



# Bermuda Botanical Society

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Bermuda

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## February NEWSLETTER 2025

### FROM THE PRESIDENT:

2025 got off to a great start with the visit of expert horticulturalist, Chris Collins. His passion for plants shone and his horticultural knowledge was immense. Chris was an adept presenter, well able to engage with a variety of audiences from primary school students showing him their permaculture garden, to seniors at the LLC looking at his work in Camerouns. Delighted that the presentation at BAMZ saw 100 people fill the hall. Particularly pleasing to see how fully engaged a large contingent of 40 or so Parks Staff were when he met with them on the Wednesday morning at the Horticultural Hall. All in all a very worthwhile event, definitely fulfilling the BBS educational remit.



Top left and right, Chris Collins with Paget Primary students in their garden, bottom left: Chris presents to the staff of the Botanical Gardens, Chris presents the Saturday morning talk at Horticultural Hall.

Cont.

“To encourage and support the study and promotion of the botanical sciences within Bermuda”

Lawrence Millman, Associate Researcher at Harvard, will be revisiting Bermuda following up his work on Bermuda's fungi. When I contacted him he kindly agreed to give a guided tour at one of his sites – the places for this were filled very quickly indeed! The value of fungi is becoming more widely known with research showing how plants use the fungal network to obtain food and communicate with one another.

Other events include a presentation on March 24<sup>th</sup>, when BBS member and former Bermuda Conservation Officer Alison Copeland, will be giving a presentation on her PhD work, Invasive Species in Bermuda. Alison is monitoring several sites across the Island. Not just a case of checking them for plants, but also being literally up at dawn to see how birds might be contributing to the spread of these plants, then again to check them out at dusk – in January!! All this just part of the paper. So please, do come in support and find out more about the fascinating insights she will be sharing.

April is Agricultural Exhibition month April 23, 25 & 26. – BBS hopes to have a display there and will be looking for volunteers to help. A great group helped out last year and thoroughly enjoyed themselves!

## A first for Bermuda?

When Chris visited Warwick Academy – a delightful look at the student's work – guided by the students themselves. A small meadow area, an endemic/native plants area and a wonderful woodland walk. It was in the woodland area that Ros Wingate and students found a morel mushroom fruiting body. There is no previous record of this!



Regarding the work undertaken by Ros and students Chris remarked that this was one of the most impressive school environmental projects he has seen – and he's visited over 200 schools!



Jennifer Flood

*"To encourage and support the study and promotion of the botanical sciences within Bermuda"*

# Our own Bermuda Botanical Treasures art show!

Text: Belinda Tartaglia

We would love for YOU to be a part of this exciting new Art Show for BBS, now taking place at Bermuda Society of Arts.

**Theme: Celebrating Botanical Elements, Vegetation and Natural Scenery**

**Date: July 3, 2025**

**Time: 5-7 pm**

**Venue: Bermuda Society of Arts,  
The City Hall Arts Centre  
17 Church Street, Hamilton**

Whether you're a seasoned artist or someone who simply enjoys capturing the beauty of the natural world, this is your opportunity to shine. This show is open to artists and creative individuals of all skill levels. Non-members of BBS are also invited to participate. The show is about celebrating the beauty of nature in a light-hearted and friendly setting.

This is also a fantastic opportunity to connect with fellow nature enthusiasts and showcase your unique vision of Bermuda's botanical treasures. All artwork, **regardless of the medium**, must prominently feature local vegetation. Additionally, depictions of Bermuda landscapes or representations of local gardens are warmly welcomed. Please be advised that 20% of the sale price of each artwork serves as a commission for BSoA. Additionally, BBS would greatly appreciate if a portion of the proceeds from each artwork sold could also be donated to the Bermuda Botanical Society in support of their vital work."

Artists, Photographers and Creators, produce artwork inspired by the lush greenery, vibrant blooms, interesting trees, and enchanting landscapes of Bermuda, capturing the magic of our island's flora, exhibiting your perspective. To be a part of this wonderful show, please register your interest by emailing [bdabotanicalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:bdabotanicalsociety@gmail.com) **as soon as possible**, to confirm your participation and any questions you may have.

For the exhibition, artwork on paper and photographs need to be framed. To be accepted into the show, you must submit a description of your artwork, including the title of your work, your name, medium, dimensions, and price, **no later than June 9, 2025**. Join us in celebrating the natural beauty that inspires us all. We eagerly await the incredible creations you'll bring to life!

