

# The BackYard Farmer

HEMOCRRAFTED ARTISAN PRODUCTS & FARM

The Backyard Farmer is a small, family owned and operated farm in Bodden Town. We produce hot peppers, fruits, vegetables, root crops, spices, herbs, herb infusions, and fresh eggs. What we can't sell, or use ourselves, we manufacture into homemade products from our harvest, and then sell. Join our Facebook Group or Instagram if you want to get in on the sales at The Backyard Farmer, Cayman Islands.

Some of our manufactured products that are sold are homemade ice creams, pepper sauces, seasoning blends, jellies, jams, pepper jelly, soaps, sugar scrubs, body butters and other bath and spa products.

All of our homecrafteds soaps, scrubs, butters, and other body products are made with as much locally produced coconut oil, raw honey, fruits, vegetables, aloe, and herb infusions as can be grown in the Cayman Islands. Other ingredients include essential oils, herb, spices, cane sugar, sea salt, beeswax, shea; cocoa; avocado; and mango butter, vitamin E, and oatmeal.

Our goal is to produce sustainable agriculture with the use of biodiversity and integrated pest control in a permaculture context. This practice is not new to these islands but has been lost over the years due to "modernized" agricultural practices. Rewind our Caymanian history a few generations and this was a normal subsistence way of life for all Caymanians. Every "homestead" had what was called a "ground" where all of the familys' daily food was grown supplemented by protein caught from the ocean.

Due to "modernized" agricultural practices coupled with the rapid development of the islands this way of living and farming has all but disappeared. It is our dream here at The Backyard Farmer to bring this way of life back to the Caymanian people by way of education, farm demonstrations and tours and workshops.

When fully operational locals and visitors alike can come and have a "hands on" experience on what life was like in Cayman 50-100 years ago (minus the mosquitoes). Visitors will be able to walk through a traditional "ground" and be able to learn about our food staples, learn about medicinal plants and herbs and try old Caymanian "bush teas".

In addition, our farm will also have a "banana walk" as it was called back in yesteryear where visitors will be able to see, touch and even taste different varieties of banana and plantains. There will also be a fruit orchard showcasing traditional Caymanian fruits such as mangoes, West Indian cherries, neaseberries and more.

Livestock and poultry will also be a familiar sight on our farm including our current flock of layer hens which was also an important source of eggs and meat for every home in the past as there were no grocery stores.

*Did you know that the green iguana seen around the island is in fact an invasive non-native species?*



## "Bush Teas"

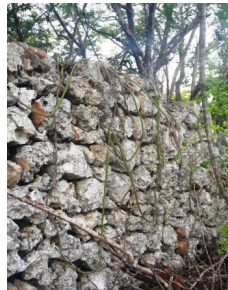


Aside from our traditional "bush medicine" Caymanians also had two main teas consumed daily. These are lemon grass "feva-grass" and "providence mint". Both on their own are a refreshing tea or can be

mixed together for unique flavor.

Both are grown on our farm for personal consumption and can also be sampled at our farm store.

## The Bodden Town "Slave Wall"



It is a little known fact that our property sits on part of a larger area known as the 'slave wall'. Although little is recorded in our written history on this testament of time long gone, an article in the 1974 Issue of The Northwester gives an oral account of this piece of our history as told to Mrs. Mary Lawrence by then 82 year old resident of Bodden Town Mrs.

Netty Levy.

Mrs. Levy recants the stories told to her by her 'grandpa', "Lowen Wood" on the harsh conditions slaves and their owners had to endure in order to erect this wall with areas being up to 7ft tall. It is widely believed that these walls of dry stacked rocks were erected by the slaves of the day as a means to "fortifying" their masters homes from possible attacks from pirates who frequented the area in that time.

Unfortunately large sections of the wall has been removed in the name of 'progress' however we are currently cutting trails to the remaining sections of the wall surrounding our property with the hopes of restoring any fallen or removed section in order to preserve this history.

Where u frum???



**Why not 'leave your mark' on our farm for future visitors to see? Ask us how...**

## Grand Cayman curly-tailed lizard



(*Leiocephalus carinatus varius*), also known as the "lion lizard" is a common sight on Grand Cayman. Originally found mainly along isolated beach areas, this lizard can now be found on developed sites on rocks and concrete ground where it basks in the sun. It can be recognised by its characteristic curly tail -often arched over its

back.

