

Educating with Extension



By Liz Yongue, Extension Coordinator, and in collaboration with Alicia Betancourt, Shelly Krueger, and Michelle Leonard-Mularz

Volume 18 Issue 10

University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), Monroe County

October 2019

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SAVE-THE-DATE

Free Movie at the Gato

"Changing Seas"

Friday, October 18th
12:00 PM to 1:00 PM
Gato Building
1100 Simonton Street
Key West

Florida Friendly Landscaping Training

Wednesday, November 6th
1:00 PM to 3:30 PM
Marathon Garden Club
5270 Overseas Highway
MM 50, Bayside
Marathon

**Please Register at
(305) 292-4501**

Marathon Garden Club Holiday Bazaar

Saturday, November 30th
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Garden Clubhouse
5270 Overseas Highway
MM 50, Bayside
Marathon

For the Birds!

By Michelle Leonard-Mularz, Environmental Horticulture Agent

Here in the beautiful Florida Keys, we have no shortage of tidal shoreline and coastal landscapes, in addition to some unique natural habitats. This provides a fantastic opportunity to observe many of nature's beautiful creatures. Especially this time of year, when many migrating birds seek to rest and refuel in our National Wildlife Refuges, parks, open spaces, and gardens, as a last stop before continuing southward. However, in order to attract these winter visitors and pollinators to our landscapes, there are certain elements we need to provide them.

Food, water, and shelter. The more diversity of plants in your landscape that provide seeds, berries and fruits throughout the seasons, the more species of birds and pollinators you will be able to attract. Native plants are an excellent option when considering expanding your plant pallet since they typically require a lower level of maintenance once they are established and are better adapted to our soil and climatic conditions. Some fantastic plants to consider would be, American Beautyberry, Wild Sage, Christmasberry, Florida Privet, Jamaica Caper, Marlberry, and Florida Keys Blackbead. Adding birdfeeders, in addition to increased plant diversity, can be another way to lure more of a variety of birds to your property. However, it is important to keep birdfeeders clean and free from disease by washing them at least twice a month with chlorine and water. Due to their porous nature, wood and/or cement feeders and baths should be washed with warm water only.

Water is an essential element to any wildlife habitat and can be as elaborate as a beautifully ...Continued on page 3

Monthly Events

Wednesday, October 2nd
Plant Clinic
9 a.m. to Noon
Suite 244 (2nd Floor)
102050 Overseas Hwy,
Key Largo

Monday, October 7th
Plant Clinic
9 a.m. to Noon
Suite 2-260
1100 Simonton Street,
Key West

Wednesday, October 16th
Plant Clinic
9 a.m. to Noon
Suite 244 (2nd Floor)
102050 Overseas Hwy,
Key Largo

Saturday, October 19th
Plant Clinic
9 a.m. to Noon
Marathon Home Depot
Garden Center

Monday, October 21st
Plant Clinic
9 a.m. to Noon
Suite 2-260
1100 Simonton Street,
Key West

Tuesday, October 22nd
**Climate Change
Advisory Committee
Meeting**
12:30 - 4:00 p.m.
Marathon Gov. Center
2798 Overseas Highway,
Marathon

Thursday, October 24th
Plant Clinic
9 a.m. to Noon
Island Home Nursery
88720 Overseas Hwy
Tavernier

Sea Grant News

Shelly Krueger
UF/IFAS Florida Sea Grant Agent

Shelly recently accomplished the following activities:

- Shelly is a member of the Coral Advisory Panel and was invited to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council joint meeting with the Shrimp AP/Coral AP/Coral Science and Statistical Committee meeting in Tampa, FL, and had Rob Ruzicka present on stony coral tissue loss disease.
- Shelly was invited to review three UF/IFAS EDIS (electronic data information system) documents regarding ocean acidification.



FLORIDA FRIENDLY FISHING GUIDE

Are you interested in becoming a Florida Friendly Fishing Guide? Check out [THIS VIDEO](#) to see what it's all about!

- Shelly is appointed to the College of the Florida Keys Marine Resources Management committee and worked to finalize course requirements for the new Bachelors of Science degree to the Board of Regents.
- Shelly and Savanna Barry co-lead the Florida Sea Grant Estuarine and Coastal Health Initiative Work Action Group at the annual Florida Sea Grant meeting in Cocoa Beach.



Plant Clinics

The Monroe County Master Gardener Volunteers will help you with plant problems or insect identification at the following locations throughout the Fall and Winter:

KEY WEST
Gato Building
Extension Office
1100 Simonton Street, #2-260
9:00 a.m. to 12 noon

October 7th and 21st
November 4th and 18th
December 2nd and 16th

MARATHON
Marathon Home Depot
4555 Overseas Highway
(at the Garden Center)
9:00 a.m. to 12 noon

October 19th
November 16th
December 21st

ISLAMORADA
Island Home Nursery
88720 Overseas Highway
(Mile Marker 88)
9:00 a.m. to 12 noon

October 24th
November 21st
December 26th

KEY LARGO
Murray E. Nelson Government
& Cultural Center
102050 Overseas Hwy., #244
9:00 a.m. to 12 noon

October 2nd and 16th
November 6th and 20th
December 4th and 18th

Horticulture News

Michelle Leonard-Mularz
UF/IFAS Environmental Horticulture Agent

Michelle recently accomplished the following activities:

- Out of 17 applicants, Monroe County Extension Service was one of the five winners of the Florida Wildflower Grant. The wildflower garden will be planted at the Gato building, in Key West. Special thanks to Master Gardener volunteer, Diane Covan, for preparing the application and gathering community support for the project.

- Michelle and Master Gardener Volunteer, Susie Reutling were invited to be participants on the City of Key West Beautification Committee.



