



COLLIER FRUIT GROWERS NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2015



Andy Firk of Arcadia will be our speaker on Wild Edibles of Florida. Andy has been a forager and wild crafter since he was 15. He would gather wild herbs for the Herb-Pharm and other herbalists while living in CT, NY and later Florida. Andy has built a photo collection of over 25,000 wild plant, gardening, and wildlife (www.flickr.com/photos/andyfirk/).

Since 1993, Andy has stewarded a two acre food forest homestead, named Bamboo Grove, in Arcadia, FL. The property is home to over 230 heirloom fruits, 40 clumping bamboo species, medicinal, rare natives, a nice collection

of perennial vegetables including 30 true yams, culinary herbs, and more. He has given away over 12,000 potted plants so far and have hosted over 13,000 visitors.

His presentation includes perennial veggies, 75 clumping bamboos, wild edible plants, wild medicinal plants, magnificent life of the gulf, butterflies and their host plants, 75 culinary gingers, a tour of Florida food forests, surf fishing, and wild plant foods of indigenous tribes of Florida. He hosts four large garden parties each year (PlantFest! plant swap and sale each October, YamFest! perennial vegetables each December, GingerFest! Herbs gathering each February, and ForageFest! wild edible plants gathering each April). His deepest field of study has been the wild edible and medicinal plants that grace Florida's wild places. His book on Florida's wild edible plants will be available in 2016.

**NEXT MEETING: June 15 at the Golden Gate Community Center
4701 Golden Gate Parkway
7:00 pm tasting table and 7:30 pm meeting/program.**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:
July 11-12 Mango Festival, Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden, Coral Gables
July 18 Annual Tropical Fruit Seminar, Collier Extension
at Naples Botanical Garden, \$15. Featuring presenters:
Dr. Stephen Brady, The Burds, and Billy Hopkins**

BURDS' NEST OF INFORMATION

THIS and THAT FOR JUNE:

ITS MANGO SEASON !

As you travel around, you may observe many new varieties of mangos that you don't know or recognize. Make a point to discover the name or find an expert who might know.

QUESTION ??? is the tree grafted, look at the base of the tree trunk, you will observe a graft union, a difference or change from one bark to the one above. If there is no change it is probably a seedling, a new variety – then its time to evaluate that fruit.

To be continued in July...



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

It is always nice to find a recipe that uses several Florida grown ingredients. I found this recipe in *Clodagh's Kitchen Diaries*, a new cookbook by an Irish chef, Clodagh McKenna. It is easy, light and delicious, thus, the perfect summer meal.

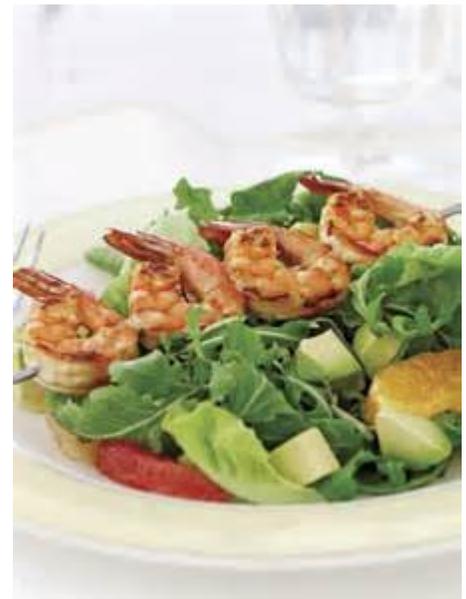
recipe:

SUMMER GRILLED SHRIMP, AVOCADO AND MANGO SALAD

Submitted by Roberta Taylor

INGREDIENTS

16 medium shrimp, shelled and deveined
Juice and Zest of 1 lime
1 avocado, peeled and diced
1 large ripe mango, peeled and diced
6-8 ounces arugula leaves
1 small red chili, finely chopped
1 tsp of Dijon mustard
2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste



Marinate the shrimp by tossing the shrimp with half the lime juice and zest, chili and half the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Marinate for 15 minutes. If you are using bamboo skewers, now is the time to soak them in water for 15 minutes. They won't burn while the food cooks. Once the shrimp has marinated, thread them onto skewers. Heat a grill to medium. Thread shrimp onto skewers; grill until pink and cooked through, about 1 minute each side. Set aside and keep warm. Make the dressing for the salad by whisking the Dijon mustard, remaining lime juice and zest, extra virgin olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place the arugula, avocado and mango in a large bowl and pour over the dressing and toss. Divide the salad between the plates and place the shrimp skewers on top. Serve immediately.

