

Frida Kahlo. 40.

NAPLES
BOTANICAL
GARDEN

Cultivate



SPRING 2023



IN SEASON |

Vibrant folk art dances to life on this deer, one of six animal sculptures waiting to be discovered as part of *Frida and Her Garden*. Learn more about this exhibition on page 17.

Photo by John Eder



OUR MISSION

Where Plants & People Thrive Together

Naples Botanical Garden conserves the plants and habitats of the tropics, cultivates beauty, offers knowledge, and inspires the protection of nature.

ON THE COVER

Frida Kahlo (Mexican, 1907–1954), Untitled [Self-portrait with thorn necklace and hummingbird], 1940. Oil on canvas mounted to board. Nickolas Muray Collection of Mexican Art, 66.6 © 2022 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

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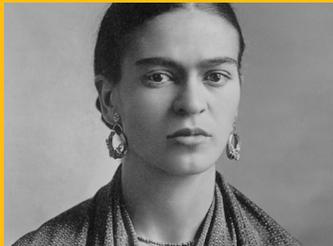
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CULTIVATE SPRING 2023

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This magazine is printed by an FSC®-certified printer. Forest Stewardship Council® certification imposes stringent standards for forest management that benefits people, wildlife, and the environment.

It feels like yesterday when we donned flower crowns and held our first multidisciplinary *Frida and Her Garden* meeting.

I'm sure the staff will tell you it was *not* yesterday—they have, quite literally, spent a year preparing the site, setting up the exhibition, and writing the programming to support it.

We pride ourselves on transporting our guests to other places, such as Southeast Asia, Brazil, and the Caribbean through our cultivated gardens. *Frida* does the same. The exhibition recreates *La Casa Azul*, the Blue House, her home in Mexico City. Frida's home was her sanctuary throughout her tumultuous life (learn more about her on page 13). I feel like the shady exhibition space is a respite from my busy life, too. I invite you to wander its pathways, and see what effect it has on you.

We present *Frida and Her Garden* as part of our 2022–23 season, *Mexico: A Celebration of Plants & Culture*. I'm thrilled by the response so far. *La*



Calavera Catrina, which remains on display in the Scott Florida Garden through March 5, surprises and delights guests. We welcomed more than 3,000 people to our first Día de los Muertos Celebration last November and intend to make the event an annual affair.

Beyond special events, the Garden teems with activity. The Evenstad Horticulture Campus takes shape along our property's southern end (catch a glimpse of the progress atop the Florida Garden), our

educators have developed new topics for our daily programs, and our winter bird watchers are in their seasonal glory. Be sure to read Garden birding guide Ed Kemnitzer's commentary on the simple joy of this activity, page 25.

All these things—and so much more—happen because of you. Our Members, donors, and guests sustain the Garden's mission and allow us to provide a place of refuge as precious to the community as Frida's garden was to her.

Donna McGinnis
President & CEO
Naples Botanical Garden

✉ Questions and letters to the editor may be sent to email@naplesgarden.org.

What's happening



Naples Orchid Society Show & Sale

Orchid Mardi Gras

February 24–26 | 9am–5pm

Celebrate this symbol of rare and native beauty during this annual Garden event. View awe-inspiring displays of orchids in full bloom, behold the LaGrippe Orchid Garden bursting with color, drop in on demonstrations, take an orchid-themed tour, and shop orchids and orchid care supplies.

Naples Orchid Society and American Orchid Society volunteers will ensure you leave with enhanced knowledge of these ephemeral plants.

Presented in partnership with:  NAPLES Orchid SOCIETY since 1962



Naples Flower Show & Garden Market

Just Imagine

March 17 & 18 | 9am–5pm

Aptly titled *Just Imagine*, the 2023 flower show is sure to inspire and delight. Discover hundreds of floral designs in one of the largest juried flower shows in Florida. Seek inspiration with creative and educational displays, gain botanical know-how during demonstrations, and peruse a variety of plants and gifts available for purchase.

The Garden congratulates our friend, partner, and longtime supporter, the Naples Garden Club, on 70 years of service to the community! Thank you for the important work you do to provide opportunities for sharing and learning about horticulture, floral design, and the environment.

Presented in partnership with:  NAPLES GARDEN CLUB™

Members enjoy early entry at 8am.



Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



SAVE THE DATE Family Wonder Days return May 27 & 28!

The fun continues throughout the entire Garden. Bring the family to walk, observe, navigate, draw, explore, and read with activity stations dotting our lush landscape. Enjoy scavenger hunts, live music, and more!



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

10:30am daily

Bring the whole family along to learn more about our natural world, with new themes each month. Or pick up an activity pack in English, Spanish, or Haitian Creole at the Smith Entry Prow, near the Info Station, to explore at your own pace.

March: Fabulous Flowers

April: Bamboo-zled

May: Celebrate the Earth

Dig Deeper

11:30am & 1pm | Thursdays–Tuesdays

Daily starting April 19

Gain a deeper understanding of the botanical world with fun, engaging topics designed especially for adults. Learn more about the botany behind your favorite brew, see how to re-pot succulents, discover the diversity of bromeliads, and more.



Tours

Expand your knowledge of the Garden and understanding of the botanical world with these staff-led experiences.



Join a daily tour, departing from the Smith Entry Prow several times a day!



Listen as you stroll! Self-guided audio tours available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole.

NEW THIS YEAR!

Mexico: A Celebration of Plants & Culture audio tour

PLUS

Look for new stops on the Natural Areas and Journey of a Raindrop audio tours to learn how the Garden fared during Hurricane Ian in September 2022.



FRIDA

AND HER

GARDEN

Through September 10

Immerse yourself in the world of Frida Kahlo, one of the most iconic and influential Mexican artists in the world. This exhibition features a re-creation of Kahlo's iconic home, *La Casa Azul* (or the Blue House), which showcases Kahlo's creative refuge and the plants that inspired her.

Explore the exhibition just past the Water Garden Stage, adjacent to the Kapnick Brazilian Garden. As you stroll the rest of the Garden, you'll encounter monumental sculptures that speak to the influence of animals on Kahlo's life and work. Learn more about this expansive exhibition on page 17.

Supported by:



Special thanks to Banco de México Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo Museums Trust.



Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



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FLORIDA'S PARADISE COAST

Frida After 5



March 3, April 7 | 5–8pm

May 5 | 5–8:30pm

Frida and Her Garden is a beautiful exhibition, interconnected with Mexican culture, plants, and animals that inspired world-renowned artist Frida Kahlo. To allow even more opportunity for Members and guests to experience this artist's world, the Garden will celebrate Frida the first Friday of each month through May, with after-hours entertainment. Enjoy specialty themed cocktails, lively music, and an evening stroll through the exhibit.

Supported by:



Sunset Wednesdays

Wednesdays in February, March, and April | 5–8pm

Wednesdays in May | 5–8:30pm

Nothing compares to the beauty of the finest tropical plants and curated botanical collections illuminated under nature's almighty sun, casting vivid hues and magnificent colors



during the pre-twilight hours. Witness this phenomenon on your Garden stroll as we stay open late midweek for guests to bask in the beauty of Southwest Florida's highly acclaimed sunsets.

During your Garden visit, browse the Berger Shop, or relax at Fogg Café, open late with food specials and half-price bottles of wine.

Sunset Wednesday Special Programs

Dive into fun with these ticketed programs created just for adults, starting Wednesdays at 6pm.

UPCOMING SESSIONS:

March 1: Mysteries of Mexico's Cacti Walking Tour

March 8: Agave Paint & Sip

March 15: Cocktail Scavenger Hunt

March 22: Crowns of Paradise

April 5: The Buzz Below the Border Walking Tour

April 12: Bird of Paradise Paint & Sip

See more experiences, and book yours before they sell out!



Supported by: **WINTRUST**
BANKING CENTER

Blooms & Brews



April 15 | 6–10pm **TICKETS ON SALE MARCH 15!**

At the Garden, we know how to provide our guests with a truly unique beer-tasting experience. The Garden will host a wide variety of regional microbreweries, allowing guests to sample craft beers made from locally sourced ingredients, emphasizing flavors that transport you to the tropics. Toast to the plants that make beer happen as you listen to live music, and then check out our breathtaking sunset, or enjoy a starlit stroll around the Garden.

Special Thanks to Suncoast Beverage Sales



Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Gardeners tend the plants. But who tends the gardeners?

Mike Brewer,
Horticulture Business Manager

Photos by John Eder

Horticulture Business Manager Mike Brewer supervises the supplies, logistics, and equipment needed to maintain our ever-growing Garden.

Just what does it mean to manage the business of horticulture? At times it's anchoring himself to a desk when the majority of his 33 team members fan out into the Garden for the day. Or diving into the nitty-gritty of planning and purchasing after his colleagues dream up new horticultural features. Most of all, though, for this former retail nursery manager, it's about knowing what questions to ask.

Say I need 20 yards of soil. What mix do you need in that soil? Do you want it bagged? Is it going to come out in a truck? What will you put it in? All those questions would require someone who knows what (project) that soil will be used for. Rocks are not just rocks. Are these the rocks that come from Brazil, or are these rocks that come from Asia? If you put the wrong rock in the wrong garden, it doesn't make sense. It throws it off. Understanding that really makes a difference for the person setting up or making the order.





“I really enjoy being able to get outside from time to time, and the cacti and succulents need less attention than most, so it works for me since most of my job is at my desk.”

“We always seem to be going 100 miles an hour. I couldn’t handle a job that had a true off-season; I have to be busy all the time.”

I handle the day-to-day logistics for our staff. Making sure they have all the tools, supplies, and support they

need to get their jobs done. I feel like I wear a lot of hats, and you’ll never hear me say, “That’s not my job.”

A true business manager probably only deals with numbers and budgets (Horticulture’s totals nearly \$2.5 million annually). But I get to do so much more than that. If there are business managers at other botanical gardens, they’d be jealous of my job for sure. I’m not just in a cubicle running numbers, but I can get in there and be part of the process, part of the plan. A normal business manager would sit back and take notes. I’m in a situation where I’m in a group of our managers, and I’m offering suggestions, saying, “Why don’t we do a big rock formation there, and plant agaves.” I feel very fortunate that I get to be a part of

“I get to be part of the planning and planting when we put new plants in.”

that conversation, that thought process, and ultimately get to see some of those things come to fruition. I’m very much a plant person at heart, and that’s a real perk of the job for me in that respect.

It always seems to be busy. Just in different ways. Off-season it’s all about big, messy projects—planting huge palms, digging up irrigation pipes—things we can only do when there aren’t as many guests in the Garden. In season, it’s all about our amazing events and the role Horticulture plays with them. For me, I don’t feel like there’s a slow period. We always seem to be going 100 miles an hour. I couldn’t handle a job that had a true off-season; I have to be busy all the time.



Other duties as assigned: Oversee the Foster Succulent Garden.

Pining for Peppers

Educator Kyle Possai teaches us to grow our own in backyard or patio containers

Simple to grow and delicious to eat, peppers are perfect for container gardening at home. These plants like the long, warm growing season of sunny Southwest Florida. Many varieties of peppers, from sweet bells to spicy chiles, can be grown easily in your backyard or on your patio.

For those wanting a sweet snack, the 'Red Knight' bell pepper and 'Sweet Banana' pepper cultivars will fill that need. Be warned, if you are starting your pepper seeds in the summer, you may have to wait

until nights become longer and cooler to see your bells swell and change color. If you instead desire a spicy kick, you might try 'Big Chile II' and 'Long Cayenne' varieties. Hot peppers are generally more heat-and drought-tolerant than sweet peppers and can produce an astounding amount of fruit once established. You can find a more extensive list of recommended Florida pepper cultivars on the University of Florida's Gardening Solutions website.



Kyle Possai is an Education Specialist for the Garden's Education & Visitor Experience Team.



STEP 1: Choose nutrient rich, well-draining soil for your peppers. If you start from seed, most seed-starting mixes available at your local nursery will work just fine. Keep the soil moist and in a sunny spot.

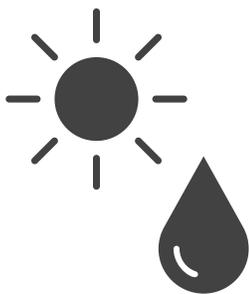


STEP 2: Once the peppers have grown three inches, step them up into a larger container. Replace the seed-starting soil with an organic all-purpose container or raised bed mix. If you want to make your own mix, one-third soil, one-third mulch, and one-third sand works well. If you are growing multiple plants in one container, space them 18 to 24 inches apart.



STEP 3: As your peppers grow, lay down mulch to keep the soil cool and moist. A continuous-release fertilizer will help boost the nutrient uptake. Place the fertilizer under the mulch around the base of each plant, and water thoroughly.

