



Educating with Extension

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Florida Keys State Parks

A warm winter's day is the perfect time to visit and get familiar with some of the unique state parks of the Florida Keys. Certain places have features you won't find in any other park in the USA. Below are brief descriptions of some of the Keys' state parks and information retrieved from www.FloridaStateParks.org.

John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park is located at MM 102.5 in Key Largo. It was the first underwater park in the U.S., and encompasses approximately 70 nautical square miles of coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangrove swamps. Recreation is year round for visitors to enjoy hiking, picnicking, swimming, diving, fishing, snorkeling, canoeing, kayaking, and glass bottom boat tours. The Visitor Center has a 30,000-gallon saltwater aquarium and theater showing nature videos. (305) 451-1202

Indian Key Historic State Park is on the oceanside of U.S. 1 at MM 78.5 in Islamorada. In 1836, Indian Key became the first county seat for Dade County. At that time, this tiny island was the site of a lucrative business: salvaging cargo from shipwrecks in the Florida Keys. Accessible only by canoe, kayak, private boat or charter boat, visitors come here to hike, fish, swim, sunbathe, snorkel, and scuba. Boat and kayak rentals are available from Robbie's Marina. (305) 664-2540

Curry Hammock State Park is located at MM 56.2, with the entrance on the oceanside of U.S. 1. This park is made up of a group of islands in the Middle Keys, with public access to swimming, picnic tables, grills, a playground, and showers. The hardwood hammocks support one of the largest populations of thatch palms in the U.S. Mangrove swamps, seagrass beds, and wetlands provide vital habitats for tropical wildlife. (305) 289-2690

Bahia Honda State Park, located at 36850 Overseas Highway, MM 37, has white sandy beaches, birding, boating, kayaking, camping, fishing, hiking, biking, snorkeling, and swimming. There are guided walks and nature talks by rangers and a nature center where you can view an extensive sampling of local sea life, unique plants, and animals. (305) 872-2353

Fort Zachary Taylor Historic State Park is in Key West, at the end of Southard Street in Truman Annex. "Fort Zach" is Florida's southernmost state park which features a fort that was built in 1866, a beautiful beach, picnicking, swimming, snorkeling, and fishing. Visitors can also enjoy a short nature trail and bicycling within the park. A refreshment stand offers snacks, beverages, beach sundries, and souvenirs. (305) 292-6713



Regional Plant Clinics

Kim and the Monroe County Master Gardeners are available to help you with your plant and/or insect problems. Bring a sample to any of the following free Plant Clinics:

Key West: Extension Office, Suite 2-260, 2nd Floor, Gato Building, 1100 Simonton Street, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.:

February 7 & 28
March 7 & 21
April 4 & 18

Big Pine Key: Big Pine Academy, 30220 Overseas Highway (turn at entrance to Flea Market), 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon:

February 19
March 19
April 16

Marathon: Marathon Garden Club, 5270 Overseas Highway, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon:

February 19
March 19
April 16

Key Largo: Extension Office, Suite 244, 2nd Floor, Murray E. Nelson Government & Cultural Center, 102050 Overseas Highway, MM 102, Bayside, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon:

February 2 & 16
March 2 & 16
April 6 & 20

Monthly Gardening Guides

For monthly gardening information, check out the Florida Gardening Calendar for the South Florida region to get specific tips on what to plant in your garden, how to maintain it, and links to useful gardening websites, all based on University of Florida research and expertise.

Log onto our website calendar at <http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar.shtm1>.



Recycling Roundups

If you've been saving old electronics gear (e-waste) and hazardous household materials (HHW) for the bi-annual Monroe County community "green ups," now is your chance to "clean house!"

Two Saturday collection events will be offered from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the following locations:

- ◆ **February 5** - Cudjoe Key Transfer Station, Blimp Road, MM 21.5, Overseas Highway, Bayside
- ◆ **February 12** - Key Largo Recycling Center, 300 Magnolia Street, MM 100.3

These events are free for local residents, so bring ID. Business waste will not be accepted at these events; however it is accepted for a fee during the regular collection times listed in Monroe County's online brochure at <http://fl-monroecounty.civicplus.com/DocumentView.aspx?DID=474>.

