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## MARCH HAPPENINGS

### National Women's History Month

#### March 3rd-5th

Key West Orchid Fair  
West Martello Tower  
Exhibits, Vendors, Raffles,  
Demonstrations & Presentations



**March 12th**  
Plant a Flower Day!



#### March 11th-12th

Original Marathon  
Seafood Festival  
Marathon Community Park  
MM49 Oceanside

#### March 12th-18th

Termite Awareness Week



#### March 25th

Raise the Reef: Coral Restoration  
Foundation Annual Gala



## The History Behind Termite Awareness Week

By Brynn Morey,  
Extension Coordinator

Did you know that national termite awareness week takes place every year during the first week of spring? Termite destruction is what homeowners worst nightmares are made of and people living in the Florida Keys are very familiar with the type of damage these insects cause. Termite Awareness Week was created to provide more information on these insects and prevent homeowners for having to spend lots of money in the future.

Termites have inhabited the Earth for more than 100 million years. These tiny creatures walked the Earth with dinosaurs. They also share a common ancestry with cockroaches, a creature well-known for its incredible resiliency. Many think it's part of the reason why controlling termite infestation can be such a challenge. Evolution over millions of years has ensured their survival against all odds.

Termites are sneaky little things that reproduce rapidly — quietly making their way through moist soil or mulch. Some termites can fly, while others live in wood and soil. They even have a taste for things other than wood. Termites are known to chew through fabric, plastic, and wallpaper too. Termites are silent destroyers

## Plant Clinics

Every Saturday

### Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Grimal Grove

258 Cunningham Lane  
Big Pine Key

Wednesday, March 1st

### Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Murray Nelson Govt.  
Center

102050 O/S Hwy. #244  
Key Largo

Thursday, March 2nd

### Plant Clinic

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Key West Garden Club  
1100 Atlantic Blvd.  
Key West

Saturday, March 18th

### Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to Noon

Marathon Home Depot  
4555 O/S Hwy,  
Marathon

Saturday, March 18th

### Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to Noon

KW Botanical Garden Nursery  
5210 College Rd.  
Stock Island

Tuesday, March 21st

### Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to Noon

Garden Club of Upper Keys  
94040 O/S Hwy.  
Tavernier

Thursday, March 23rd

### Plant Clinic

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Island Home Nursery  
88720 O/S Hwy,  
Islamorada

# Sea Grant News



Shelly Krueger  
UF/IFAS Florida Sea Grant Agent

Shelly recently accomplished the following activities:

- Shelly was invited to the Marathon Library speaker series "Coffee and Cookies" and taught 35 attendees about sponge restoration in the Florida Keys.
- Shelly spoke on US1 radio 104.1 Morning Magazine about hogfish.
- Shelly taught 80 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Poinciana and Gerald Adams about our local agriculture: seafood! The students learned about our dominant commercial landings for stone crab, spiny lobster, king mackerel, greater amberjack, and yellowtail snapper. Many tried fish dip for the first time and we ended with a fish identification game – our local kids really know their fish species!
- Shelly was asked to attend the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (virtually) to be available to answer questions regarding the Restoration Blueprint. The Coral Advisory Panel provided recommendations to the Gulf Council about the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary boundary expansions around Pulley Ridge, Dry Tortugas, and the overall perimeter expansion.



The Environmental Horticulture Program and Master Gardener Volunteers remain dedicated to helping you with your plant related questions.

**CALL OUR OFFICE:**  
(305)292-4501

*We have many different ways we can assist!*

**EMAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO:**  
mastergardener@monroecounty-fl.gov

Please include a detailed description of the problem and photos if available

**VISIT OUR OFFICE:**

Email [Monroe@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:Monroe@ifas.ufl.edu) or  
Call (305)292-4501 to schedule an appointment

**FACEBOOK PAGE:**

Visit our Facebook page for updates, requests, information and so much more!

<https://www.facebook.com/MonroeCountyExtension>



## Horticulture News

**UF** IFAS Extension  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

### SOIL TESTING MADE EASY

Finally! Results you can understand!

University of Florida, IFAS, Turfgrass Science soil test results are now available using the enhanced features of SoilKit's user-friendly technology.

#### This test includes:

- Soil sample bag
- Collection and registration instructions
- Customer care card
- Online registration
- QR scanning
- Address geolocation
- Satellite-guided square footage calculator
- Pre-addressed, postage-paid mailer
- Pre-paid lab processing fee
- Email report notification
- Online dashboard access
- Digital report with lab results
- Customized product recommendations
- Using the Mehlich III extraction method, SoilKit tests for: pH, Buffer pH, Phosphorus, Potassium, Magnesium, Calcium, Manganese, Iron, Copper, Boron, CEC, base saturation and organic matter.



POWERED BY  
**SOILKIT**

Scan code for more information or purchase online at [soilkit.com/florida](http://soilkit.com/florida)

Call Monroe County Extension to pick up your soil testing kit today!

(305)292-4501

Contact Christina McInnis  
[info@soilkit.com](mailto:info@soilkit.com) or 251.923.6345

Be sure to "Like" us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)!