STEP 4: As the plants grow and start to bear fruit, you may have to stake or tomato cage them to help support their weight. Avoid pulling the peppers by hand as you can easily snap a branch.



Light + moisture is key
Place the plants in a sunny spot. Peppers need six to eight hours of sunlight per day. All that sunlight is drying, so be certain to water every two to three days to maintain pepper production. Feel beneath the soil to check moisture levels.

With these gardening tips in mind, you will be able to grow and enjoy delicious peppers in your own home.



Pepper history

Peppers are one of the oldest cultivated fruits in the world, originating out of central Mexico 7,000 years ago. The word chili comes from the Nahuatl (Aztec) word “chil” and refers to all plants in the *Capsicum* (pepper) genus. Indigenous people considered peppers to be a staple of their diets. Starting in the 14th and 15th centuries, Portuguese and Spanish traders saw an opportunity to capitalize upon the plant and spread it across Europe and Asia.



Did you know?

The chemical responsible for hot peppers’ burning sensation is capsaicin. It functions as an irritant to mammals and as a deterrent against eating the plant’s fruit. Birds, however, do not feel the sting of capsaicin. Unlike mammals, who chew and grind the seeds thoroughly while eating, birds swallow the fruit whole, and pass the seeds unharmed.





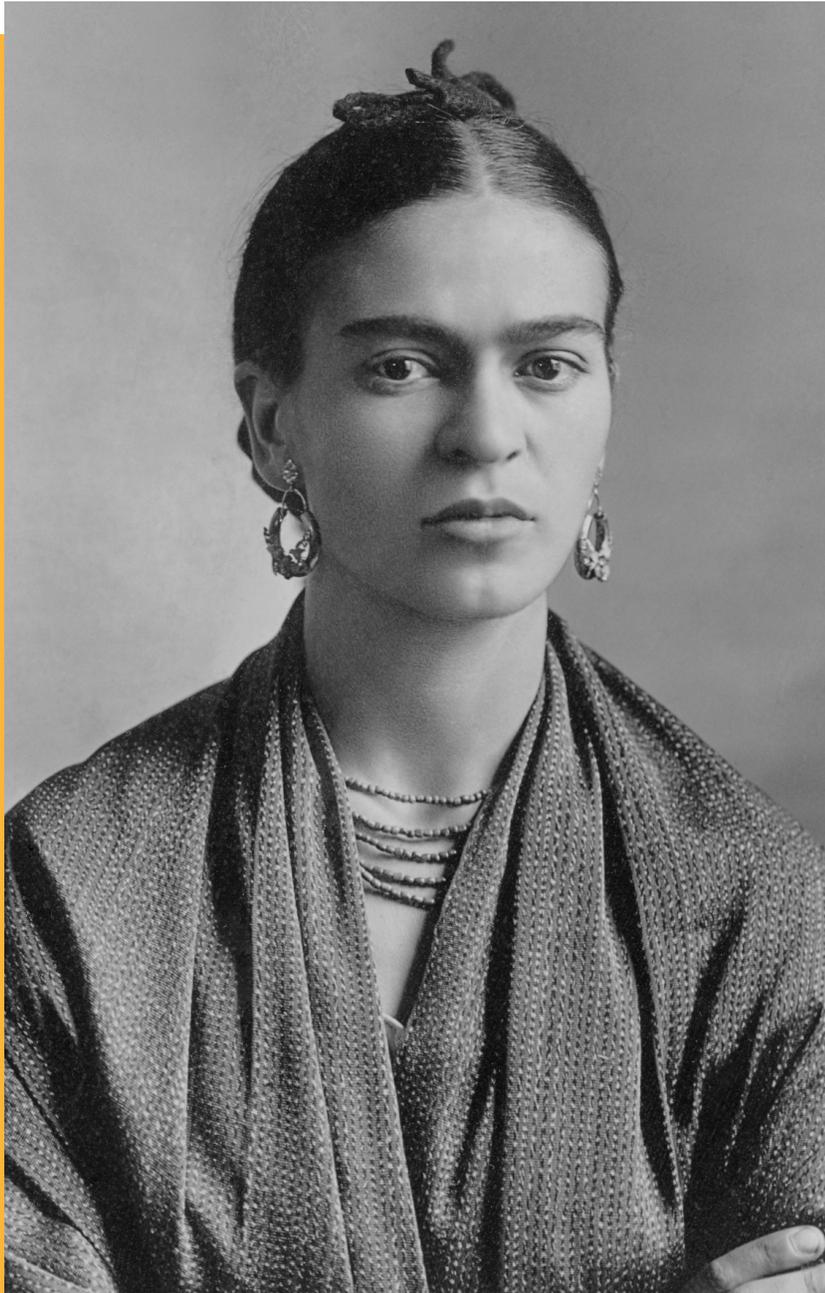
Frida Kahlo standing next to an agave plant, by Toni Frissell

WHO WAS FRIDA KAHLO, AND WHAT WAS HER CONNECTION TO THE NATURAL WORLD?

BY ERIN WOLFE BELL

Mexican painter Frida Kahlo is one of the world's most celebrated and studied artists. In a word, she is timeless. Kahlo's life, cut short at the age of 47, was filled with personal tragedy. But like many of us, she found refuge in her garden. Throughout her career, Kahlo depicted native plants as well as foliage and fruits from her garden to embrace her heritage and express her innermost thoughts.





Frida Kahlo, by Guillermo Kahlo, 16 October 1932, Coyoacán, México

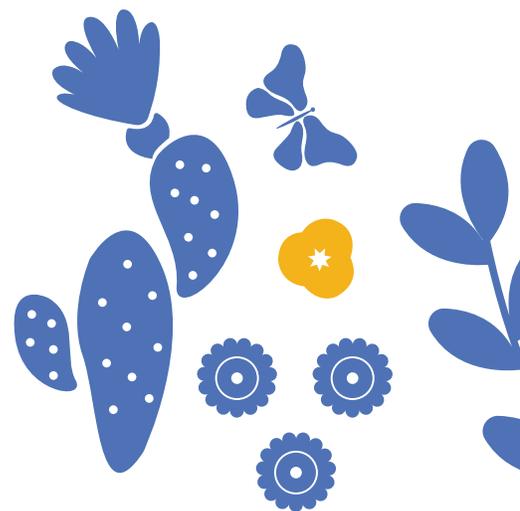
*"I paint myself because I am
so often alone and because
I am the subject I know best."*

- Frida Kahlo

Born on July 6, 1907, to a German father and a Mexican mother of Spanish and Native American descent, Kahlo was named Magdalena Carmen Frieda Kahlo y Calderon. She went by the name Frieda, derived from the German word for peace, but changed it to Frida at age 25 to de-emphasize the traditional Germanic spelling.