E-waste includes computers, printer/copy/fax machines, games, TVs, DVD/VCR players, cellular / land phones, microwaves, speakers, radios, and numerous other electronic devices.

Acceptable HHW includes paints, stains, preservatives, resins, solvents, cleaning, automotive and gardening products, adhesives, corrosives/acids, fluorescent/CFL bulbs and batteries (household A, C, and D batteries can now be safely disposed of with other trash).

Please limit amounts to 25 gallons of liquids or 200 pounds of dry materials. **Gasoline and propane tanks will not be accepted at these special events.**

Please call Colleen Murphy at 305-289-6037 for additional information and further details.



Media Recap

Doug Gregory spoke on US 1 Radio's "Morning Magazine" about February public hearings in Key Largo on proposed fisheries quotas, closures, and other regulations.

Kim Gabel spoke on US 1 Radio's "Morning Magazine" about Saturday Plant Clinics in Big Pine and Marathon, and the Integrated Pest Management Update video conference she hosted on January 25.

Alicia Betancourt spoke on US 1 Radio's "Morning Magazine" twice, once about new tax information for filing 2010 tax forms, and again about the ten most costly money mistakes people make. On WGMX's "Morning Mix" she talked about the new tax info.

New Website for Palm Problem Diagnosis

A Resource for Pests and Diseases of Cultivated Palms: Symptoms of Diseases and Disorders, was created by UF/IFAS palm faculty and USDA-APHIS-PPQ-CPHST. The website is actually a group of tools to help with the identification of diseases, insects and other pests, and disorder of palms. Additional tools within this resource are currently being developed, including palm species identification and individual screening tools for mites, beetles, and scale insects. You can find it online at <http://itp.lucidcentral.org/id/palms/resource>.

Symptoms of Diseases and Disorders features illustrated fact sheets with descriptions of each disease and disorder. It can be accessed at <http://itp.lucidcentral.org/id/palms/symptoms>.

Screening Aid to Pests is a basic identification tool for arthropod pests of palms and can be accessed at <http://itp.lucidcentral.org/id/palms/sap>.

Adult Flatid Planthopper

Photo © Mike Deep 2008





**Family, Youth,
and Community
Sciences News**
Alicia Betancourt

Alicia worked with two High School Financial Literacy classes and five teachers to compile completed lessons for mid-term grading.

She collaborated with County staff and administration on the development of a new position to manage the Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant (EECBG) including the job description and position announcement, and worked with staff to report grant progress and amend the grant contract as necessary.

Alicia also worked with County staff as part of the management team for the EECBG grant to provide assistance in the coordination of grant activities and reporting. She compiled the EECBG grant reports for two tasks including the education and conservation strategy, and coordinated the education component of the education grant activity with other agencies.

Alicia was selected to present her efforts in greenhouse gas and energy-related programs at the Public Issues Leadership Development Conference in Alexandria, VA in April, which is a national conference of Extension specialists, agents, and professional association leadership that explores new program opportunities for Extension program development.

She worked with the South Florida Water Management District to develop support for the E.P.A. Water Sense Program, which encourages conservation and efficiency for water resources.

Alicia attended an International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) member strategy meeting to plan for 2011 development including what support may be

needed from ICLEI and through member benefits.



**Marine &
Green News**
Doug Gregory

The Monroe County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved the resolution to establish a Climate Change Advisory Committee that will meet quarterly to assist the County in completing its Climate Action Plan and in conducting outreach for the Energy Efficiency grant. Members will be appointed by the BOCC in February.

The BOCC approved amendments to the Florida Department of Transportation and Organized Fishermen of Florida's Memorandum of Understanding regarding management of the roadside trap storage areas along US 1.

Doug attended a four-day meeting of the Gulf Fishery Council Scientific and Statistical Committee in Tampa to review the spiny lobster and goliath grouper stock assessment reports, revisit gag and red grouper rebuilding schedules, and continue development of potential quotas for various data-poor fisheries within the Gulf of Mexico.

He was a speaker at the two-day Sea Grant Fisheries In-Service Training in Tampa.

The [6th Annual Florida Keys Seafood Festival](#) was a stunning success with more participation from groups, agencies, tourists, and locals than any of the previous five years. The Monroe County Solid Waste Department, along with Waste Management and the City of Key West Public Works has been instrumental in developing the festival's recycling efforts for the past couple of years. At this year's festival, 850 pounds of mixed glass, cans, and plastic was recycled.



**Horticulture
News**
Kim Gabel

Kim coordinated the presentation of a three-hour statewide video conference, "Integrated Pest Management Update." Twenty-four Master Gardeners and commercial landscapers were in attendance.

Six regional plant clinics were conducted (Key West, Big Pine Key, Marathon, Key Largo), with 21 Master Gardeners assisting 28 clientele.

Three site visits were made:

- ◆ Big Pine Key – Citrus greening disease
- ◆ Key Largo – chilling damage of coconut palms
- ◆ Tavernier – citrus decline

Five pesticide exams were proctored: two CORE, two Advanced Public Health, and one Turf and Ornamental.

Kim set up a horticultural education booth at the Marathon Garden Club's annual "January Jamboree." More info on this event will be printed in next month's issue.

She held the first Master Gardener Training Class of 2011 on January 28. Twenty-three people will attend the class every Friday until March 25, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Some of the topics that will be covered include:

- The Nine Florida-Friendly Landscaping Principles
- Plant and Soil Relations
- Watering Efficiently in the Keys
- How to make a rainbarrel
- Water Testing
- Plant Growth
- Plant Taxonomy
- Basic Botany
- Growing a Healthy Landscape
- Palms
- Turf Grass
- Vegetable Gardening
- Composting and Vermiculture
- Entomology
- Native Plants
- Invasive Plants
- Invasive Wildlife

and a whole lot more!

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

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Extension programs and activities are open to all persons and do not discriminate with regard to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations.

February Events

2/2: "Water Conservation and Rain Barrel Technology."

Kim Gabel will talk about methods of water conservation and demonstrate how you can build your very own rain barrel. 7:30 p.m., John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, MM 102.5, Key Largo.

2/3: "Rare Keys Plants, Species and Their Conservation" by Janice Duquesnel, Florida Keys Biologist, 1:30 p.m., Key West Garden Club, 1100 Atlantic Boulevard and White Street, Key West.

2/5-6: "Introduction to Permaculture" at the GLEE Community Garden, Leon & Seminary Streets, Key West. kwjody@yahoo.com

2/12: "Paddle/Pedal" Meet at 9 a.m. at Sugarloaf Lodge for a five-mile paddle thru bayside mangrove creeks before taking a 1:00 p.m. bike ride along US 1. Contact Monica.Woll@dep.state.fl.us.

2/17: Big Pine Key Botanical Society meeting at Lord of the Seas Lutheran Church, Key Deer Boulevard, 7:30 p.m.

2/18-20: "GardenFest Key West." at the Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Garden, 5210 College Road, Stock Island, time TBA.

2/20: "Sugarloaf Key Volunteer Fire Department Plant Sale," 11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Sugarloaf Boulevard.

For more information on these and other events, see our online calendar at <http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar.shtml>



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edis Publications

Facts about Vitamin D

A 2-page fact sheet summarizes key facts on the role Vitamin D plays in human nutrition.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy207>

Vegetable Garden Insects

A 2-page illustrated fact sheet that describes the ten most common vegetable garden insects from aphids to whiteflies. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in006>

What do you know about Fiber?

A 3-page fact sheet answers basic questions about fiber. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy304>

Invasive Species in Coastal & Marine Waters

A 28-page primer gives specifics on the harm caused by invasive species, the impacts they have on coastal and marine waters, and how to manage them.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/files/sg/sg07500.pdf>

Impacts of Free-ranging Pets on Wildlife

A 2-page fact sheet which describes solutions to the dilemma of dogs and cats that attack wildlife.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/files/uw/uw09000.pdf>



Food Creations:

"Banana Octopus"

UF/IFAS/MCES QUARTERLY CONTACTS

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Phone calls	417	302	343	1062
Office visitors	39	23	40	102
Visits to clients	32	17	18	67
Group teachings	14	7	10	31
Participants	913	181	231	1325
Media submissions	6	5	5	16
Publications distributed	570	364	288	1222
TOTAL contacts	1991	899	935	3825