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Greater Palm Beach Rose Society

September 2025 Newsletter

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Message From The President

Welcome all to our new 2025 - 2026 season. The Board members have been working very hard over the summer during the break and I thank everyone. We have put together some very exciting programs for you this year. We are hoping that this is our best season ever.

Our season's lineup of programs this year will be:

September: Fall Rose Care, Rescuing Your Roses From Summer Heat

October: Building the Soil for Roses Composting 101 with Master Gardener, Barbara Bogart.

November: Photographing Roses: Some Basic Guidelines and Examples with Ken Rifkin, landscape photographer

December: Holiday Party at Mounts for December 4 at 6:30 pm. Pot Luck Dinner. ROSE PONG will make a reappearance with some great prizes!

January: Rose Show Preparation with Bill Langford, Consulting Rosarian and Rose Show Judge and Mike Becker, Master Rosarian

February presentation: Spring Rose Care

March: Container Roses for Beginners and do it yourself mist system set up demonstration.

April: Fragrance of Perfumes, Past and Present with Mike Becker, Master Rosarian

May: How to make Potpourri with Laura Zaragosa.

June: Summer Barbecue

This year we have added a 2nd presentation in November. A pruning workshop that will be on site in my gardens that will be happening on Saturday, November 8, 2025 at 10 am. You will be learning hands on how to prune and you will be able to practice. Our master and consulting rosarians will be on hand for the event. You can also ask us any questions you would like about rose care at this event. Refreshments will be provided.

In addition, we are having our rose show, The Season of Love and Roses, scheduled for February 14, 2026 at Mounts Botanical Gardens. Enter your roses and win awards! Novices are welcome. What better way is there to spend Valentine's Day than surrounded by award winning roses???

As always, we will be so happy to see you all join us each month. And remember, we zoom all meetings except workshops and rose shows.





Tips and Tricks for South Florida

Here are some great Tips and Tricks from South Florida Rosarians and Growers!

Plant a biodiverse garden. If you only plan for a “Roses Only” type garden, you will probably be endlessly disappointed. Roses in South Florida are fabulous from November through May, but June through October is often another story entirely between blackspot and Chili Thrips and annual prunings. If you have a biodiverse garden where roses are merely one element in a broader design palette that includes annuals, perennials, and even some shrubs and small ornamental trees, you’ll have (a) backup beauty when your roses aren’t looking 100% (note I said “when”, not “if”), (b) beautiful visual complements for the roses when they ARE at their best, and (c) it’s better for the environment and all the little critters that live out their whole lives in our gardens. Win-win for all involved. – *Victor Lazzari*

Research your roses before buying. Know your climate (South Florida is either Zone 10a or 10b, hot and humid). Choose your roses based on health, heat tolerance, and ‘Florida’ size. Don’t believe what the rose catalogs say on mature size. Here in Florida, roses tend to grow bigger and taller if they can tolerate the heat. Roses on Fortuniana root stock also tend to be more vigorous and definitely larger. Check with our Rosarians or other South Florida growers as to the actual size of a particular, mature rose in our climate. If in doubt, add another 2 to 4 feet in size. Plan and plant accordingly. – *Kim Wendt*

Choose the right size pot. Smaller roses should be kept in smaller pots especially in

rainy season as the roots could rot in a larger pot that doesn't dry out. Another option is to plant your smaller pot inside a larger pot if you need it for display. This way, when it's ready for the larger pot, just lift out the smaller pot, remove the rose and place it in the hole that was already there. Perfect fit. – *Denise Abruzzese*

Hard prune between late January and early February in South Florida. This is a great time to do some major cutting. Reducing the size of the established bushes by one-third to one-half will be of benefit to them. Young or small bushes should only be lightly trimmed. Pruning can be a daunting task for novice rose growers. However, pruning does a favor to your rose bushes and they handle it quite well. I have never lost a rose bush due to pruning. – *Bill Langford*

Don't cut roses in the South Florida summer. When we cut roses in the summer, the tender new growth that results from cutting attracts every insect in the state to your rose garden. The energy the plant spends on producing new growth in our hot, humid summers is wasted on spindly stems and inferior blooms and causes stress to the plants. – *Debbie Coolidge*

During summer, keep the leaves. Summers in Florida are stressful for roses. Be sure to leave lots of mature green leaves on your plants. The leaves help cool your roses in the brutal heat of the summer as well as help remove the extra water in the soil from the heavy summer rains. Leaves also produce energy through photosynthesis which is used for flowers in the winter months but is stored in the plants stems in the summer. – *Geoff Coolidge*

Blackspot Issues? Try Cornmeal. If you have blackspot (and who doesn't?) try this little trick. Sprinkle yellow or white cornmeal (not cornmeal 'mix') around the base of your roses. Use approximately 1 cup of cornmeal around a full sized bush. For smaller bushes try about a 1/4 cup or so around a rose in a 1 gallon pot. This works in for container planted roses or roses in the

ground. The cornmeal hosts a different mold/fungi organism that actually keeps blackspot at bay. The trick is to keep applying the cornmeal about every 3-4 weeks. – *Denise Abruzzese*

