



# Friends of Deerfield Island Park

## August 2021 Newsletter

There will be no meeting in August.  
The Island remains closed for now.



### Presidents Message – August 2021

Well, here we are more than halfway through August and still looking longingly at our beloved island. Unfortunately, due to an issue with an electric cable from a transformer to the Nature Center, the Parks Department was not able to open the island when planned. It will still take a few weeks for this work to be completed.

But work on the island is still moving along.

The plant list for the Butterfly Garden has been finalized, the area has been cleared and hopefully, work will begin on the walkways shortly.

Boat docks railings are being repaired and the kayak floating dock will be installed as soon as that has been completed.

Some directional signs have been installed, and others are on order.

Drains and gutters were installed at the Ambassador Kiosk.

Designs of the Nature Center, including walkways from Tony the Tortoise, are being developed.

So, we just have to hold on a little while longer. We will get there.

We will not be having a meeting in August. Our next meeting is currently scheduled for Friday, September 10. I will keep you updated.

Stay Safe !!!!!!!

Helene

## FLORA and FAUNA



### Surinam Cherry: Ornamental and Versatile, but Invasive

by Diana R. Lopez

Surinam cherry, also known as Pitanga, Suriname cherry, Brazilian cherry and Cayenne, is an invasive species that flourishes in both the tropical and subtropical regions of the United States. It is native to both Surinam and Guyana where it is commonly used in gardens as an ornamental hedge or screen.

There are two distinct types of Surinam cherry, both of which produce edible berries with a unique pumpkin-like shape. One is bright-red to nearly black and the other, a deep crimson-red. Although the bright-red variety is more common, the crimson-red variety is sweeter to the taste and less resinous in content.

The white flowers of the Surinam cherry are delicate and long-stalked; they are a rich source of pollen for honey bees. They are borne singly or as many as four together in the leaf axil. They have delicate petals and white stamens with pale-yellow anthers. When crushed or trod upon, the leaves release their pungent, fly-repellent oil. Young leaves are bronze in color, deep-green and glossy when mature and turn red in cold, dry winter weather. The Surinam cherry bark contains tannin that can be used for treating leather.

The seeds of whole berries are extremely resinous (acidic) and they are known to be a gastrointestinal irritant to dogs. The strong, spicy emanation from pruning can be a respiratory irritant to susceptible individuals.

Three weeks after the flowers open, the fruits develop and ripen quickly. When they drop into the hand at the lightest touch, they are at their least resinous and are ripe for picking. In Florida, there are two crops that coincide with the spring and fall rains. There is a spring crop that occurs in March or April and lasts through May or June, and a second crop in the fall that runs from September through November.

Surinam cherries are tart and acidic with a taste similar to green bell pepper. They are best prepared by slicing them open to release the seeds, and then chilling for 2 or 3 hours to dispel most of their resinous, aromatic character. If seeded and sprinkled with sugar prior to being chilled, they become mild and sweet and are an excellent addition to fruit cups, salads, custard pudding and ice cream. They are sometimes made into jam, jelly, relish or pickles, are tasty when used in a pie, made into a sauce or preserved whole in syrup. Brazilians are known to ferment the juice into vinegar or wine, and sometimes use them to prepare a distilled liquor.



You can now view the past 2021 newsletters on our website. [Click here](#)



### Friends of Deerfield Island Park (FODIP)

Formed in March 2015

We are dedicated to preserving and protecting our unique green island as a natural habitat for native plants and for the island's animal inhabitants. We have been approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for this purpose.

[Website](#) [About Us](#) [Contact Us](#) [Why Friends?](#) [News & Events](#) [Photos](#)