La Casa Azul, or the Blue House, was built by Kahlo's father in 1904 in Coyoacán, Mexico, a Mexico City borough. At the home's center is a courtyard garden with curving pathways and plant beds. As a child, Kahlo loved the garden, then a formal design with imported palms and manicured rose beds. Later, she would fill it with native plants, a sign of her deep connection to her homeland.

When Kahlo was 6, she was diagnosed with polio and became bedridden for nine months. This was the first of many times she would be confined to isolation due to poor health. At 18, Kahlo was commuting home from the prestigious National Preparatory School in Mexico City when she was in a horrific bus accident. She sustained serious injuries, including a broken spinal column, and would be in acute pain for the rest of her life. It was during her recovery that she took up painting.



The courtyard garden became her sanctuary and an important source of artistic inspiration. She embraced representations of foliage, fruit, and flowers, often using them to represent fertility and celebrate the natural beauty of Mexico. In fact, during the last months of her life, she moved her bed to the hallway between her bedroom and studio so that she could look out into the garden at *La Casa Azul*.

Kahlo married Mexican muralist Diego Rivera (1886–1957) in 1929, and together, they created a warm and intimate atmosphere at *La Casa Azul*. They adapted the home's European style to one that reflected their passion for traditional Mexican art and architecture, and they transitioned the garden to an oasis filled with native plants and collections of traditional Mexican folk art and pre-Hispanic art. Their home attracted visitors from all over the world, serving as a gathering place for Mexico's artistic and political elite of the day.

Beyond her paintings, Kahlo adorned herself with bright blooms of bougainvilleas, dahlias, fuchsias, and lantanas, woven into her iconic headdresses. Kahlo posed for many photographs in her garden, suggesting its significance to her identity.



Photo by Luis Vidal, Unsplash

Animals were always present at *La Casa Azul*. Kahlo's beloved pets included parrots, ducks, peacocks, Xoloitzcuintli dogs, monkeys, and even deer. These companions accompanied Kahlo in her daily life and are featured in her magnificent self-portraits. These works explore the most intimate parts of her life experience, including her conflicted marriage, her post-accident pain, and her reverence for Mexican heritage.

Kahlo enjoyed artistic success with exhibits in New York City and Paris, but she always remained rooted at home in Coyoacán, eager to return to *La Casa Azul* after every trip. Later in her

“They thought I was a Surrealist, but I wasn't. I never painted dreams. I painted my own reality.”
— Frida Kahlo

life, Kahlo taught art and used the garden as an open-air classroom.

In 1958, four years after Kahlo's death, *La Casa Azul* became a museum. Kahlo and Rivera always wished to donate their assets to the people of Mexico. Today, Museo Frida Kahlo is one of the most visited museums in Mexico City.

Erin Wolfe Bell is the Garden's Director of Exhibitions & Special Programs.





La Casa Azul, Frida Kahlo's home in Coyoacán, Mexico City, helped inspire the artist in her craft. It also serves as the basis for the facade that can be experienced in this immersive exhibition.

Photo by Luis Vidal on Unsplash



A WINDOW INTO FRIDA'S WORLD

Discover the plants, animals, and garden sanctuary that inspired one of the world's most iconic artists

By Jennifer Reed

WHAT FUELS AN ARTIST'S CREATIVITY?

Frida Kahlo, the renowned Mexican painter, found her artistic inspiration within. Her self-portraits are a window into her soul, and often, expressions of her emotional and physical pain. But Kahlo found solace in her home and in the natural world. At *La Casa Azul* (the Blue House), Kahlo tended gardens and delighted in animals. The property, which was her birthplace, marital home and deathplace, served as a haven in times of joy and of tumult. The home reflected her cultural pride, from its cobalt blue exterior to the Aztec-style pyramid Kahlo and her husband, Diego Rivera, built to display their collection of pre-Hispanic art. Their garden abounded with native plants. Kahlo took cuttings of blooms and wove them into her hair.

Frida and Her Garden celebrates the comfort of home and the beauty of nature. We hope the Garden offers you the same sense of peace and opportunity for quiet reflection that Kahlo found at *La Casa Azul*.



GARDEN BEDS

Plants are the heart of this exhibition. *Frida and Her Garden* features five beds specially designed and curated by our staff. They include a Kitchen Garden honoring Mexico's contribution to global cuisine and the edible plants found at *La Casa Azul*; an Inspiration Garden featuring plants that appear in Kahlo's paintings; and a Mexican Garden recognizing the country's tremendous biodiversity and range of ecosystems.

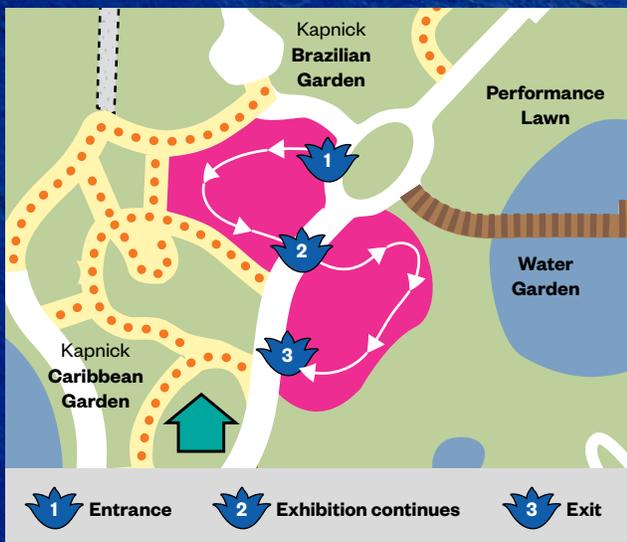


ANIMAL SCULPTURES

Frida adored her pets and the surrounding wildlife. Throughout the Garden, you will find six animal sculptures. Their varying styles reflect Frida's interest in pre-Hispanic sculpture and in folk art. The sculptures include a small, hairless Mexican dog whose name is derived from an Aztec god; a hummingbird reminiscent of the one included in a famed self-portrait; and a parrot, like the ones she kept at *La Casa Azul*.



Photos: John Eder



In keeping with Mexico's proximity to the Caribbean and South America, the exhibition's facade, pyramid, photo niches, and other elements are nestled between the Kapnick Caribbean and Kapnick Brazilian gardens. Animal sculptures are placed throughout the Garden and promise to surprise and delight.

Jennifer Reed is the Garden's Editorial Director.



THE MAKING OF AN EXHIBITION

BY JENNIFER REED

Photos by John Eder
and Kristen Kerwin

How we transformed a forested, inaccessible portion of the Garden into an immersive experience

It's February 2022, and a group of Garden employees gathers in a wooded space between the Kapnick Caribbean Garden and the Kapnick Brazilian Garden.

"There is nice sun over here," says Elizabeth Beans, Associate Director of Horticulture, stepping into a pool of light. "We can utilize this space."

Erin Wolfe Bell, Director of Exhibitions & Special Programs, picks her way through the brush, envisioning a serpentine pathway.

"I think we can start curving it here," she says.

Vice President of Horticulture Brian Galligan agrees.

"Imagine all this is gone," he says. "Don't even think about the understory stuff."

The making of *Frida and Her Garden* began more than a year ago with tape measures, spray paint markings, and imagination. The exhibition is our most ambitious art installation to date, requiring the creation of a new display garden. A cross-departmental task force began meeting in November 2021 to determine how to transport visitors to *La Casa Azul*, (The Blue House), the home that served as the refuge and inspiration for Mexican artist Frida Kahlo (1907-1954).

We had acquired the exhibition from San Antonio Botanical Garden, which had commissioned it. But the architectural pieces and sculptures were only the start. We wanted to make *Frida and Her Garden* our own.

"It's really about telling a story," Bell says. "We've done that with other exhibits, but this one is different."

Venture behind the scenes with us to learn how we created *Frida and Her Garden* and why we spent over a year planning our tribute to the iconic artist.



PREPARING THE SITE

We generally place large sculptures in the Garden's open vistas. (Think *La Calavera Catrina* in the Scott Florida Garden and *STICKWORK* in the Kapnick Caribbean Garden.) But *Frida* required a different treatment.

"We went to San Antonio to go see it, and one of our first questions was, 'Gosh, where will we put it?'" remembers Britt Patterson-Weber, Vice President of Education & Interpretation. Unlike other exhibitions, the *Frida* pieces needed to be clustered together. Staff agreed the space between the Brazilian and Caribbean gardens was best because the foundational plants were already in place and because Mexico falls between those two places on the map.

"It was a prime location in the heart of the Garden, but it wasn't previously open to visitors," Bell says.



Top: Horticulture Team members prep beds for new irrigation and plantings. **Bottom:** The facade and photo niches were eased into place with the help of forklift and crane. **Bottom center:** Bill Pattison, Special Projects Technician, drills the walls into the exhibition's slab foundation.



The exhibition site begins to take shape in December 2022 as the stepped pyramid is positioned into place, walls and niches assembled, and animal statues enlivened with a splash of fresh paint.



Site work began last summer. Plants that were important to the exhibition, such as guava, chocolate, and coffee, would remain in place. Many others needed to be relocated or removed. Beans and Stephen Jurek, Associate Director of Horticulture Maintenance, estimate that horticulturists cleared some 60 to 70 shrubs and moved 16 palm and hardwood trees. They dug a silk floss tree out of its place by the new Evenstad Horticulture Campus, where it interfered with construction, and replanted it in the exhibition area.

Staff added some 30 yards of fill dirt to add elevation and address drainage. They removed existing irrigation and added new lines. They installed electricity, poured concrete pads, and laid new pathways.

“(Horticulture) is involved in all the exhibits, but this is probably the most intense one,” Beans says. “The plants are as important as the actual exhibit itself. It’s *‘Frida and Her Garden.’* We’re in the name.”



Erin Wolfe Bell, Director of Exhibitions & Special Programs, and Kristen Kerwin, Exhibitions Coordinator





“(Horticulture) is involved in all the exhibits, but this is probably the most intense one. The plants are as important as the actual exhibit itself.”

– Elizabeth Beans, Associate Director of Horticulture

By fall 2022, dozens of plants accumulate in the nursery, prior to being potted or planted at the exhibition site.

SOURCING THE PLANTS

With that in mind, Liz Chehayl, the Brian Holley Curator of Collections, delved into research on Kahlo’s work and the plants she featured in it. Starting last fall, she and Director of Collections Nick Ewy scoured nurseries for plants that appear in her paintings, those that reflect Mexico’s culture and ecosystems, and other interesting finds that would create the tranquility and beauty Kahlo valued.



“I’m excited to get the cacti,” Ewy says. Among their finds were “tree yucca,” a towering succulent, and

Mexican fence post cacti, a species that Mexicans use to create living fences. “We’ll use those for *Frida* and then repurpose them in the Foster Succulent Garden or put them in pots and rotate them for display,” he says.

Chehayl and Ewy also looked for plants that help tell Kahlo’s story, such as “frogfruit,” a flowering groundcover chosen for Kahlo’s husband, muralist Diego Rivera. He nicknamed himself “the toad-frog.”

DISCOVERING THE ARTIST AND HER WORLD

Garden educators have researched and rolled out more than a dozen new experiences all themed around Mexico and Frida Kahlo.

They include tours highlighting Mexican plants, and Dig Deeper programs about Mexican foods, spices, and unique plants, such as cacti and succulents.

The Garden stays open late every Wednesday from February through May for Sunset Wednesdays. For an



Guests may create flower crowns reminiscent of Frida's during Sunset Wednesdays Special Programs on March 22, April 26, and March 24. See page 8 for more details.

additional fee, guests can partake in special group activities, such as making flower crowns reminiscent of Frida Kahlo's.

"I think the programming extends the experience of the exhibit beyond the exhibit," Patterson-Weber says. "You can continue exploring this theme in different ways while you are at the Garden."



In addition to these programs, you don't want to miss Frida After 5, first Fridays through May! More information on page 8 and at naplesgarden.org.

This bird's-eye view of the *Frida and Her Garden* site, taken while under construction, reveals the exhibition's breadth. Not shown here are the six monumental animal sculptures nestled throughout the Garden.



WHY FRIDA?

If you think it's unusual to spend this amount of time in exhibition planning (preliminary research started three years ago), you are right. But Frida Kahlo seems to cast a spell on her viewers, and we were determined to create something worthy of her legacy. (Discover more about the artist's biography on page 13.)