CLUB NOTES



WHAT'S RIPE

With Erica Klopf

The lychee is a fruit with a rich history of romance and luxury. It is a symbol for good luck. Legend has it that the seventh emperor of the T'ang dynasty, Hsuan Tsung, had baskets of lychees carried over hundreds of miles on his fastest pony to the woman he desired, lady Yang Kuei. Even the common name comes from the Chinese phrase 'lee chee', which translates to 'the one who gifts the pleasure of life'.

The Lychee is native to the subtropical lowlands of mainland of China in the provinces of Kwangtung and Fukien. The earliest record of praise for this magnificent fruit was in 1059 AD. It did not arrive in India until the 18th century, and was brought to greenhouses in France in the early 19th century. It made it across the ocean to Hawaii in 1837 and finally to Florida in 1883. At first the new fruit was thought to be inappropriate for the warmer climate of Florida, until new varieties were imported. In the early 1900s, Reverend W.M. Brewster introduced the vitally important variety 'Brewster'. This variety had been grown for hundreds of years in China, and was known as 'Chen-Tze' or 'Royal Chen Purple'.

Bill Whitman introduced the esteemed 'Emperor' variety from Thailand in 1985. In his article written on air-layering lychees for "Tropical Fruit News" in 1997, he suggests pre-wetting the moss used to wrap the air-layers in a solution of water, rooting hormone, and soluble fertilizer. In the article "Rare Fruit Council Activities of 1963-63", Whitman writes about girdling techniques being used to induce winter dormancy in tropical climates. This technique applied in the month of September results in enhanced fruiting in the spring. Whitman also warns home-growers not to accidentally over-irrigate lychee trees in the fall and winter months, as this will reduce fruiting. Though over-irrigation in winter months can reduce fruiting, mature trees can tolerate flooded conditions in summer months. In the 1950s Bruno Munoz, the Whitman Fruit Manager, witnessed a grove in Davie, Florida that was flooded for over a month with no ill-effects.

Lychee relatives that are grown in South Florida include Spanish Lime (*Melicoccus bijugatus*), Longan (*Dimocarpus Longan*), and more rare species such as alpag (*Litchi chinensis* ssp. *Philippensis*), Figian Longan (*Pometia pinnata*), Rambutan (*Nephelium lappaceum*), Pulasan (*Nephelium mutabile*), and Cotopriz (*Talisia olivaeformis*).

It is amazing to think of how recently the genetic material from this amazing fruit was introduced to Florida. We are at the beginning of a renaissance in tropical fruit growing, as varieties of every species are selected for our particular climate. We are very lucky to have the opportunity to participate in this grand endeavor, especially with delightful lychees.



OPINION: The future of the Florida citrus industry and our backyard trees are endangered by Hanglongbing (HLB) or citrus greening as well as citrus canker. I have seen no evidence that the Orange dog (see May's Newsletter) is a vector of disease and, in my opinion, does not deserve to be destroyed. Human activities have inadvertently disrupted the small, once isolated, ecosystems of earth. These isolated were balanced to some degree of homeostasis before humans became capable, through technology, of disturbing them. Illegal importation of animals, plants, fruit, and vegetables as well as uninformed importation brought agricultural pests to America's shores without the predators that controlled them overseas. Besides the Asian citrus psyllid, other problematic imports include the Giant Snail, Lion Fish, Brazilian Pepper, Air Potato, and more.

The Orange Dog or Giant Swallowtail Butterfly is indigenous to Florida and is not a carrier of Greening or Canker. It coexisted with the growth of a great citrus industry and was probably eating wild citrus leaves in Florida long before the European migration. It may eat a couple of leaves, but it will not significantly damage your citrus tree. The Giant Swallowtail is one of the largest and most beautiful butterflies in the United States. It is a joy to behold in any garden along with the Orange Sulphur, Zebra Longwing, Monarch, and other winged creatures. Does beauty have an intrinsic value? I say "YES". Please don't kill the Orange Dog.

~ Janet Puig, Senior Butterfly Correspondent

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JUNE 2015

FRUIT NEWS

**FUTURE MEETING:
Will be on July 20th. There is no meeting in August.**

The Collier Fruit Growers Inc. (CFG) is an active organization dedicated to inform, educate and advise its members as well as the public, as to the propagation of the many varieties of fruits that can be grown in Collier County. The CFG is also actively engaged in the distribution of the many commonly grown fruits, as well as the rare tropical and subtropical fruits grown throughout the world. CFG encourages its members to extend their cultivation by providing a basis for researching and producing new cultivars and hybrids, whenever possible. CFG functions without regard to race, color or national origin.

REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

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