(above) American Beautyberry, *Callicapra Americana*



Wednesday, November 6th
1:00 PM to 3:30 PM
Marathon Garden Club
5270 Overseas Highway
MM 50, Bayside, Marathon
Please register at (305) 292-4501

Learn more about the Florida Friendly Landscaping Program at their website:
<https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/>

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 presented the program "Tools for Building and Managing Partnerships" for 46 participants at the annual Extension Professional Conference. This program was developed to be part of continuing education for Extension staff.
- Alicia worked with the Climate Change Advisory Committee to present their 82 recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.
- Alicia met with the Sea Grant/Extension Climate Work Action Group to formulate development of work products for 2020 including a Climate Change 2.0 targeting small local governments.
- Alicia presented "Community Development in Extension" at the National Network for Sustainable Living Education meeting.
- Alicia received an Epsilon Sigma Phi "Distinguished Team" award for her work with CIVIC, Community Voices Informed Choices, program. This program is designed to help citizens engagement in complex community issues such as a climate change, affordable housing and poverty.



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constructed pond, or as simple as a bird bath. It is important to keep the water clean and be mindful of possible breeding opportunities for mosquitos. Change the water frequently in a bird bath and to control mosquitos in ponds, contact the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District for Gambusia fish.

Also, enhance vertical layering to increase shelter and nesting opportunities. This can be achieved by including a variety of sizes of plants and trees from upper-story canopy trees such as Wild Tamarind, Paradise Tree, Jamaica Dogwood, and Gumbo Limbo;



(above) White-crowned Pigeon, Courtesy R. Bowers for Audubon Society. The White-crowned Pigeon is one of the Keys' year-round residents.

mid-canopy trees including our native Stoppers, Pigeon Plum, Fiddlewood, Lignum Vitae; on down to the shrub and ground-cover layers. Provide snags and bird-houses for 'cavity-nesting' bird species. Snags are dead trees that birds will utilize for nests. You can have the tree pruned back to a safe height by an arborist.

Limit the amount of lawn. In general, lawns offer very little food and/or habitat for birds and pollinators. Increase the landscaped beds in your yard, try alternative ground covers such as Creeping Charlie, Pencilflower, Beach Creeper, and Beach Sunflower. Or simply reduce mowing frequency to allow the grass to seed.

Remove Invasive Plants. Invasive plants can aggressively take over a landscape and expand to natural areas, reducing and/or eliminating native ecosystems. In fact, more wildlife habitat loss is due to invasive plant expansion than development. Consider removing plants such as Brazilian Pepper (formerly called Florida Holly), Beach Naupaka, Snake Plant, and Lead Tree.

Reduce pesticide use. In addition to fruits and berries, many birds diet consists of insects, especially for feeding their young. Most pesticides when used, kill a broad range of insects. So in addition to harming beneficial insects, it also eliminates a food source for our feathered friends. Try to establish a reasonable threshold of insect presence and/or feeding activity you are willing to accommodate. Instead of reaching for pesticides, try

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UF IFAS Extension

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UF/IFAS/MONROE COUNTY EXTENSION

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County Extension Director: Alicia Betancourt
Newsletter Editor: Liz Yongue, 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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<http://ufl.edu>
Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS)
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>

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directly to our
UF/IFAS Website for
more information!

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pruning off plant limbs with excessive pest presence or spot treat with products that have low toxicity to beneficial insects and the environment, such as horticultural oil, insecticidal soap, neem oil, spinosad, or Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*).

By providing these elements and attracting wildlife, you are connecting your landscape to larger areas of wildlife conservation and habitat and the reward will be observing some of Mother Nature's greatest gifts.

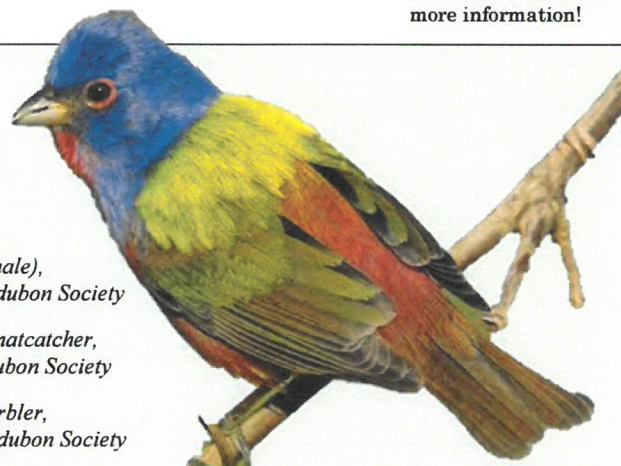
To learn more, contact the Monroe County Extension Service at monroe@ifas.ufl.edu!

An Equal Opportunity Institution. UF/IFAS Extension, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Nick T. Place, dean for UF/IFAS Extension. Single copies of UF/IFAS Extension publications (excluding 4-H and youth publications) are available free to Florida residents from county UF/IFAS Extension offices.

(right) Painted Bunting (male),
courtesy Brian Small, Audubon Society

(left, above) Blue-gray Gnatcatcher,
courtesy Bob Steele, Audubon Society

(on the cover) Yellow Warbler,
courtesy Greg Lasley, Audubon Society



UF/IFAS/MCES QUARTERLY CONTACTS

	July	Aug	Sept	Totals
Phone calls	43	44	46	133
Office visitors	10	9	7	26
Visits to clients	11	14	15	40
Learning events	24	30	25	79
Participants	269	343	332	944
Media submissions	5	10	8	23
Publications distributed	167	103	162	432
TOTAL contacts	529	553	595	1,677