Editor's note: Belinda is the Art Show Coordinator for the BBS Executive. She can be reached at:  
[btartag@northrock.bm](mailto:btartag@northrock.bm)

441-505-0909

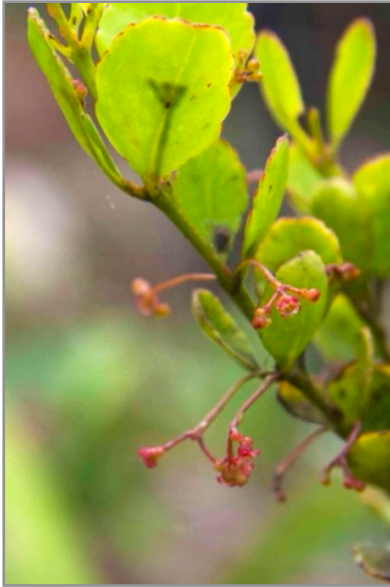
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**"To encourage and support the study and promotion of the botanical sciences within Bermuda"**



# *Crossopetalum rhacoma*, commonly called Maidenberry or Rhacoma

Text and photos Jennifer Flood



A small evergreen shrub, rare Bermuda native and naturally confined to Southampton Parish. Delighted to see that shrub planted 10 months ago has flowered and produced a bright red berry! According to DENR's Bermuda PlantFinder, the *Illustrated guide for Bermuda's indigenous and invasive plants*, seed collection should take place during appear August – October. Will be interesting to see if the seeds germinate, which can take up to 20 weeks so patience is needed!! However, In Nathaniel Lord Britten's book *Flora of Bermuda*, the following is noted

“Found by Lefroy in Southampton Parish about 1875. Not found by subsequent collectors. Native. Florida and the West Indies. Fruit ripe in January. Flowers presumably in spring. that being its flowering time in the Bahamas.”

Footnote: sadly, during construction work on the building adjacent to the Endemic/Native area, the rhacoma was trampled and though surviving, the central trunk was broken off.

Editor's note: To see better images than mine above (including a great one by Alison Copeland), go to the **Flora of the Southeastern United States** website: <https://fsus.ncbg.unc.edu/cust/20221/main.php?pg=show-taxon-detail.php&taxonid=7948>. I see that on that website it is also called poison-berry, so take note!

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## TRUNK ISLAND VISIT May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025/ Rain date-May 4<sup>th</sup> 2025

Trunk Island, a seven acre island within Harrington Sound is a large part of the Bermuda Zoological Society and one of Bermuda's mini but mighty island gems.

The aim of the Bermuda Zoological Society in taking over the island in 2006 was to restore it to a 'true nature reserve', "reintroducing native and endemic plants" while "eliminating invasive flora and fauna". The Trunk island project plays a huge part in the BZS' core goal of teaching preservation and protection of Bermuda as a Living Classroom.

The BBS working party event on Saturday May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025 might involve identifying and pulling up invasive species. Chairs plus buckets for plant disposal will be supplied.

As the island grows and changes throughout the next few months other tasks may be added.

More information to follow!

“To encourage and support the study and promotion of the botanical sciences within Bermuda”

## You can help by propagating Loquat

Text: Lisa Greene

If you have recently cleared some land, or have a space that needs filling, consider the native-compatible loquat. And if you don't have any need for a new plant, perhaps you'd be interested in propagating some for others. Plant sales are *always* looking for natives and endemics and native compatible plants to add to their offerings.

Loquats are fruiting now and there are probably a few fruit that can be spared for planting. According to the "Ask IFAS" website (the University of Florida) loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*) can be "propagated by seed, but they do not come true from seed and they have a 6- to 8-year juvenile period before flowering and fruiting. Loquat seeds may remain viable for up to six months of storage at high RH and 41°F or cleaned and planted immediately."

And as we know, in Bermuda loquat seedlings can be dug up from under parent trees, potted up and grown on very easily.

The nectar from their flowers attracts and supports bees, and small insect and spiders are a food source for our local and migratory birds. Miguel Mejias, a local birder has seen small passerines including warblers, vireos and flycatchers gleaning insects etc from loquat branches and foliage. The internet reports that catbirds and cedar waxwings eat the fruit, and Miguel thinks it's possible that, in Bermuda, tanagers, grossbeaks and orioles might feed on the fruit. Keep an eye out for that and report back! Miguel has observed starlings and kiskadees feeding on fallen fruit.

If you do try propagating it, please let us know of your success (or failures) so we can better advise other wanting to try. And if you don't want to hold onto it for a plant sale, let me know: [elgreenebda@icloud.com](mailto:elgreenebda@icloud.com)

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## Focus on self-seeding plants in Bermuda

Text and photos: Lisa Greene

An ongoing series highlighting plants self-seeding in Bermuda. Some of them will be considered invasives, other may be less of a problem.



