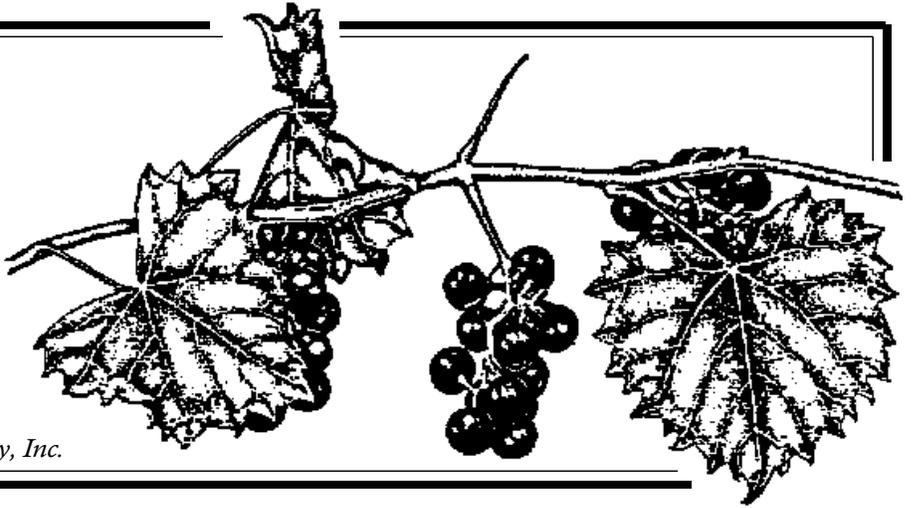


www.suncoastnps.org

The Suncoast Grapevine

Newsletter of the Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc.



Volume 31 Number 5

May 2014



Open Mic: Five minute Native Plant talks

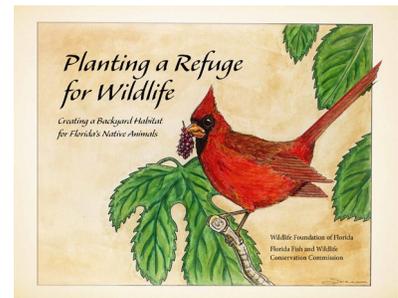
Presented by You
Wednesday, May 21, 2014 @ 7PM
Hillsborough County Extension Office



Want to show what you have done in your yard, get suggestions about what might work in your yard or just show us some pictures of your favorite native plants?

Please come to our May meeting, sign up to talk and be ready to share your pictures on an USB drive. Let our combined experience help with your plant questions, we have experts on native plant identification and landscaping. We also have a lending library with many good resource books for members to check out. Our plant auction can help fill in those empty spots in your yard at a reasonable cost, often plants go for \$2-\$4.

New members get a copy of the booklet- *Planting a Refuge for Wildlife*, we also have copies for sale (\$5) .



Our meetings include light refreshments and a plant auction afterwards.

- submitted by Janet Bowers



The Florida Native Plant Society was organized in 1980 to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida. For more information about the Florida Native Plant Society, please visit our web site: www.fnps.org

Spring USF Plant Sale



We had 180 different species thanks to Troy Springer, our plant sale chair. He gave up several days of his time again this year to make our sale a success. We would love to let him step down from chair and just be the plant person. We are looking for a new plant sale chairperson, please let someone on the Board know if you are interested. The person would organize volunteers, supplies and monitor the sale to be sure that we have what we need. Please consider volunteering.

Saturday was a busy day but we managed to make time to sing Happy Birthday to Troy and share his birthday cake with everyone in attendance.

Starting with several volunteers on Friday we were able to label and price all the plants that we had. Saturday set up morning was not nearly as hectic as normal but the customers were very heavy and we sold out of popular blooming plants before noon.

We sold over \$7,000 of plants, books, T-shirts and signed up 6 new members. We had a profit of almost \$3,000.

Thanks to everyone who helped!



UPCOMING SPEAKERS-

June – Lisa Roberts – Wildflowers

July – Joint meeting, SNPS hosting At Nature's Classroom

Aug – Juliet Ryneer – Conservation Project Update



Thanks for helping with the April meeting to -

Fred Mulholland, Harriett Wright, Bunny Worth, Janet Bowers
for providing plants for the auction.