The curly-tailed lizard is 'omnivorous' which means it has a broad diet, feeding on vegetation (mainly flowers), insects and other lizards.

**Fancy A New Plant For Your Garden?**



For all gardeners, their gardens are their pride and joy, that's why we provide a mix of locally propagated plants for sale to the general public. Although our nursery is not as large as some on islands we still provide a good cross section of plants for your garden.

**AGUTI "Cayman Rabbit"**

Dasyprocta Punctata, or agouti, has served as a highly coveted dish of natives in the Cayman Islands over the years. However, the creature is actually not native to Grand Cayman and is not found in Cayman Brac or Little Cayman.



"Agoutis, known as rodents and said to be related to rabbits and guinea pigs, were introduced to Grand Cayman in the 1900s and replaced the Hutia, a similar type of animal, which was endemic to the Islands but is now extinct. Early travelers brought them here from South America for food. The animal thrived in Grand Cayman's environment," said Mat Cottam, senior research officer for the Department of Environment.

This usually timid creature can be found roaming the farm in the early morning or late evenings can be quite destructive to crops and are a constant battle on our farm.



**Cayman Parrot**

The sight of a pair of Cayman parrots is a familiar one to many Caymanians. You are more likely to hear the raucous squawking of the National Bird of the Cayman Islands before

actually seeing one, especially in the early morning and late afternoon when they are most vocal. When feeding quietly in the tops of trees, they are so well camouflaged you may never realize they are there.

The Cayman Islands' parrots are, in fact, two subspecies of the Cuban Parrot (*Amazona leucocephala*). Both subspecies are endemic to the Cayman Islands - which means they are found nowhere else in the world. In fact, there are only three other subspecies of this parrot in the world - two in Cuba and one in the Bahamas.

Cayman's parrots have iridescent green feathers with darker edges over the body, a white eye ring, red cheeks, black ear patches and brilliant blue wing feathers which are only obvious when the bird is in flight. The tail has blue outer edges, with some red and yellowish green underneath.

The Grand Cayman Parrot (*Amazona leucocephala caymanensis*) in particular has a pink flush to its whitish forehead. The male is slightly larger and more brightly coloured than the female. Juvenile birds have yellowish foreheads, gradually becoming more washed with pink as they mature.



*Don't forget to purchase feed for the animals!*

*www.Thebackyardfarmer.ky, email us at info@TheBackYardFarmer.ky, or call us at 345-917-0094.*



**Help Us Improve Our Farm**

Our farm also houses a number of rescue animals and birds that their previous owners could no longer afford to care for, for whatever reason.

Aside from our daily operating expenses we are also undertaking a number of small but exciting on-going projects.

Your kind donations would help with the realization of our dream and to also help to cover some of the cost of feed for animal residents. We greatly appreciate any assistance by way of donations from you.

You can also make a donation by visiting our website [www.thebackyardfarmer.ky/donations](http://www.thebackyardfarmer.ky/donations). and any assistance is greatly appreciated.

**Blue-throated Anole**



The Western Grand Cayman Blue-throated Anole (*Anolis conspersus conspersus*) is commonly found throughout Grand Cayman and males can be easily recognised by their

bright green to turquoise colour. While the anole is not a chameleon, it gets this common name due to its ability to change colour to dark brown or beige. Males are at their brightest blue during breeding season while females remain paler -often grey or light brown.

The blue-throated anoles are commonly seen above ground on trees and on the side of buildings. They are relatively shy with males preferring to flee upwards while females and juveniles seek to escape by hiding on ground level.

**Nature Trail**



Our Nature Trail illustrates the typical terrain of the Cayman Islands comprising limestone rock and pockets of soil.

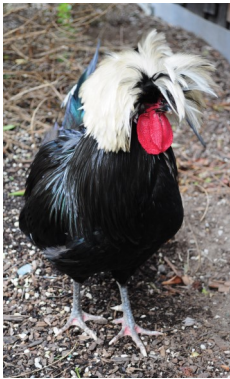
Our Forefathers had to find ways to work this land in order to provide food for their families. This is still true today, as modern farmers face some of the same challenges of 'working the land' in such a harsh environment.



Are you the lover of all things spicy? Then try our own "home brew" Calypso Pepper Sauce" made from pepper and seasonings grown on our farm.



## Polish Chickens



The Polish (Also called the Poland) is a European breed of chicken known for its crest of feathers. The English language name of these birds is a misnomer, as they do not originate in the country of Poland. Instead, the oldest accounts of crested chickens come from the Netherlands.

In addition to combs, their heads are adorned with large crests due to a cone (called a protuberance) on the top of their skull.

The crests cover almost their entire heads. They are normally tame chickens, but can be timid or easily frightened because the crests on their heads limit their vision. This limited vision can impact their temperament.

Polish chickens are bred primarily as a show bird, but were originally egg layers. Accordingly, Polish rarely go broody and are noted for their white eggs. They may be bearded or non-bearded. Hens weigh around 4.5 pounds, and roosters 6 pounds.

**Look Out For Local Birds!**



## The Hickatee



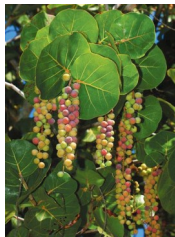
*Trachemys decussata angusta* is a medium-sized freshwater turtle, also called a "slider". They can be found in fresh and brackish water pools around the islands. Hickatees

are most commonly seen poking their heads out from beneath the waterline, in order to draw breath. They are also commonly seen basking on rocks, mangrove roots and partially submerged tree stumps, to heat their bodies in the sunshine.

Hickatees are freshwater turtles, and cannot survive for more than a week in sea water. They are omnivorous; feeding mostly on aquatic vegetation and insects.

There is some uncertainty as to the historical origins of Hickatees. It is known that they have been in the islands for a very long time, but no remains have yet been found in the fossil record in Cayman. As a result, it is currently unclear as to whether their origins are truly native, or if perhaps, they were introduced here by early sailors to the islands.

## Sea Grape



*Coccoloba uvifera* is a species of flowering plant in the buckwheat family, Polygonaceae, that is native to coastal beaches throughout tropical America and the Caribbean, including southern Florida, the Bahamas, Barbados, Antigua and Bermuda. Common names include Seagrape and Baygrape.

In late summer it bears green fruit, about 2 cm (0.79 in) diameter, in large grape-like clusters.[1] The fruit gradually ripen to a purplish color. Each contains a large pit that constitutes most of the volume of the fruit

The wood of the sea grape is sometimes used for firewood, making charcoal and even cabinetry. The reddish fruits of the sea grape may be eaten raw, cooked into jellies and jams, or fermented into sea grape wine. Sea grape wine may also be fermented into sea grape vinegar, which is also useful in cooking. The sap of the sea grape is used in the West Indies and Jamaica for dyeing and tanning of leather.

## Silver Thatch



Bearing the scientific name *Coccothrinax proctorii* after renowned botanist, Dr. George Proctor, its leaves (or fronds) are what gives this tree its common name. The upper sides of the leaves are a light green while the underside is a silvery colour that is particularly prominent in moonlight.

The leaves are also unusually tough and their broad shape makes them a useful covering. In the past, Silver Thatch Palm leaves were frequently used to thatch roofs as they were cool and rainproof. leaves were also used to weave hats, baskets and fans. Shoes known as "wompers" were made with a flat leather sole and held on the foot by straps -like a thong - of thatch rope. Nowadays, hats and baskets are in demand in tourist and craft shops. Many of them are still made by those who were taught their skills over fifty years ago!

## Fresh Baked Pastries



Our pastries baked fresh daily and available for purchase in our 'Farm Store' with our carrot cake with cream cheese frosting being our #1 seller. Grab a pastry and a beverage and have a seat underneath one of trees or in the flower

garden and enjoy.

## Farm Fresh Eggs



Did you know that we sell fresh eggs? Our eggs are collected daily from our hens and sold directly to our customers no later than 24hours to ensure optimal freshness.

## Silkie Chickens



The Silkie (sometimes alternatively spelled Silky) is a breed of chicken named for its atypically fluffy plumage, which is said to feel like silk. The breed has several other unusual qualities, such as dark blue flesh and bones, blue earlobes, and five toes on each foot, whereas most chickens

only have four. They are often exhibited in poultry shows, and exist in several colors including red, buff, blue, grey, black, white, and many mottled variations.

In addition to their distinctive physical characteristics, Silkies are well known for their calm, friendly temperament. Among the most docile of poultry, Silkies are considered an ideal pet. Hens are also exceptionally broody, and make good mothers. Though they are fair layers themselves, laying about three eggs a week, they are commonly used to hatch eggs from other breeds and bird species. Silkies come in both a full-sized and diminutive forms, the latter being typically known as Silkie Bantams.