The point is to heighten awareness about which plants are self-seeding and how much of a problem they are currently, might become, or may never become. Some plants you may be aware are self-seeding, others perhaps not.

*Araucaria* spp. self-seeding. The photo on the left was taken out at Cooper's Island in 2021. Note the several saplings growing at its base; the photo on the right was also taken in 2021, at Southlands in Warwick. Several seedlings were seen at that location at the time. Since then I have also seen seedlings of what was I was told was Cook's Island pine, *A. columnaris*.



"To encourage and support the study and promotion of the botanical sciences within Bermuda"



## Walking Iris (*Neomarica caerulea*)

Text and photos - Jade Lovell

Also known as Apostle's Iris, Apostle Plant, Fan Iris, Poor man's orchid.

Do you have a walking iris in your garden? If not, you are missing these beautiful flowers!



We are often treated to surprise flowers of the bluest of blues, or shades of violet, with added fancy patterns and colors, but you could easily miss seeing them as they last but one day! Most unusual, the flowers protrude from the upright clumps of long, stiff, green leaves. They are called Walking Iris because, should the flowering leaf bend sufficiently for the flower to touch the ground, a new plant could form, however this is unusual and they are not considered invasive.

We have several in our garden as once established, they can be divided and the plantlets and rhizomes will soon establish themselves. Though our specimen plant is quite showy when in bloom, we have tucked others toward the back of beds (they grow to about 3 1/2' - 4') with lower annuals or ground cover in front. These plants are equally attractive when not in bloom, the leaves provide interesting colour throughout the year.

Like most plants, spoiling them with a bit with extra attention, ie watering during dry spells and fertilizing regularly may reward you with an even greater number of flowers, possibly larger, with stronger colours. But our garden is intentionally as 'easy care' as possible and we find Walking iris fits in well.

# Broccolini & Bangers

Vegetarian, Gluten-Free, Wheat-free ~ Choose local organic ingredients for best results  
Makes 3-4 servings, Prep Time = 5 minutes, cooking time = 10 minutes

## Ingredients:

- 1 packet Beyond sausages (4 large bangers), sliced
- 1 bunch fresh broccolini
- 1 bunch fresh young carrots, sliced lengthwise
- 1 cup potatoes, chopped
- ½ cup fresh Bermuda onion, chopped
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ cup roasted pine nuts or sliced almonds

## Method:

1. In a wok or deep-sided pan, add olive oil and brown sausages over medium heat
2. Separately, steam veg until tender but firm, retain some of the veg water
3. Add veg and water to cooked sausages
4. Cook for a few minutes, turning occasionally with wooden spurtle
5. Scoop mixture into serving dish, garnish with nuts

*Variations: Other favourite veg such as green beans, asparagus, and broccoli, can work with the sausages but grilled broccolini has a superior flavour and texture. Various coloured carrots add visual interest. A bit of chopped garlic or balsamic vinegar can be added. Choose the regular vegan sausages or try spicy Italian for added flavour.*

*Quick, easy, healthy and hearty, this makes a great 1-dish meal for lunch or dinner as well as a colourful addition to any buffet.*

*Contributed by Marlie & Jocelyn Powell, Vegan/Vegetarian chefs at Kingston House B&  
[KingstonHouse@BBBermuda.com](mailto:KingstonHouse@BBBermuda.com)*



## Painting with Chlorophyll

Did you know you can paint with chlorophyll, the green pigment found in leaves?

All you need is a sheet of white card, brown pen or crayon and about 10 soft leaves, like fresh spinach or basil (waxy, thick leaves don't work well)

1. Draw your tree
2. Ball some leaves in your hand until they are squishy, then press them onto the paper to make the "leaves".



Chlorophyll 'spinach' leaves



## Why is Chlorophyll so important?

Chlorophyll absorbs light and turns it into chemical energy the plant can use as food - it's called photosynthesis.

Go to this link to find out how that works! (Copy and paste it into your web browser.)

<https://youtu.be/UPBMG5EYydo?si=Nb9o2KZEeA36te-g>



## **Events** - A varied and interesting selection of activities over the coming months

February 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Fungi Tour with Larry Millman – fully subscribed
March 24 <sup>th</sup>	Alison Copeland will be giving an update on her PhD work: Bermuda's Invasive Species
April 24th, 25th, 26th	Ag Show – volunteers needed
May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Trunk Island visit and work party
early June	Visit to Kings Point and Cambridge Beaches Garden
July 3 <sup>rd</sup>	BBS very first art show celebrating Bermuda Plant life Time: 5-7 pm Venue: Bermuda Society of Arts



Chris Collin's final slide of his recent presentation on the gardens at Westminster, London, UK.