Vivian Kilgore and Nina for bringing the refreshments

Thanks every month to Joanne Hoffman, Joel Jackson, Gar Reed, Vikki Sinclair, Mike Fite, Shirley Denton and Stephen Dickman for your on-going efforts!

Note from the Editor

10 years - that is how long I have been a member of FNPS. It took me a couple years before I went to a meeting, I actually went to a conference as a Bok Tower volunteer before I had been to a local meeting. This year is the seventh conference that I have attended. It's been a fun ride, I have learned a lot, met some great people and I've been happy to do my part to making SNPS successful. I think the same theory applies to membership as it does to most things in life - it's a journey not a destination, enjoy the journey, be in the moment and open to new possibilities.

- *Janet Bowers, Grapevine editor*



Letter from the President

Ten Things I've Learned From Plant Sales

1. The Sparkleberry is not related to the Sugarberry but it is related to the Blueberry. The Sugarberry is sometimes called the Hackberry which suggests it may not be at all good to eat.
2. If it's blooming, it will sell, especially if it's a Milkweed. 
3. People moving from out-of-state are some of the most eager to learn about Florida natives.
4. Everybody loves cake and a good birthday party. 
5. Most people favor birds and butterflies over snakes and possums, except Troy. He likes possums!
6. When buyers know they can use their credit cards, they buy more. 
7. Most people choose plants to: decorate their house, feed them or attract wildlife. Plants that serve double duty are especially attractive.
8. Holding a plant sale is a huge team effort, but if everyone pitches in, it will be a success.
9. People would use more native plants in their yards if they were readily available.
10. If someone has not joined FNPS, it's probably because no one has asked them.

Devon Higginbotham



Need a Speaker?

Need a speaker for your civic group, gardening club or homeowner's association? The Suncoast Native Plant Society has speakers with a wide range of knowledge, eager to speak about the virtues of native plants. Contact Devon Higginbotham (archiveproperties@gmail.com) or one of the board members to see how we can customize a talk to fit your needs.

Little Manatee River State Park, April Field Trip

Eight people took advantage of what proved to be the last cool day of the year on our April 19th fieldtrip to Little Manatee River State Park . Carmel, who currently volunteers at the park, led the group.

Little Manatee River State Park has a variety of habitats, from scrub to floodplain. We followed Carmel through the nature trails near the picnic area. As we walked through Pine Flatwoods, Scrubby Flatwoods, Hydric Hammock and Scrub we observed a great deal of vegetation. Sparkleberry was putting on a great show. The small stature trees were heavy with little white urn shaped flowers. We compared leaves on the Chapman oak and Myrtle oak. We admired the plentiful and beautiful False dragonhead by the riverside. The Fringe tree, one of our target plants, had few blossoms, and we did not identify any of the pigmy variety. In the scrub we observed Deer moss, Spike moss, Prickly pear, and Blackroot . We then carpoled to a different area of the park. This was near the youth campground. It was full of large, twisted live oaks. We witnessed a rare fern growing by the water. A short walk to river, we saw the intricate flower of the Swamp Milkweed. Along the river bank we saw lots more False dragonhead, Spider lily and Pickerelweed. We even saw manatees in the river!

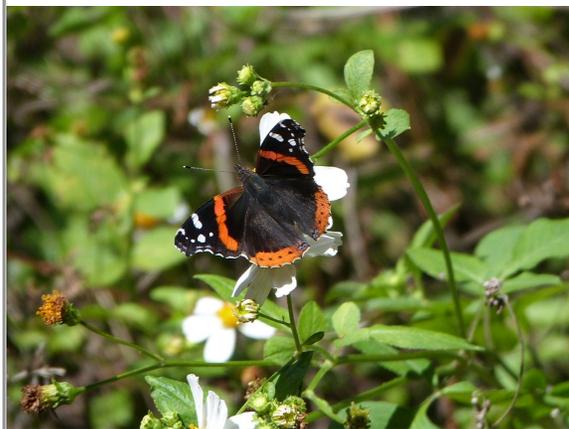
But the sights didn't end there. Stepping just off the trail to get a closer look at some Lizard's tail, we were enveloped in a jungle like canopy of oaks, with large ferns blanketing the floor. It was breathtaking. We stood, silently, for a few minutes to absorb the tranquility of the moment.