Silkies appear in two distinct varieties: Bearded and Non-bearded. Bearded Silkies have an extra muff of feathers under the beak area that covers the earlobes. They also are separated according to color. Colors of Silkie recognized for competitive showing include black, blue, buff, grey, partridge, splash and white. Alternative hues, such as Cuckoo, Red, and Lavender, also exist.

## Local Medicinal Plants & Shrubs

### Lemon Grass “Fever Grass”



Lemongrass is widely used as a culinary herb in Asian cuisines and also as a medicinal herb in India and the Caribbean. It has a subtle citrus flavor and can be dried and powdered, or used fresh. It is commonly used in teas, soups, and curries. It is also suitable

for use with poultry, fish, beef, and seafood. It is often used as a tea in Caribbean and Latin American countries such as Mexico.

Lemongrass oil is used as a pesticide and a preservative. Research shows that lemongrass oil has antifungal properties. Despite its ability to repel some insects, such as mosquitoes, its oil is commonly used as a "lure" to attract honey bees. "Lemongrass works conveniently as well as the pheromone created by the honeybee's Nasonov gland, also known as attractant pheromones. Because of this, lemongrass oil can be used as a lure when trapping swarms or attempting to draw the attention of hived bees."

### Rosemary Bush



This shrub was used to cure many ailments, as well as a shampoo, while the branches made a good broom to sweep the yard. The leaves were also dried and used as tobacco to smoke or to relieve asthma.

Rosemary contains two chemicals known as camosic acid and carnosol. These substances are not only extremely potent cancer cures, they also are said to protect against the deadly effects of radiation exposure.



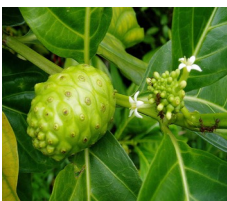
### Serasee/Cerasee



This climbing vine has small, bitter fruit which turn bright orange when ripe, and split into three parts to expose red pulp-coated seeds within. Parts of the fruit can cause undesirable effects such as vomiting, although the mature fruit was used to make cough syrup.

When made into a tea, the plant was used to build appetite, treat colds, fevers and painful menstruation and also to treat high blood pressure and diabetes.

### Nuni Fruit



The health benefits of this small round fruit include lowered cholesterol and lower blood sugar. Believe it or not, noni is part of the coffee plant family. It's hardy plant that thrives in a tropical environment and has a pungent scent when ripening.

Considered a tonic to help erase fatigue and give a natural energy boost when consumed as a freshly pressed juice. That said, if you have kidney problems steer well clear, you'll find noni to be quite the opposite of a wonder-fruit for its high potassium levels could cause you some problems.

### Aloe Vera



From treating cuts and burns, to acting as a purgative, aloe vera has a range of traditional medicinal uses due to its antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, antiviral and antifungal properties. The gel inside the thick leaves of the plant was, and still often is, applied topically to treat sunburn, minor cuts, wounds and skin infections and has even been used for eye issues. A juice produced from aloe vera has been used traditionally to treat nerves, lung issues, diabetes and high blood pressure and was also a laxative.

### Vervine



As its alternative moniker of worry vine suggests, this plant was traditionally drunk as a tea to treat nervousness. The tea also had other wide-ranging uses as a treatment for measles, heart conditions, coughs and colds, colic, jaundice and to help babies sleep. The leaves of the worry vine were also used topically, mashed and applied to the body to treat fever and boils.

### Headache Bush



The aptly named headache bush was used as a treatment for headaches. A tea was made from the leaves and stems, and it was claimed that this concoction killed bacteria in the blood and therefore eased headaches. Alternatively, the leaves of the headache bush could be used in their dry form, crushed and the odor inhaled, akin to smelling salts. Toothaches could also be alleviated by the headache bush, by applying dry, crushed leaves as a topical application

### Leaf-of-life/Curiosity Plant



The list of traditional medicinal uses of this plant certainly lives up to its grandiose common name. Juices produced by the leaves of the leaf-of-life succulent was often drunk to treat coughs, colds and sore throats, or the leaves chewed as another method of curing coughs. Externally, swellings and other injuries could be bathed in a concoction made from the leaves, or the plant was used for skin infections.

### Castor Bean Plant



Castor bean plants have been used in traditional medicine for a long time, and their use continues into modern times. Their seeds contain a highly poisonous substance, which is inactivated by

heat. The castor bean plant is the source of castor oil, which was taken internally as a laxative, and sometimes to treat coughs and colds. Externally, the oil could be used for sore throats and ear pain, and the leaves were used on boils or to extract heat.

### Periwinkle



The plant has been traditionally used to slow tumor growth, due to cancer-fighting properties it contains. Periwinkle was previously used as a diabetes treatment in many traditional medicines, and a tea made from the pretty

plant, which has a toxic sap, was used to treat high blood pressure, coughs and diarrhea.



## Local Medicinal Plants & Shrubs.. cont

### Sour Sop



Soursop (also graviola, guyabano, and in Latin America, guanábana) is the fruit of *Annona muricata*, a broadleaf, flowering, evergreen tree. The exact origin is unknown; it is native to the tropical regions of the Americas and the Caribbean and is widely propagated. It is in the same genus, *Annona*, as cherimoya and is in the Annonaceae family.

With aroma similar to pineapple, the flavor of the fruit has been described as a combination of strawberries and apple, and sour citrus flavor notes, contrasting with an underlying creamy texture reminiscent of coconut or banana.

Soursop is widely promoted (sometimes as "graviola") as an alternative cancer treatment, but there is no medical evidence it is effective for treating cancer or any disease.

### West Indian Cherry



This a fruit bearing plant that grows to form a thick, bushy shrub. The crimson colored fruit is the edible part, and it is consumed whole or in juice form; it is loaded with nutrients, and has been used as a medicinal herb for centuries. A good source of calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium, phosphorous, and Vitamins A, B1, B2, B5, B6 and particularly, Vitamin C. As with most deeply colored foods, Acerola is also rich in beta-carotene.

#### Medicinal Uses

Acerola contains antifungal, antioxidant, and astringent properties. It has been used to hydrate the skin, support the liver, and has been known to combat diarrhea and fever.

### Papayas



Papayas grow in tropical climates and are also known as papaws or pawpaws. Their sweet taste, vibrant color, and the wide variety of health benefits they provide make them a popular fruit.

The possible health benefits of consuming papaya include a reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, aiding in digestion, improving blood glucose control in people with diabetes, lowering blood pressure, and improving wound healing.

Papayas are a soft, fleshy fruit that can be used in a wide variety of culinary ways. Here we will explore more on the health benefits, uses, how to incorporate more of them into your diet, and what nutritional value papayas have.

### Moringa



Moringa is a plant that is native to the sub-Himalayan areas of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan. It is also grown in the tropics. The leaves, bark, flowers, fruit, seeds, and root are used to make medicine.

Moringa is used for "tired blood" (anemia); arthritis and other joint pain (rheumatism); asthma; cancer; constipation; diabetes; diarrhea; epilepsy; stomach pain; stomach and intestinal ulcers; intestinal spasms; headache; heart problems; high blood pressure; kidney stones; fluid retention; thyroid disorders; and bacterial, fungal, viral, and parasitic infections.

Moringa is also used to reduce swelling, increase sex drive (as an aphrodisiac), prevent pregnancy, boost the immune system, and increase breast milk production. Some people use it as a nutritional supplement or tonic.

Moringa is sometimes applied directly to the skin as a germ-killer or drying agent (astringent). It is also used topically for treating pockets of infection (abscesses), athlete's foot, dandruff, gum disease (gingivitis), snakebites, warts, and wounds.

Oil from moringa seeds is used in foods, perfume, and hair care products, and as a machine lubricant.

Moringa is an important food source in some parts of the world. Because it can be grown cheaply and easily, and the leaves retain lots of vitamins and minerals when dried, moringa is used in India and Africa in feeding programs to fight malnutrition. The immature green pods (drumsticks) are prepared similarly to green beans, while the seeds are removed from more mature pods and cooked like peas or roasted like nuts. The leaves are cooked and used like spinach, and they are also dried and powdered for use as a condiment.

The seed cake remaining after oil extraction is used as a fertilizer and also to purify well water and to remove salt from seawater.

### Home Made Ice Cream



Fancy something cold to cool you off on a hot day? Why not try one of our home made ice creams made with ingredients from our farm. You can choose from sour sop, passion fruit, mango, banana, coconut or others depending what's in season. Available from our "Farm Store"

### Did You Know?



The sap of the "nesberry" tree was used by early Caymanins as chewing gum? The tree was tapped for it's white resin like milk, sweetened and flavored and left to dry overnight leaving a latex type paste that could be chewed just like gum.