## Extension Director's News

Alicia Betancourt  
UF/IFAS Family and Community Development Agent and  
Monroe County Extension Director

Alicia recently accomplished the following activities:

- Alicia was invited to teach six K-4<sup>th</sup> grade classes how to grow microgreens. Students tried a variety of microgreens to decide which they preferred to grow and eat. Each student was able to plant their own microgreens and watch them grow. The older classes also learned nutrition and graphing plant growth.



- Alicia serves on the Southeast Florida Climate Compact Greenhouse Gas Technical Committee. This committee is working on an update to the Regional GHG inventory. Broward, Miami Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties collaborate on strategies to reduce the region's emissions, including the development of an emissions baseline for Southeast Florida. A regional greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) inventory is integral to developing informed climate change mitigation strategies and monitoring the region's progress over time. The Compact's regional greenhouse gas inventory provides a summary of overall emissions trends from across the four counties. The inventory was conducted as a retrospective of 10 years of community-wide emissions, from 2005 to 2015. The inventory scope was discussed and will be expanded to include solid waste and transportation for the years 2018-2022.



- Alicia co-taught graduate students in a UF, International Extension class. She shared the Climate Smart Floridians program and other Extension efforts in Florida. The class discussed how training the trainer in Extension programming expands the reach of Extension.



- Alicia continues to work with Solar United Neighbors of Florida and has helped to launch the Florida Keys 2023 Solar Coop. Find out more at [SolarUnitedNeighbors.org/Keys](https://SolarUnitedNeighbors.org/Keys)

Continued from page 1

since they nest out of sight. Many people do not realize the extent of their infestation until they start on a house renovation. But by then, the damage is usually irreparable. Each year, termites cause over \$5 billion in property damage in the U.S. To offer a better perspective, termites cause more damage than tornadoes or fires combined.

In 2011, the National Pest Management Associate (N.P.M.A.) started Termite Awareness Week to generate more awareness about the issue. The week encourages homeowners and others to inspect their properties for termite infestations and prevent irreversible damages. Termite Awareness Week takes place the first week of Spring because it is the peak of the termite swarming season. Keep in mind though, termite control is an all-year endeavor. Take care to check decaying wood or plants around your house. Some giveaways that indicate termite presence are narrow mud tubes or spongy wood, presence of wings and granule piles that resemble dirt piles. If you see any of these signs, it is always a good idea to have a certified inspector come to check your home.

### How to observe Termite Awareness Week:

- Check for signs of termites: holes in woodwork, sawdust, or termite wings and droppings on furniture. Holes in furniture that give way easily are a sure sign of termites.
- Place furniture out in the sun for three days continuously. Termites can't thrive in warm conditions. Sunlight also gets rid of excess moisture in wooden furniture.
- It's a good week to bring in the pros for pest control around the property. Since most of us are Spring cleaning around this time anyway, the timing couldn't be more perfect.

### Why Termite Awareness Week is Important:

- This week reminds us to pay extra attention to our homes. Spaces that people build so lovingly should stay in good shape for as long as they can.
- A little vigilance today can go a long way. Checking regularly for termites can save thousands in property damage.

Reference: [nationalday.com/termite-awareness-week/](https://nationalday.com/termite-awareness-week/)

Be sure to "Like" us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)!

**UF/IFAS/MONROE COUNTY EXTENSION**

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County Extension Director: Alicia Betancourt

Newsletter Editor: Brynn Morey, Extension Coordinator

This newsletter can be accessed online at:

<http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu/newsletter.shtml>

We're on the Web at: <http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu>



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Scan this code to go directly to our UF/IFAS Website for more information!



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<https://ics.ifas.ufl.edu/ufifas-diversity-and-legaleeo-statements/>

**UF/IFAS/MCES QUARTERLY CONTACTS**

	Dec	Jan	Feb	Totals
Phone calls	25	20	27	72
Office visitors	5	3	4	12
Email Consultations	36	51	52	139
Learning events	13	17	18	48
Participants	286	332	328	946
Media submissions	2	6	3	11
Publications distributed	165	161	181	507
<b>TOTAL contacts</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>1,735</b>

## March 12th - 18th Termite Awareness Week

Below are some interesting facts  
about termites:

### 21 Different Species in FL!

Florida has the highest diversity of termites in the United States.

### 30 000 Eggs per day!

Termite queens can live up to 20 years producing new termites, laying up to 30, 000 eggs per day.

### Ecosystem Engineers

Termites are considered ecosystem engineers for their recycling capabilities, and termite mounds that extend deep underground and alter soil properties and water availability

## Microgreens

- Microgreens are young greens that are harvested around 1-2 weeks, just after sprouting. There are over 25 different types of microgreens.
- Microgreens contain 40x more nutrients than their fully-grown counterparts.



- Microgreens are a great source of vitamins A, C, E, and K.
- Store microgreens in the fridge and wash in cold water.
- Microgreens are an easy way to increase your nutrient intake.