanish beard,” and over time, it became known as “Spanish moss.”)

Air nourishes the plant, which absorbs moisture and nutrients carried on dust particles. Spanish moss used to have industrial uses, as a material in upholstery for cars, furniture, and mattresses. Synthetic fibers rendered that use obsolete, but the animal and insect worlds rely heavily on the plant. The tangled masses make homes for various species of insects, bats, frogs, snakes, and spiders. They also make excellent bird nest material.

So, slow down. Look up. And take in all of what Naples Botanical Garden has to offer. As Galligan reminds us, “If you beeline somewhere, you’ll miss all this!”



**Name:**  
Jade vine (*Strongylodon macrobotrys*)

# STORIES WOVEN IN WILLOW

**S**culptor Patrick Dougherty's latest work consumes the Kapnick Caribbean Garden lawn, stretching 70 feet long, 20 wide, and 15 high. He's known for his large-scale environmental art, crafted from tree saplings, but even by his standards, this one is big. The top edges undulate, like waves, the tallest point cresting above the landscape. The sides thrust outward. Arches jump over walls.

The Garden commissioned the piece, which will remain in place for approximately two years, but we had no idea what to expect. The only hint: a piece of graph paper with four overlapping ellipses. Dougherty and his 27-year-old son, Sam, had only an inkling of the eventual outcome, a sense of how they intended to shape 30,000 pounds of willow saplings into a piece of immersive art.

Over three weeks, the pair led nearly 100 volunteers in the sculpture's making. The volunteers worked four at a time in four-hour shifts—deputized artists helping create a shared work of art. To make your *STICKWORK* experience even more memorable, we offer this look back at its creation and the stories woven into its walls.

**F**ather and son crouch on dewy grass the morning of November 1 and strategize in low voices. They consult the graph paper, measure the lawn, find the middle, insert marking flags, outline circles using orange electrical cords. The first of the volunteers arrive brimming with excitement; two of them had left their homes in Cape Coral before dawn to be certain they did not miss a minute.



Dougherty puts them to work stripping leaves from the largest of the saplings, which will serve as the foundation.

Dougherty has sculpted with saplings for 40 years, and he knows how much he needs to accomplish each day to meet his self-imposed, three-week deadline. He establishes the workflow from the outset—a measured, steady pace that sometimes hastens but never feels

harried. By day's end, the crew has prepped trees, dug holes, and hoisted the base pieces into place. The sun sets, and the saplings cast long shadows across the lawn. *STICKWORK* has begun.

**M**arcela Pulgarin thrusts a branch into the framework. It is day 5, a Friday.

"It's so wonderful and whimsical, but there's a lot of sweating underneath," she says with a grin. Pulgarin is an art major at Florida Gulf Coast University. The Garden offered volunteer spots to FGCU art students and faculty during the first week of the build.

"It is such an essential part of professional preparation to understand what artists do and how they do it," says Professor Patricia Fay. "The best way to understand that is to hear them in person and to work with them in person if at all possible."

And that is precisely what Pulgarin wants—a chance to understand the artist's process. She certainly gets her wish; she spends the first half of her shift helping reposition scaffolding from one area to another. In this early stage, it serves as an exoskeleton until the artists finish manipulating the shape and "freezing" it into place by interweaving branches.

"You see the pictures—they are so cool—but there's not a lot of behind-the-scenes information," Pulgarin says. "I really enjoy working with artists in this way because I get to see the prework before the actual work."



Use your smartphone's camera to scan the QR code, and watch *Sea Change* come to life in a 2-minute, time-lapse video!



**“This whole process is very flexible. If something doesn’t look right, you can just put another stick in and make it look right. There are no mistakes in nature. Just as there are no mistakes in art.”** – GERALYNN “GIGI” FELICETTA

Patrick Dougherty loves sticks because in a child’s hand, they can be anything: a drumstick, a sword, an arrow, the raw material for a fort. In Dougherty’s hands, aside from sculpting medium, they are magic wands transforming ordinary people into artists. Poof!

At the start of a shift, he gives minimal instruction, letting people experience the process before offering specifics. Then, periodically, he pauses to coach his helpers.

“Ready for some ‘Advanced Stickology?’” he asks volunteer Liz Leonard. “Now, if I were doing it, I would deflect this line. It gives it a little more flavor.” He shows her how to manipulate the willow to suggest more of a warp and weft than a series of parallel lines.

His instructional style resonates with Garden educators Hailey Spencer and Donnamarie Richmond, who, combined, spend four to five hours a day videoing the *STICKWORK* build. (To see the results of their filming, scan the QR code on page 28 for a 2-minute, time-lapse video.)