"I think it's just her striking sense of self," says Patterson-Weber. Kahlo dressed in traditional Mexican attire, even when traveling abroad, and even when photographed for *Vogue* in 1938.

Her self-portraits reflect both excruciating pain and defiant beauty.

"People who know about her and her life see her as a symbol of strength," Patterson-Weber says. The artist had suffered from polio as a child and was in a horrific crash as a young woman.

All the Garden's exhibitions connect to our mission, but Kahlo's ties are especially pronounced.

"I was interested in exploring her through the lens of plants," says Bell. "The Blue House and her personal garden, which is really what we're exploring, was her most rooted place throughout her whole life ... Through turmoil and trouble and tragedy, her

garden was her refuge, and we all can relate to that."

Kahlo's story invites people—even those who don't consider themselves outdoorsy—to explore the natural world.

"The visual arts can make an emotional connection for people that they may not have when looking at a plant in isolation," says Patterson-Weber. "Storytelling is where you make connections with people."

Jennifer Reed is the Garden's Editorial Director.

Birds of a Feather

The Garden serves as a winter haven
for bird and birder alike

By Ed Kemnitzer

*Photos by John Eder, Dick Murray,
and Jim White*

A buzz ripples through the Garden whenever roseate spoonbills arrive on the marsh. The brilliant pink adults, often mistaken for flamingos, are one of the many Florida “specialties” that frequent the Garden’s 90-acre Preserve. Their visits typically coincide with low water levels enabling their eponymous bills to swoosh through muck in search of crustaceans. Simultaneously, our brackish marsh hosts hundreds of egrets and herons enjoying a smorgasbord of fish in shallow pools. A dining out spectacle to rival Fifth Avenue South.

Birds, clockwise, from top:
roseate spoonbill, white ibis, Merlin.

If you have any interest in learning more about birding on a leisurely walk in the Preserve, please join Ed on **Tuesday mornings at 8am**. The more eyes, the better!



Every Tuesday, the birding group wends its way through the Garden to the James and Linda White Birding Tower.

This winter will mark 10 years of docent-led bird walks in the Garden. Every Tuesday, no matter the season, a cadre gathers in the parking lot at dawn to observe and document birds present on our grounds. It's a labor of love, and the excitement of finding the stealthy yellow-bellied sapsucker or the diminutive ruby-crowned kinglet is shared by novice and veteran birder alike. Both of these species join the billions of birds that migrate thousands of miles to suitable winter habitat. These journeys are perilous, and way stations in Florida are critical for many vireos and warblers who instinctually continue on to Middle and South America. Migratory birds have suffered inordinate losses over the past 50 years, according to 2019 findings published in the journal *Science*. Our Preserve and the green swath extending to Rookery Bay provide a modicum of relief for these intrepid travelers.

Winter also marks the welcome return of Members from summer sabbaticals. Tuesday bird walks have given me the distinct pleasure of reuniting with friends from northern states and Canada, not to mention overseas compatriots from the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. These very special, congenial birders have made birding in the Garden a fount of enjoyment and knowledge for all who participate. It has also been rewarding to watch newcomers to birding become mentors to this old timer and share insights on bird behavior. There is much discussion about optimum group size for birding, and in winter, unlike summer, we have pushed the boundaries considerably. Our solution has been to provide guidance and oversight for newcomers in small groups and wish “happy bunting” to the elusive painted bunting seekers. Needless

to say, we do find satisfaction in cobbling together a nice species list but, most importantly, we take pride in making all who participate comfortably engaged.

This past autumn, we waited on tenterhooks for the return of seasonal visitors—birds and humans. After a second great “I-pruning” in five years (Hurricane Irma in 2017, and later, Ian in 2022), how would non-jaded eyes view our grounds? Well, Florida is a jungle, and it has very rarely hurt to open up vistas for visitors. And the staff and volunteers with an “all-hands-on-deck” approach managed to muscle, muster, and mulch the Garden into pristine shape. And, from a bird’s-eye view, I’m sure the red-berried dahoon hollies, peeling gumbo limbos, newly-leafing red maples, and fruited cabbage palms will still issue their siren’s call for weary or wintering travelers.

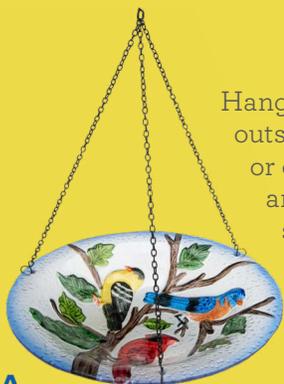
Ed Kemnitzer is a Garden volunteer and avid birder who has led more than 400 birding walks.

200+

Species of birds spotted in the Garden, to date



Read on for birding essentials available in the Jane & Chuck Berger Shop in the Garden, page 27.



A.

Hang a bird bath outside your lanai or on your patio, and watch as songbirds congregate for a sip and a dip.



B.

Give your bird-obsessed friend or family member a birdhouse for their favorite feathered friends to nest, along with charming bird ornaments to hang on a plant or wall.

In Formation

Find these birding essentials & items of whimsy in the Berger Shop

By Darby Kordonowy

Introduce young, curious birders to the pastime with educational books and binoculars to get out in the field and spot winged beauties.



C.



D.

Host a social gathering after a morning of birding, with bird-themed wine glasses, coffee mugs, and coasters.

- A. Hanging glass bird bath, \$48
- B. Bird house, \$45; Birds, \$12
- C. *Big Book of Birds* by Yuval Zommer, \$19.95; *Wild and Free Nature* by Ainsley Arment, \$22.99; *Mrs. Peanuckle's Bird Alphabet*, \$7.99; Binoculars, \$11
- D. Wine glasses, \$30 (each); Mug, \$15; Coasters, \$20

Southwest Florida is a sanctuary for birders. November through May is the best time of year to spot a variety of birds in our region, including crowd favorites, such as roseate spoonbills, anhingas, and blue herons.

Birding is a time to escape to a quiet place, whether it be the Garden, a nature preserve, state park, or even a body of water to observe birds by shoreline, kayak, or paddle board. Sometimes this escape is as close as our own backyards or patios. Birding is more than just a hobby—it's a state of being in the present to observe the beauty of wildlife that surrounds us.

The Berger Shop in the Garden offers birding mementos for all ages, perfect to give to your avian-admiring friend or family member or someone you'd like to introduce to the wonderful world of birding.

Darby Kordonowy is the Garden's Content Coordinator.