A Partial List of Plants we saw:

Sparkleberry	<i>Vaccinium arboretum</i>
Chapman oak	<i>Quercus chapmanii</i>
Myrtle oak	<i>Quercus myrtifolia</i>
False dragonhead	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>
Fringe tree	<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>
Deer moss	<i>Cladonia spp</i>
Spike moss	<i>Selaginella spp),</i>
Prickly pear	<i>Opuntia humifusa</i>
Blackroot	<i>Pterocaulon pycnostachyum</i>
Swamp Milkweed	<i>Asclepias perennis</i>
Spider lily	<i>Hymenocallis rotata</i>
Pickerelweed	<i>Pontederia cordata</i>



-submitted by Donna Bollenbach



THE RED ADMIRAL GOES BIDENS

This observation is not about a Soviet Naval Officer who had a little too much caviar and has gone off the starboard bow, but one of nectar with the one you are with. Many of us are quite familiar with Bidens alba aka Spanish Needles in our yards. The much respected University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agriculture Science (IFAS) uncharitably calls alba a common weed. In reality, *Bidens alba* is an excellent source of nectar for Florida's pollinators. Bidens also provide year around entertainment in our gardens since there are usually insects flying around the flowers making this a very interesting habitat. Unfortunately, the Bidens can be a bit too successful and rightfully has been called an invasive native, but it is certainly not a weed!

-submitted by Mike Fite



Dates to remember

May 10 - Before the meeting - Fieldtrip - see page 5
May 15-18 FNPS Conference

May 10th -Adjacent to Alderman's Ford Park, Alafia River –Knight Parcel.

Where: next to softball field on Rt 39

When : 9AM



SUNCOAST CHAPTER
Florida Native Plant Society

An interesting site with nice trails through xeric hammocks with bridge crossing over the north prong of the Alafia River. The trail leads to relic phosphate mine site with interesting topography and plants. Timed to see *Sacoila lanceolata* var. *lanceolata* in bloom. Might see white flowered form of *Passiflora incarnata* in bloom too. Please bring hats, water, mosquito repellent, and sunscreen. Check with other members for car-pooling. Shirley Denton is the contact (986-6485). Look for more info on Meetup or suncoastnps.org



2014 Field Trip schedule

May 15th – 18th FNPS conference - check out FNPS.org for Conference info, the field trips look great, they include trips led by Roger Hammer and Walter Taylor and they range from Botanical gardens to swamp.

Sunday June 22st - Fish Hawk Preserve — Some trail time and some off-trail time to walk through habitats just south of the Alafia including sand hill, scrub, flatwoods and riparian forest of Fish Hawk Creek and the Alafia River. Maybe find Carolina coralbead in flower?

Saturday July 19th - For buying trip -- possibly Pine Lily nursery. The nursery is pleasant and has good variety. They are near Ona -- if timed to coincide with blooming butterfly orchids, finishing at Solomon's Castle is worthwhile -- they have a small restaurant that is unique and reasonably good, and there are many butterfly orchids in the live oaks. Confirmation of location is coming soon.

Saturday August 23rd – TBA – Possible night hike?

Saturday Sept. 20th – Balm Scrub Preserve, Balm - Scrub and flatwoods and scrubby flatwoods, great place to see fall wild flowers.

Saturday October 18th – Ridge Manor Cypress Lakes -- A Hernando County environmental lands site -- Mark Hutchinson led a 2012 conference field trip there and will be our guide.

Sunday November 9th – Rhodine Scrub Preserve , Riverview – The scrub here is a little fire suppressed but it is habitat for the endemic Florida golden aster (thousands of them) which should be in flower. Earlier in November is usually best time to see the maximum number in flower.

Hernando Chapter Meeting

The speaker for our June 2nd program will be FNPS member Terry Godts. Knowing of the imminent destruction of a 72 acre expanse of pristine scrub/sandhill in Lake County, Terry undertook the effort to relocate many of the special and listed species of plants found on the doomed parcel. Initially she collected seeds, propagated them, and planted them at her home to create a small restored upland habitat. Over the course of a dozen years, this small restoration area became the adopted home to 15 to 20 gopher tortoises and other upland species that moved in to take advantage of this newly created native food source. With such success, Terry searched for a publicly owned place to move some of the listed plant species she had propagated. That was the beginning of another restoration, this time at the Lake Louisa State Park in Clermont, Florida. Terry will present the story of this labor of love.