“He made each of them feel comfortable,” says

Richmond. “It didn’t feel like mandates. It felt like teaching moments.”

Dougherty is deliberate in his interactions. He’s worked with the trepid, the pushy, the adroit, the unskilled, and everyone in between.

“We have an obligation to make it a good experience,” he says. And it is.

“For people who have no knowledge of this process, to just come in and be part of it is amazing,” Leonard says. Fellow volunteer Geralynn “Gigi” Felicetta nods in agreement.

“To be a part of his creative process, it’s a gift,” she says. She appreciates the forgiving nature of the work—and of the artist who demonstrates simple fixes for less-than-perfect craftsmanship. “This whole process is very flexible. If something doesn’t look right, you can just put another stick in and make it look right. There are no mistakes in nature. Just as there are no mistakes in art.”

Within days, the circles from which the sculpture originated are utterly unrecognizable. Dougherty explains his thinking: “It’s the idea that this ribbon-y wall might have a life of its own and be subject to haphazard pressure, that if you push on one piece of the ribbon, the other piece kind of falls over a bit,” he says, “If you have something tall and thin, you can’t really control that, specifically the shape of it. We wanted that. We wanted it to look like it was wallowing out a bit and falling this way and that way.”

In the sculpture’s early stages, he is something of an engineer; in the later ones, he is pure artist. Once the form is in place, “then it’s just like making a canvas and drawing on it.” Sticks serve as pencils.

“Since sticks are tapered, if you organize the tapers in one direction, you get a sense of implied motion on the surface, which makes it seem a lot like the wind or the ocean, and all the other forces of nature playing themselves out on these objects,” he explains.

Volunteer Lauren Redding sees the connection. “You just let the sticks guide you,” says Redding, herself an artist who specializes in silverpoint drawing. “He said to create an overlay, so these ideas of layers are very much like drawing. It is a beautiful process,” she says.

Sticks may be an imprecise medium, but the Doughertys are sticklers for details. As the process nears its end, Sam sits in the grass and tinkers with the base. To an untrained eye, the piece looks complete, but Sam spies the imperfections and manipulates the sticks until he’s satisfied.

“I think for a lot of people, if you are lucky enough to have a job where you make anything, you get a lot of joy in the really fine details, the specifics,” he says.

Specifics are why volunteer Suzie Yeager holds a cup of mud and walks the interior perimeter looking for cut branches whose pale wood contrasts with darker bark. She dips her index finger and smudges the exposed edges with soil.

“He said there was a lot to finish up. I had no idea what he meant!”

This sculpture is best viewed from the inside, Dougherty says. He made it long and linear to complement the expansive Caribbean Garden lawn. It is too long to take in from any single exterior vantage point.

“When you are inside of it, you see the full grandeur of it. It’s a piece that’s viewed, really, from the inside out.” He has left the top open and designed oversized doors and windows so that the structure feels airy, despite its enormity.

“Having a lot of big openings allows you to see the surrounding garden. I wasn’t prone to put a top on it because I wanted to be able to see all around and have the landscape merging with the object itself.”



The sculpture is unveiled at a starlit ceremony three weeks after the Doughertys’ arrival. The final piece? Its name. Dougherty christens it *Sea Change*.

“A sea change is a great transformation, but it also reflects some of what happens in the ocean itself and the wind that plays on it, the ebb tides that push it. We thought those would be reflected in the surface as we made it,” he tells the crowd.

He doesn’t extrapolate, preferring to let viewers develop their own interpretations. Which they do. Richmond and Spencer, the staffers filming the project, had much time to reflect on the work as they watched it emerge.

“This one reminds me so much of being underwater that it really feels like it belongs here,” says Richmond. “Being a Naples native, my go-to happy place on a bad day is the beach, especially on a stormy day. When you go there, you sit under the waves and you hold your breath for a while, and you look up, and you can watch the sand being turbulent through those waves.”

“It’s so interesting that you say that,” Spencer says. “To me, coming from Oklahoma, it looks like a tornado, the wind pulling stuff around. To me, it looks like it’s been warped by wind. Those are just the environmental differences based on where we grew up.”

Richmond agrees. “It’s both forces of nature—but depending on where you are from and what your experiences are, you connect in a different way.”

What will *Sea Change* say to you?

**STICKWORK IS SUPPORTED BY:**

NAPLES • MARCO ISLAND  
EVERGLADES  
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**FIFTH THIRD BANK**



## Get Your Winter Bursting with Flavor!

Taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) is a tuberous, evergreen plant with an edible starch vegetable root that adds a pearly and purple hue to desserts and drinks.

This beverage is perfect for an uplifting refresher or best paired with avocado toast or a breakfast bowl for a healthy start to your day.

## Taro Milk Boba Tea

### Ingredients

#### Taro root purée:

15 ounces peeled and diced taro root  
2 tablespoons sugar

#### Boba:

2 cups water  
1/2 cup tapioca pearls  
2 tablespoons sugar

#### Tea:

2 cups spring water  
2 tablespoons loose-leaf jasmine tea  
1 tablespoon sweetened condensed milk  
1 cup milk

If you haven't heard of boba milk tea, its origins trace back to the 1980s in Taiwan, where cooked tapioca pearls were added to traditional milk tea. The pearls looked like bubbles floating at the bottom of the drink and were chewy and had a pop of sweet liquid, thus creating an instant favorite and new drink trend!

#### For the taro root purée:

Bring a small pot of water to a boil, and add the peeled and diced taro root.

Cook for 20 minutes or until tender. The taro root should be soft enough to poke through without resistance. Discard the water.

Using a food processor and working while the taro is still hot, purée the cooked taro root and sugar until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.

**Note:** All forms of taro, a popular, starchy root vegetable, contain calcium oxalate in their raw form. Taro must be cooked to minimize this toxin, which causes severe mouth and throat irritation.

#### For the boba:

Add the tapioca pearls and 2 tablespoons sugar to 2 cups of boiling water.

Boil for 5-7 minutes.

The boba are done cooking when they begin to float. You can adjust the cooking time depending on how firm or soft you prefer your boba pearls.

Remove from hot water, and set aside to cool.

#### For the jasmine tea:

Heat 2 cups of water in a tea pot until it reaches 180 degrees Fahrenheit, or when the water starts to simmer.

Remove from heat, and add the jasmine tea leaves.

Steep tea for 2-4 minutes, or until you reach your desired tea strength.

#### Assembly:

While the brewed jasmine tea is hot, mix well with fresh ground root paste and condensed milk to form a light purple-hued tea. Add the milk and tapioca pearls to the mixture. Serve the taro milk tea hot or cold.

*Matthew Herrman, Tropical Fruit Specialist, harvested taro root from the Marcia and L. Bates Lea Asian Garden. Fogg Café Chef Andrew Foyt used the taro root for a tasty drink, the taro milk boba tea.*



A



B



C



D

## Sticks & Stones

Bring natural elements into your home by sprucing up your space with sticks and gemstones.



E



F



G



H

**STICKS ADD TEXTURE**, height, and complement any home's décor with their neutral tones. Gemstones add a sense of energy and can transform any room into an uplifting place of healing, to influence positive change. You can also use gemstones to accessorize your ensemble. Whether choosing a crystal or woody accent, consider which you are drawn to—your energy will ultimately lead you to the right one.

#### Members save 10% in Fogg Café and the Berger Shop!

Head to the Berger Shop in the Garden, and choose from an array of sticks and stones to incorporate into your home décor.

Explore the **STICKWORK** sculpture, *Sea Change*, on the Kapnick Caribbean Garden lawn during your next visit to discover the boundless potential of natural materials—namely, sticks—but on a much larger scale.

#### PRICES:

**A,B,D,G,H:** Cholla wood branches, \$18

**A:** Dyed geode, \$12

**B:** Freshwater pearl bracelets, \$25 each

**C:** Gold stone, \$15

**C:** Small blue stone, \$12

**C:** Dyed geode, \$12

**D:** Dyed agate slab, \$15

**E:** Hanging basket, \$24

**F:** Trinket dish, \$11.99

**G:** Geode, \$12

**H:** Quartz stick earrings, \$35



## THERE IS SO MUCH FOR MEMBERS to enjoy in the Garden

### Member Appreciation Day

April 14 | 8am–5pm

Enjoy special perks on select days this season; it's all part of our way of saying thank you for all you make possible for the Garden!

- Enjoy a 20% discount in the Berger Shop in the Garden.
- Bring a friend (one additional guest beyond what your membership allows) to discover the beauty of our cultivated display gardens and restored Florida landscape.

#### New! Digital Download Clinic

9:30 to 11:30am and 1:30 to 3:30pm during Member Appreciation Day

Are you ready to make the leap and transition to a digital membership card? We'll have team members on site to assist you with this process. Plus, recycle your card with us during these days, and be entered into a drawing to win a prize.

## WHY DIGITAL MEMBERSHIP CARDS?

### ✓ BENEFITS FOR OUR MEMBERS:

#### Convenience

Just like your phone, it's always with you! Plus, both named Members can carry the card in their digital wallets.

#### Contactless entry & discounts

Scan and go, whether at the entrance or utilizing your Member discount in Fogg Café or the Berger Shop in the Garden—no more searching your pockets or purse for that plastic card.

#### Ease of access

Members will find their Membership ID, expiration date, and links to Member benefits on their digital card.

### ✓ BENEFITS FOR THE GARDEN:

#### Cost savings

Saves the Garden thousands of dollars per year on printing and mailing costs. These dollars can be redirected toward plants and programming.

### ✓ BENEFITS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT:

#### Conservation

Reduced dependency on single-use plastics improves everyone's carbon footprint and aligns with the Garden's conservation mission.

### Members-Only Picnic

March 5 | 4–6pm

Escape to a picnic in your tropical paradise during this exclusive event for Members. Spread out on a blanket or lawn chairs (in select areas only) to enjoy a relaxing afternoon with friends and family. Listen to live musical talent, and immerse yourself in *Sea Change*, the Garden's *STICKWORK* sculpture in the Kapnick Caribbean Garden. Opt to bring your own food, or select from a full menu at Fogg Café. Alcoholic beverages are available for purchase only. Guests beyond your membership level admitted at regular price.



Log in to [naplesgarden.org](https://www.naplesgarden.org) with your membership ID to register by February 25.



# Why We Give

## Jim & Linda White

This couple's bequest translates to a long-term future for the Garden's birding tower



As two of Naples Botanical Garden's founding philanthropists, Jim and Linda White could have contributed anything they wished to the organization—a plant collection, a piece of art, a bridge, a pavilion. They chose to build a birding tower, a nod to Jim's avian interest and the couple's appreciation of Southwest Florida native habitat. The Jim & Linda White Birding Tower overlooks a marsh that the Garden's inaugural staff reclaimed from invasive plants, including melaleuca.

In visiting the tower, the Whites noticed themselves spotting more than feathered friends. The couple encountered birding enthusiasts they'd never met, despite years of Jim photographing Southwest Florida birds and wildlife.

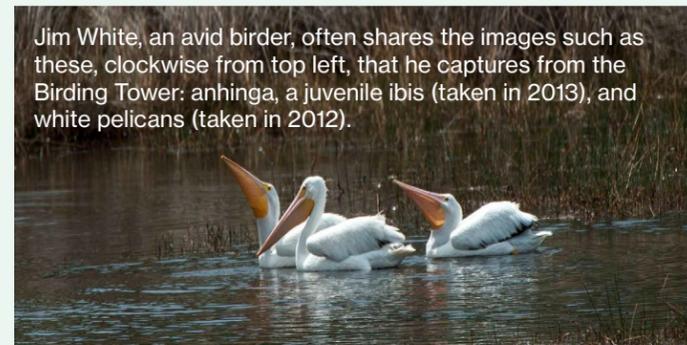
"Until the Birding Tower was there, I didn't know any people who were birders," says Linda.

The adage, "Build it, and they will come," certainly holds true in this real-life story.

Now, the couple has pledged a bequest gift to fund future maintenance, ensuring the tower remains a bastion for birders and all who come to revel in the possibilities of restored Florida habitats.

Over the years, the Whites have championed the Garden, with Linda serving as chair of the Board of Directors. When needs surface, they seize the opportunity to give, be it providing endowment funding for the Garden's Executive Director post or supporting Florida Gulf Coast University's environmental efforts, naming a classroom on our campus.

Come to the Garden on any given birding morning, and chances are good you'll find Jim, perched at the birding tower, camera at the ready.



Jim White, an avid birder, often shares the images such as these, clockwise from top left, that he captures from the Birding Tower: anhinga, a juvenile ibis (taken in 2013), and white pelicans (taken in 2012).

Linda opts for a different vantage point. "Right now, I love the Scott Florida Garden," she says. "It's just magical. I love to look up from the bench at the top of the hill and look this way and that—when I'm not at the Birding Tower," she says.

More than 20 years after their relationship with the Garden began, the two still marvel at its impact.

"The whole neighborhood has changed because of the Garden," Linda says. "What's not to love about it? This is our home away from home."



If you're interested in including the Garden in your estate plans, we encourage you to speak with your financial advisor and access our planned giving resources at [naplesgarden.org/support/donate](https://naplesgarden.org/support/donate).



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To learn more about becoming a Royal Palm Society Member, please visit [naplesgarden.org/membership](https://naplesgarden.org/membership), or email [development@naplesgarden.org](mailto:development@naplesgarden.org).

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“I look at their propagules like ships heading out to sea. They’re using the tides, and what’s driving that is the moon. These plants are using the power of the moon to send their seeds around.”

—Eric Foht, Director of Natural Resources,  
on how mangroves, and all nature from sea to sky, are intertwined.

Explore more about the connections between nature and ourselves in this Notes from the Garden Blog: [naplesgarden.org/interwined](https://naplesgarden.org/interwined).



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