The Flavors of Mexico

By Darby Kordonowy



Embrace the vibrant culture and rich flavors of Mexico through Fogg Café's new menu. Café staff members crafted several of this season's dishes in a truly collaborative process.

Noemi Vazquez, who led the development of the salsa roja (red sauce) for the Café's tasty carnitas flautas (pork-filled tortillas), is from Guanajuato. This central Mexico city, tucked into the valley of the Sierra de Guanajuato Mountains, brings charm through its bright neoclassical buildings, cobbled streets, and *callejones* (narrow alleys). Guanajuato is also known for its rich cuisine—in particular, for its sauces, such as mole and salsa.

Vazquez's salsa roja contains a thick purée the color of chili powder, layered with a smoky taste. This easy-to-make sauce is a great component to add to your tacos, quesadillas, and of course, to pair with tortilla chips.

Salsa Roja

Ingredients

- ½ guajillo chile
- 6 large Roma tomatoes, diced
- 2 large yellow onions, diced
- 10 garlic cloves
- 1 teaspoon cumin seed
- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns
- ½ teaspoon whole cloves
- ¼ cup lime juice
- Salt to taste

Remove the seed and stem from the guajillo pepper. Toast in a sauté pan, and soak in hot water for 15 minutes.

Roast tomatoes, onion, and garlic in oven at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.

Toast spices in a sauté pan for one minute until fragrant.

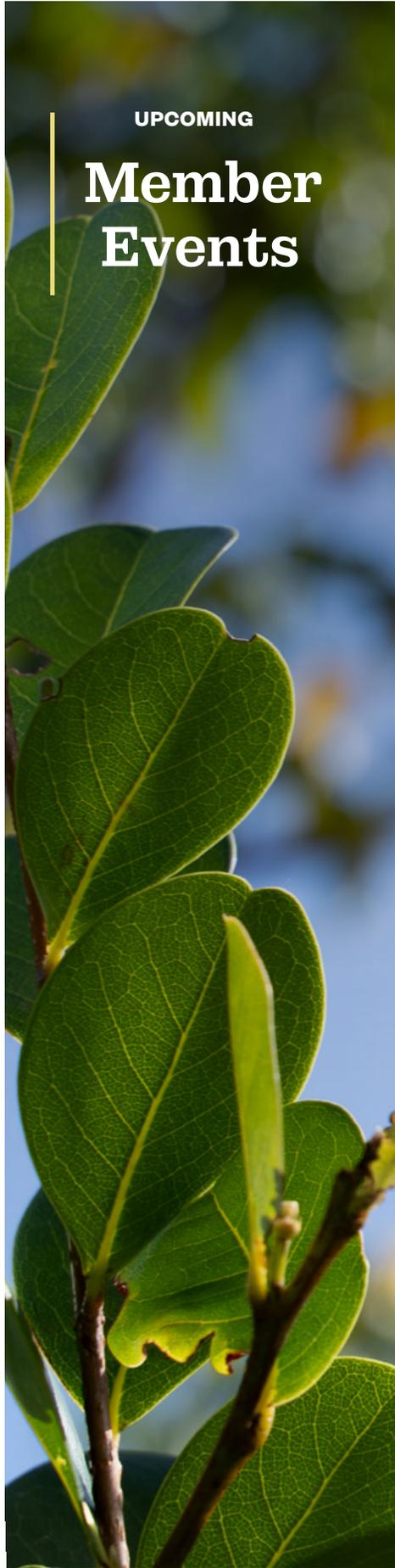
Strain the peppers, and reserve the liquid. Blend all ingredients using reserved liquid to create the right consistency. Salt to taste.



Savor this season's
Fogg Café menu!
Open daily 9am to 5pm.



Learn more on our blog about the
Fogg Café team's collaborative
approach to this season's menu.



UPCOMING

Member Events



There's so much to look forward to this season in *your Garden!*



Member Appreciation Day

April 1, 8am–5pm

Members impact our mission, and we want to say thank you for all that you do! Join us for a day to celebrate YOU—our Members—with special perks during Member Appreciation Day.

BRING-A-FRIEND

Have you been eagerly wanting to share Naples Botanical Garden with a friend? On Member Appreciation Day, you can share the Garden with a friend for free. Treat a friend to a day in the Garden, and open their eyes to the beautiful tropical plants and restored Florida landscape. One additional guest per membership, please. As a reminder, *Royal Palm Society* Members can always bring their guests free of charge.

DOUBLE THE DISCOUNT

Enjoy an additional 10% off in the Berger Shop in the Garden for a total of 20% off your purchase that day!

No registration is required. We look forward to seeing you. Thank you for all you do for the Garden!

MEMBERS ONLY! Sunset Saturday

March 4, 5–7pm

You asked for it, you got it—a Members-Only nighttime event! Enjoy an evening in the Garden with live music, fun for the whole family, and a beautiful Southwest Florida sunset. Bring your picnic, chairs, and blankets. Fogg Café will be open and serving a limited menu and alcoholic beverages for purchase. Guests beyond your membership level can be admitted at regular admission price.



**Registration is open.
Sign up now!**

Photo by Paul Osborn

Annual Members' Meeting

April 11, 5–7pm | Sustaining Leadership Council Event Plaza

Join the Naples Botanical Garden Board of Directors and President & CEO Donna McGinnis for the Annual Members' Meeting. The evening will highlight the Garden's latest accomplishments and give you a look ahead at exciting plans. Enjoy the company of fellow Garden lovers as you mix and mingle with friends and see what you make possible for the Garden.

A reception will precede the program with complimentary light bites and soft drinks. Wine and beer available for purchase.

Royal Palm Society Members are invited to drop by our VIP reception area for light bites and complimentary beer and wine.

This event is free for Members. Members are encouraged to bring a prospective Member. Stay tuned for your exclusive Members-Only invitation.



Digital Membership Cards

Thank you to our Members for helping the Garden to reduce its dependence on single-use plastics through your use of the digital membership card! For new Members, your digital membership card is available to download within 48 hours of purchase. Existing Members may download their digital membership card via a customized link in the monthly Member email, or by emailing membership@naplesgarden.org.

Give Them the Gift of the Garden this Mother's and Father's Day

Surprise that special person in your life with the beauty of the tropics all year long.

New! Personalize your purchase with a Gift of Membership certificate. Available Monday–Friday, 8am–5pm, at the Chabraja Visitor Center.

Can't make it to the Garden in person?

Simply email us at membership@naplesgarden.org.

Garden Circle Insider Experiences



Explore the Garden on one of our curated, unique tour experiences with staff experts. Tours are offered in February and March to active Members at the *Contributing*, *Sustaining*, and *Garden Fellows* levels of the Garden Circle. Space is limited for these exclusive Member opportunities!



The Botany of Brewing: Mezcal & Tequila

March 22, 5:30–7pm | Fogg Café Patio

Tequila is more than just the kick in a cocktail or something to be tossed back and chased with a citrus wedge. Made from agave, tequila and mezcal are both spirits rising in popularity across the United States. Join us to explore the history, production, and taste of mezcal and tequila, and then enjoy a signature cocktail at sunset!

For information on upgrading your membership to the Garden Circle, please contact Erin White, Membership Manager, at ewhite@naplesgarden.org or 239.325.1916.





Photo by John Eder

Bob and Karen Scott at the *Frida and Her Garden* Premiere on January 12

An “Extension of Home”

Through their service and support, Karen and Bob Scott have helped grow a botanical wonderland for the community to cherish

There’s a family portrait in Karen and Bob Scott’s home office. Mid conversation one morning, the two glance at it. Some two dozen faces beam back at them. Taken in 2015, the family is set against the backdrop of a former Garden exhibition; the visit is a treasured memory to this day.

“The Garden is an extension of our home,” says Bob. “Whenever the family comes to visit us, they always want to get a chance to go to the Garden. It’s really special, and it’s part of the way we share our experiences here in Naples with our family.”

Children, grandchildren, sisters, brothers, nieces and nephews, they’ve all been introduced to these 170 acres.

“They see how much I love it,” Karen says, “and they learn to appreciate nature.”

The couple’s relationship with the Garden dates back 20 years. At the invitation of a friend, Karen attended the first *Hats in the Garden* in 2004, five years before the Garden would open to the public. She was immediately drawn to the cause, joined the committee that steered the fundraiser, and later, would chair the event. Her passion and leadership led to a 12-year appointment to the Garden’s Board of Directors.

“We did everything ourselves,” Karen recalls of those early *Hats in the Garden* soirées. Organizers spent hours stuffing envelopes and hot gluing decorations, taking the pressure off a tiny founding staff that was focused on planning and planting.

As Karen worked to support the fledgling institution’s growth, Bob, an avid fisherman, rallied behind its environmental focus. Protecting the region’s natural resources is a priority for the couple, who also support the Everglades Foundation and the Conservancy of Southwest Florida.

“The mission of the Garden was to preserve a landscape and introduce the concept of gardens from tropical parts of the world to visitors to Naples,” says Bob. “It was an opportunity to build something that would really endure and become an asset for the community.”

They took their involvement one step further, offering the naming gift for the Scott Florida Garden, a tropical paradise that embodies the natural beauty the couple cherish. The Scotts’ home in Vermont flourishes with flower beds and a sizable vegetable garden; in Florida, they love to grow orchids—a plant family that would be well represented in the garden that bears their name.

But the financial crisis of 2008 delayed the Scott Florida Garden—and other portions of the property—from opening on schedule. Concerned about the economic fallout’s impact and hoping to avoid further impediments, the women on the *Hats in the Garden* planning committee strategized a way to keep construction on track. They sought support from more than two dozen women, giving those donors membership in the newly created Inaugural Leadership Council.

“That was out of critical need,” Karen recalls. “We raised this money, and then the next year, we did it

again. And then the next year, and the next year, and it evolved into this wonderful group of women, known as the Sustaining Leadership Council, or SLC. We are 47 members strong.”

Today, Karen serves on the Executive Committee of that same group. These women contribute a significant portion of the Garden’s operating budget. Bob considers the group a sort of “phantom endowment,” working behind the scenes to ensure the organization’s viability.

“If you look at it almost 14 years later, most other not-for-profits would kill to have a similar organization within their framework that they could rely on for the financial commitment that the SLC members make,” he says.

“Whenever the family comes to visit us, they always want to get a chance to go to the Garden. It’s really special, and it’s part of the way we share our experiences here in Naples with our family.”

–Bob Scott

“It is so wonderful to see what the Garden has become to the community,” Karen says. “The Garden is a place to be enjoyed alone or with family and friends; it brings people together. We are lucky that there are so many generous people in our community who believe in the mission and want to support the Garden.”

The focus of the Garden’s work resonates with the couple to this day.

“There is this scientific mission that the Garden is engaged with, in conserving species of plants. The Horticulture Campus is a big part of that,” says Bob, referring to the anticipated completion of the Evenstad Horticulture Campus in late 2023.

“While a lot has been accomplished, there is still a lot to do,” he says. “We want to continue to be involved.”

Consider the Impact of a *Royal Palm Society* Membership

Your gifts of \$1,500 or more as Royal Palm Society members aid in the Garden’s conservation, horticulture, and education initiatives.

When you make a gift to the Garden at this level, you increase our ability to guide our community in creating storm-resistant, drought-tolerant landscapes and to collaborate with partners throughout the Caribbean. These and related efforts help threatened plants thrive in the Garden and strengthen vital connections between plants and people.

To learn more about becoming a *Royal Palm Society* Member, and the exclusive events and behind-the-scenes educational opportunities that await, please visit naplesgarden.org/membership, or email development@naplesgarden.org.

ROYAL PALM SOCIETY
Naples Botanical Garden

Grow the Garden’s Future Through the Perennial Legacy Society

Including the Garden in your estate plans is a vital step to connect people with the plant world, both now and for generations to come. 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.

To inform us of your future gift intention and become a part of the Perennial Legacy Society, contact Rhea Merrill, Director of Development, at 239.571.3806 or rmerrill@naplesgarden.org.



Hats in the Garden Paris in the Springtime

PRESENTED BY WILLIAM RAVEIS REAL ESTATE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 2023

HATS IN THE GARDEN CHAIR | SHELLY STAYER

Hats in the Garden will celebrate 19 years of millinery, fashion, and the beauty of Naples Botanical Garden! Guests will enjoy a champagne celebration, extraordinary luncheon, and one-of-a-kind runway show featuring Oscar de la Renta. All proceeds will support Naples Botanical Garden.

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For information on remaining Table and Patron Tickets,
email hats@naplesgarden.org, or call 239.315.7212.



Lalo Hernandez and Noemi Vazquez

“Here, in this kitchen, everyone has a say ... It’s not just one person; it’s a group activity.”

—Lalo Hernandez, Sous-Chef, on the team approach to creating this season’s flavor-packed menu

Discover the process at our blog:





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