Terry is owner/partner of Green Isle Gardens located at 6043 Lake Erie Rd., Groveland, FL. 34736, a retail native nursery specializing in Florida upland plants as well as other plants that attract wildlife. She is also current Co-President of the Florida Association of Native Nurseries. Terry has served in Lake County government, chairing the Land Acquisition Committee and as a board of the Land Planning Agency.

We will be meeting at 6:30 at Chinsegut Hill, 22495 Chinsegut Hill Road, Brooksville, FL 34601. For a map go to www.HCFNPS.org. Any questions should be directed to hcfnps@gmail.com.

-submitted by Mark Hutchinson

Polygala cruciata
(Drumhead)

A poly of
 gala,
A cluster of
 diamonds,
Star-studded
 cotton candy,
Pink lolly
 POPs!
Flawless
 geometry,
Who did you
 cross
to be dubbed a
 Drumhead?



Photos, text and poem by Donna Bollenbach

Polygala cruciata, Drumheads

Some native flowers are greatly admired, but have yet to make it into our gardens. One is the showy Drumhead, *Polygala cruciata*.

With a few exceptions, Drumheads are found throughout Florida. Like many members of the Polygalaceae or Milkwort family, they like moist, open habitats and are found in moist prairies, the edges of marshes, and wet pinelands.

The Drumhead is an annual. Its conical pink to lavender flowers are arranged on elliptical heads. The "flower" is actually composed of the pink, spiky sepals surrounding a tiny yellowish-white flower. As the flower fades, the sepals remain for several weeks, forming the "drumhead." While the nested sepals may give the impression of little crosses, the scientific name "cruciata" actually refers to the shape of the 4-angled stem. The short, linear leaves occur in whorls around the stem.

Look for Drumheads in moist open landscapes in late spring to early fall. They stand only 4 - 12 " tall, but are easily spotted because of their bright color and showy cones.

All references I found indicate that this flower has yet to be cultivated for home landscapes.



FWC highlights efforts of 4,000 volunteers for Florida Volunteer Month

More than 4,000 volunteers help with 80 volunteer projects annually, bringing a wide range of skills, experiences and perspectives to the FWC team. Their efforts lend to the agency's success in conserving the naturally beautiful habitat of Florida, which is a key to wildlife sustainability.

Over the past six years, FWC volunteers have contributed 656,955 volunteer hours to make great strides in conservation as they tirelessly continue to:

- Fight the formidable battle against invasive species.
- Expand the range of many valuable imperiled-species-monitoring projects.
- Instruct Florida's youth, residents and visitors on how to become responsible anglers and hunters.
- Educate the public about living with wildlife.
- Improve the visitor experience at many wildlife management and wildlife environmental areas.

For example, volunteers discovered a rare wasp species. This rare invertebrate effort was a partnership with the Florida Natural Areas Inventory to identify rare invertebrate species as well as determine invertebrate diversity at Chinsegut Wildlife and Environmental Area and the Citrus Tract of the Withlacoochee State Forest. Volunteers also expanded the nest box monitoring range for the Southeastern America Kestrel Partnership. Volunteers monitored 10 boxes in Hernando County during the 2011 breeding season and are currently monitoring 95 boxes throughout the north central and south-west regions of Florida. The kestrel nest box monitoring program is a citizen science effort to help biologists assess kestrel populations statewide.

From- myfwc.com/news/news-releases/2014/april/23/volunteer-month/

Places to see Natives - Hillsborough County Roadside Wildflowers

Sharbel Riveron stopped by our March meeting to share the news about roadside wildflower plantings. He said that black-eyed susan and coreopsis will be among the flowers to be planted.

More native wildflowers will soon be found along roadsides in select rural areas of Hillsborough County. A pilot wildflower planting program, partially funded through a Florida Wildflower Foundation grant, has been started by Hillsborough County Public Works.



Hillsborough County staff and horticulturalists with the University of Florida Cooperative Extension used soil and site evaluations to select the following locations for the first four 600-1000 square foot wildflower sites:

- ☆ Lithia Pinecrest Road, between Bryant Road and Lithia Estates Drive
- ☆ Progress Boulevard/Madison Avenue, between U.S. Highway 41 and Madison Industrial Lane
- ☆ County Route 39, between Tipton Road and Old Hopewell Road
- ☆ East Fletcher Avenue, between Telecom Drive and Lettuce Lake Parkway

Roadside signs identifying the new wildflower planting areas are installed at all four planting locations. Site preparations are scheduled to begin in early May, with all the plantings expected to be completed by early July.