Invest in a digital pH/moisture meter. If you want to grow healthy roses (or anything else) – invest in the tools to do so. A digital pH meter is amazing help for knowing how and when to amend your rose soils. Roses tend to like slightly acid soils. Here are three tricks with **pH meters**: 1. Get a **digital** pH meter, as they are more accurate and easy to read. 2. When actually testing your soil, remember to wipe/sanitize the soil probe before and after every ‘test’. 3. It takes time for an accurate pH reading. Discipline yourself to insert the probe and *walk away*. Come back after 3 or 4 minutes, then take the reading. **Moisture readers** are great – if the probe is long enough to get to the roots. I’ve been told 1,000 times by Rosarians “The number one reason rose bushes die, is that they are over watered”. So take a moisture reading deeper down in the soil at the root level, to know if your roses need watering. – *Kim Wendt*

Cow Tea, Alfalfa Tea and Fish Emulsion. These solutions still work the best with roses of all types, including miniatures. These mixtures feed the soil, supporting the organisms that convert nutrients into forms available to plants. A long chain but a simple one. Food value is built in as well, but the primary boost comes from activating the soil organisms. Can’t burn... tiny hair roots love it. If you have brewed up one of the Rambler’s teas, y our roses haven’t enjoyed a natural treat. – *Howard Walters, Rosarian Ramblings, provided with permission.*

MEETING

September 22, 2025 -
GPBRS Meeting at Mounts
Botanical Garden, 7:00 pm.
Program: Rescuing Your
Roses from the Summer

MEETING

October 27, 2025 - GPBRS
Meeting at Mounts
Botanical Garden, 7:00 pm.
Program: Building the Soil
for Roses Composting 101

MEETING

November 24, 2025 -
GPBRS Meeting at Mounts
Botanical Garden, 7:00 pm.
Program: Photographing
Roses: Some Basic

Heat. Expert panel of
Consulting and Master
Rosarians!

with Master Gardener,
Barbara Bogart.

Guidelines and Examples
with Ken Rifkin, landscape
photographer.

ROSE SHOW!!!! SAVE THE DATE!
FEBRUARY 14, 2026 we will be hosting a Rose
Show at Mounts Botanical Gardens
Plantapaloosa. Enter your roses!!! Beginners are
always welcome! We will be giving tips and tricks
at each meeting from now until the Rose Show.
Just bring a rose and one of our Rosarian Judges
will evaluate it for you!

Bill Langford WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

Greater Palm Beach Rose Society is having a rose show February 14, 2026 at Mounts Botanical Gardens! It's always a fun event! We need volunteers to assist the judge the day of the event. Please contact [Bill Langford](#) to volunteer. As always....thank you!

COMING IN NOVEMBER!!!

Photographing Roses: Some Basic Guidelines and Examples

Presented by Ken Rifkin

My Professional Biography and Amateur Background in Photography

I am a retired human resources development consultant with a PhD in Experimental Psychology and 35+ years of experience advising organizations of all types (e.g., for profit and non-profit, small and large, in a variety of fields and operations, local, national and international in scope) on how to improve their performance.

I got involved in photography as a hobby over 50 years ago when I purchased my first 35mm camera (back in the film days), a *Honeywell Pentax H1A* with a *Super Takumar lens* that I bought on the “grey market” from a mail order dealer in Hong Kong. In the late 1970s, I purchased my first *Canon* camera (also film) and have been a Canon user ever since. Today, I use a *Canon R5* (a mirrorless, digital camera) and a couple of *Canon lenses including their 100-500, 70-200 and 100 mm*.

I mainly photograph wildlife, flowers and an occasional landscape --when the opportunity presents itself. I find that nature photography fits my needs perfectly. I enjoy being away from crowds, forced socializing, and, what often feels like, a lot of noise. It offers me a chance to go out alone, slow down, absorb my surroundings and concentrate on what I’m doing.

I want my images to depict nature as BEAUTIFUL, ELEGANT AND COMPELLING. All too often, we just mindlessly RUSH or PLOD through life never noticing much of the beauty and intrigue of the natural world. Practicing photography changes all of that. Your perception becomes sensitized, and you begin to “see” and “feel” elements of everyday life that you were unaware of or never paid much attention to. My goal is to produce photos that are worthy of a second or third look and which evoke some personal emotion and/or memories for the viewer.

My Presentation: November 24, 2025, 7:30 PM

I have a few goals –

- Show you some of my favorite flower images (mostly Roses) from the 2025 Rambling Rose Tour.
- Chat about a few simple principles I tried to follow producing these images and get your response to them.
- Throw in a few wildlife images that I hope adhere to the same principles and get your feedback.
- If possible, respond to your questions and comments in a helpful manner.



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OUR CONSULTING ROSARIANS

Our Consulting Rosarians are here for any members to ask rose care questions, FREE of charge with your membership! Please feel free to contact any of us.

[Mike Becker](#) 817-522-2970

[Denise Abruzzese](#) 631-988-5244

[Deb & Geoff Coolidge](#)

Debbie Coolidge 561-313-0077

Geoff Coolidge 561-310-8508

[Bill Langford](#) 561-309-3736

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Greater Palm Beach Rose Society

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