The wildflower planting program was approved as part of a Board of County Commissioners resolution last year to encourage the conservation of native wildflowers on state and county roads, and support roadside maintenance.

For more information about the County's wildflower program visit Public Works' Programs & Projects or contact project manager Sharbel Riveron at 813-272-5641.

Media Contact: Andrea Roshaven, Communications and Digital Media Services, 813-307-8380.

-Submitted by Janet Bowers, some info from hillsboroughcounty.org

Florida Native Plant Society Membership Application

Membership in the Florida Native Plant Society enables you to receive their wonderful quarterly magazine *The Palmetto*. Joining the SNPS also entitles you to membership privileges in the Suncoast Native Plant Society and a subscription to their monthly newsletter *The Suncoast Grapevine*. Contact the membership chair, Shirley Denton, at 986-6485.

New Member

Renewal

Name _____

Business name or organization _____

Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

Home phone _____ Email _____

Check pertinent category:

Individual/Renewal \$35

Full time student \$15

Library subscription \$15

Family or household \$50

Contributing \$75

Life \$1,000

Not-for-profit

organization \$50

Business or

corporate \$125

Supporting \$100

Donor \$250

Make check payable to FNPS.

Detach and mail to:

FNPS

P.O. Box 278

Melbourne, FL 32902-0278

Activities & Committee Chairs

Field Trips

Shirley Denton 986-6485
Steve Dickman 326-0221

Publications

Dick Wunderlin 977-6484
George Kish 920-0853

Librarian

Vikki Sinclair 989-2896

Membership

Debbie Butts 754-7374

Newsletter Editor

Janet Bowers 759-2822
Mike Fite, Assistant 977-0892

Programs

Troy Springer 967-4538
Janet Bowers 759-2822

Publicity/ social media

Donna Bollenbach 679-5597

Outreach

TBD

USF Plant Sales - need volunteer

Troy Springer 967-4538

USF Botanical Garden Liaison

Kim Hutton 974-2329

Chapter Representative

Devon Higginbotham 478-1183

Webmaster

Ron Huston 951-0946

2014 Board of Directors

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Gar Reed
gar0426@yahoo.com

Board Member

Donna Bollenbach
donna.bollenbach@gmail.com

Newsletter Submissions

Deadline for the next issue:

June 1 2014

Please send articles and original artwork for The Suncoast Grapevine to **Janet Bowers**, by the deadline above. **Text should be in MS Word; graphics should be in a standard graphic format (.jpg, .bmp, .gif).** Previously published artwork should be accompanied by a letter of permission from the original publisher.

Email-

jbowers27@yahoo.com

DIRECTIONS TO:

Hillsborough County
Extension
5339 County Road 579
Seffner

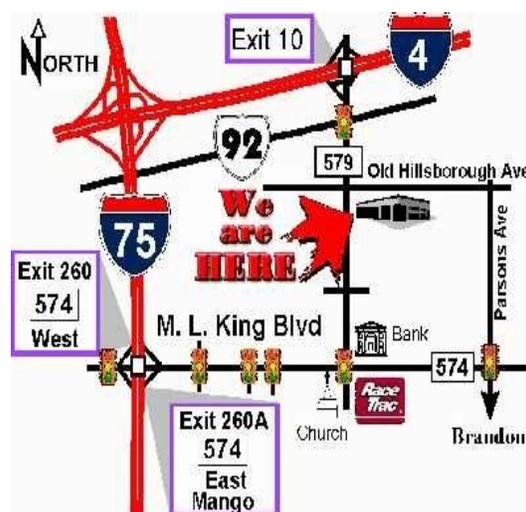
Take I-4 to Exit 10 (just east of I-75). Go south for two blocks. The office is at the corner of Old Hillsborough Road and County Road 579.

Meeting Location

The Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc. meets the third Wednesday of the month @ 7pm @ the Hillsborough County Extension Service office in Seffner.

SNPS Web Address

<http://www.SuncoastNPS.org>



Suncoast Chapter of Florida Native Plant Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 1158
Seffner, FL 33583-1158



Please deliver to: