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

APRIL CHAPTER MEETING
At the Hillsborough County Extension Office

Dispelling Misperceptions About Trees
Presented by Virginia Overstreet
Wednesday, April 19, 7 PM

There are many misperceptions about trees. Some of them have been passed from one generation to the next without any critical evaluation about the truth of the beliefs. Trees can provide a home and food for birds, some are butterfly host plants. Often we plant trees first or preserve existing trees when we do a landscaping plan, they provide the bones of our yard’s structure. The shade aspect is also important in Florida, planting to help save energy costs by keeping your home cool in the summer can be a good way to ‘go green’.

Evergreen or deciduous is an important choice, if you want to have more sun in the winter then a tree that sheds its leaves can be a good choice. As always when choosing new plants- Right plant, Right place is extra true for trees. Check the mature height of a tree before you decide where to plant or if the tree is even suitable for your yard. You are investing in the future with a large tree, make sure that it can have a long, happy life and won’t encroach on your house or other structures.

So after you’ve made a good plan and decide on what trees you’d like to have, what maintenance do they really need? Learn more about the care and maintenance of your trees and how to keep them healthy from Virginia.

Virginia Overstreet has been a Florida Master Gardener Volunteer since 2001. She has been a Certified Arborist since 2009. She enjoys gardening to attract birds, pollinators and beneficial insects.

Light refreshments are served and a native plant auction follows the presentation.

- submitted by Donna Bollenbach & Janet Bowers
UPCOMING SPEAKERS-

May 10 – Note date change due to conference – Open Mic meeting – 5 to 10 min talk by members who want to share pictures or other native plant topics, no politics or sales. Chris Kidddy will be showing a slide show on the native plant garden that SNPS helped fund for E.G. Simmons Park

June 21 – Cheryl Peterson from Bok Tower  Endangered plant research

July 19 – Ross Dickerson to speak on the ELAPP program. Joint meeting with Audubon and Sierra Club, SNPS is hosting. This will be at the Extension office as usual. We will be looking for volunteers to help set up, provide drinks and clean up.

August 16 - TBD

Bring Home the Natives from the 2017 USF Spring Plant Sale
* Saturday, April 8 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m
* Sunday, April 9 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m

Look for our tent, First Vendor on the Left!
Great selection of Natives for Your Yard

Thanks for helping with the March meeting -

Cliff Brown, Craig Huegel, JoAnn Hoffman, Bunny Worth
for providing native plants for the plant auction
-> Don’t forget that we need help from everyone bringing plants for the Auction!

Lucy & Fred Fuchs for bringing snacks

Joel Jackson for auctioning the plants

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Letter from the President:

If you follow our Facebook Page, visit the FNPS website, or read the Blog, you already know that registration is now open for the 2017 FNPS Conference. I hope you have already registered, but if not, I’m going to give you some reasons to give it a try.

The conference will feature some of your favorite native plant authors and speakers: Craig Huegel, Roger Hammer, Alan Franck, and Scott Davis, to mention a few. This year we are also flying in Dr. Suzanne Simard, a scientist from the British Columbia known for her ground-breaking research on trees in the forest communicate for survival. (Craig Huegel mentioned her renowned research in our last meeting.)

See a place you’ve never seen before, or see a place you’ve been to in a whole new way: For some people the field trips are a favorite perk of the conference. For each day that you register you get to go on one field trip. You can choose a field trip that matches your interest and physical ability. There are buggy and tram rides, pontoon boats, strolls, and hikes. Field trip leaders are chosen for their expertise in a habitat or restoration area, so expect the unexpected, and prepared to be “wowed!”

With a venue closer to home, the conference is more affordable. Each year I plan my budget around attending the conference, because I really enjoy it, and I feel it is well worth my time and money. This year the home of the conference, Westgate River Ranch Resort and Rodeo, is only 1 hour 45 minutes from Tampa, and closer if you live east of the city, so it could be so much more affordable. You could easily drive in for a day. Better yet, share the ride or lodgings with a friend. All the rooms have kitchenettes, so you can make your own meals if you wish. (If all goes as planned, next year it moves to south Florida, then after that it will be in the western Panhandle, so if you plan to attend, this is the year to do it.)

You will be in good company: My first FNPS Conference was in Fort Myers in 2014, and the great people of our chapter and the society is what keeps me going back. Past SNPS President, Janet Bowers, agrees. She has attended every conference since the one SNPS hosted in Plant City in 2012. She notes the 2015 conference when, on short notice, I took on the monumental task of hosting the silent auction, I was a bit overwhelmed at the conference, but everyone from our chapter helped. In Janet’s words: “The spontaneous willingness to help demonstrates what a great group of people the native plant society is.”

Janet goes on to say, “It (the conference) might not be what you expected but is always worth the time. It could be the conversation with a person you just met, or a new book about plants with the author who created it. Come for the day or come for the whole time and experience a FNPS conference for yourself!”

See you there,

Donna

SNPS Conference attendees in 2014

Find more reasons to register and links to conference information and programs visit the FNPS Website and blog.

Volunteer Hours

Tina Patterson (mablepatterson@hotmail.com) sent out the first request for volunteer hours. Please let her know what hours you have spent so that she can keep the SNPS information up to date. The SNPS board members work hard to keep SNPS running and we all can do our part to help them!

T-Shirts

The T-Shirts are in and we will have a few for sale at the plant sale. If you already ordered one and did not have your shirt sent directly to you then Donna has your shirt and you can get it at the next meeting. SNPS raised over $300 from this effort. Thanks to Donna for doing this fundraiser.
FNPS News.... The 2017 Conference May 18-21

Connections: Above and Below

Conference registration is OPEN! To get lodging information or the latest updates on the conference, visit our website: http://www.fnps.org/conference/2017.

Advisor needed for Leto School Project:

SNPS received the following request for advice on planting natives in the atrium of this High School. If you are interested in speaking to the students or going to the school and advising them what to plant where, please contact Sean Murray sean.murray@sdhc.k12.fl.us Phone: 813-690-9327. If you would like to coordinate the donation and delivery of tools and plants to meet the school's needs, you can make an announcement at the next meeting. (They do not plan to do the planting until early June, so you will have ample time to coordinate and deliver goods.)

Here is Sean Murray's request for assistance: I am a science teacher at A. P. Leto High School, 4409 w. Sligh Ave., Tampa, FL 33614. We are a title 1 school in Tampa Florida. The school was built in the 50's and she is showing her age. There are several private schools in the area that draw students and funding away from this once elite public school. Students at Leto come from modest and proud families that often work multiple jobs. We would like to create a Florida friendly landscape in our Science Atrium and hopefully if well received, spread it throughout the campus. We have a $0 dollar budget, but have enthusiastic students who are not afraid of getting dirty. What we are looking for is: mulch, sea shell gravel for a pathway, clippings of Florida native plants we can grow and plant like coco plum, sea grape, pigeon plum, flowering plants like hibiscus, butterfly plant seeds like milkweed, native grasses that don't require mowing, old tools we can make new, old hoses we can make into soakers, rain barrels, or anything else people do not want anymore.

Lettuce Lake Update
From Tina Patterson

Tina writes that the Lettuce Lake Garden native milkweeds are being investigated by monarch butterflies and that we have caterpillars!

Our next walk is April 22 at the Earth Day event. Stop by and check it out for yourself! It is great that we have enough interest to support the maintenance of this garden plus the Wilderness parks’ gardens and the HCC garden in Plant City.

Mark Your Calendar

April 8-9  USF Spring Plant Sale - Come and support Your SNPS
April 8  Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park Spring Wildflower Walk
April 22  Earth Day Event - Hillsborough County 100 - Lettuce Lake
April 23  11- 4 Plant City HCC Garden Earth Day event, SNPS will be a vendor
2001 E. Cherry St. Plant City
April 23  1:00 to 5:00 PM - Wine & Cheese Open House at the Mulholland's house, 15410 Stonecreek Lane, Tampa, FL 33613. An all Native Yard!
April 26-30  Camping at St Joe’s Peninsula State Park, reserve your camping site now.
May 18-21 FNPS Annual Conference at Westgate River Ranch Resort near Lake Wales http://www.fnps.org/conference/2017
Oct 27-29  Fall camping trip at Myakka State Park, tent camp overnight or come for a day
April 15 Fieldtrip
Balm Boyette Scrub Preserve
Wagon Trip

** THREE SPACES HAVE OPENED UP FOR THIS TRIP **
SEE THE EMAIL SENT WITH THIS NEWSLETTER FOR INFORMATION ON RESERVING A SPOT OR EMAIL donna.bollenbach@gmail.com

**Where:** Triple Creek Parking lot at 13305 Balm-Boyette Road

**When:** 9:00 AM (meeting at 8:45)

The Florida Scrub is one of the most endangered plant communities in the United States. It is dominated by evergreen shrubs and patches of bare, white sand. The Balm Boyette Scrub, located south of Brandon in Riverview, is Hillsborough County’s largest continuous piece of sand pine scrub. In addition to the rare sand pine scrub and xeric oak scrub habitats, it contains pine flatwoods, oak hammocks, grassy meadows, wet prairie, freshwater marsh and cypress swamp. We will visit various areas in the scrub to see what natives are in bloom, and you will have opportunities to get off the wagon and explore. But, the wagon tour is about more than the plants, you will also learn about the history of ELAPP, the preserve, and the efforts by the county to acquire additional lands and create a wildlife corridor through Hillsborough County.

We have not yet confirmed the exact location of parking and boarding the trailer, so if you are registered for this wagon tour, please watch your email for details. We recommend that you wear long pants, sunscreen and a hat. Bring water to drink and maybe a snack.

Contact for trip Donna Bollenbach 813 679-5597

Prescribed Burn at St. Joseph Peninsula State Park

The photo shows a recent burn at St. Joe State Park in early February. This could be great timing for our chapter’s field trip to the park for seeing new spring wildflowers. The area burnt is next to the Maritime Hammock Trail.

This trail is an easy 45 minute loop walk over a short boardwalk and sand dunes into a hammock area. If the walk is done at low tide it may be possible to walk the St. Joseph Bay beach. A tide chart in the central time zone is available at the ranger’s station.

Mike Fite

2017 Field Trip schedule

April 15  Wagon trip at Balm Boyette Scrub Preserve in Riverview, $5 to the county, trip is full
April 26-30  Camping at St Joe’s Peninsula State Park, reserve your camping site now.
May 13  Wolf Branch Creek Preserve and E.G. Simmons Park - Donna will be leading a hike, seaside gentian might be blooming at Wolf Branch
May 18 & 21  FNPS conference fieldtrips near River Ranch
June 24  Bok Tower tentatively
Aug 19  Nursery buying trip
Oct 27-29  Camping trip at Myakka State Park, reserve your site at Old Prairie camping area

The Suncoast Grapevine - April 2017  Page 5
ANOTHER INTERVIEW WITH OUR FEARLESS LEADERS (SUNCOAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

Our Secretary, Tina Patterson

**Question:** Where did you grow up and who inspired your interest in plants?

**Answer:** “I lived here in Tampa most of my life. We did a little gardening growing up but we didn’t study plants. My father would assign each of us kids a weed to pull and he would give them a name like “cat weed”, “dog weed” or rabbit weed”. I believe my “weed” to pull was actually Nut Sedge.

I taught Math in school for 37 years and during the summers, we vacationed in Colorado. I would join hikes with Audubon and Sierra and they would point out plants which got my interest.”

**Question:** What developed your interest in native plants?

**Answer:** “I heard about the Florida Native Plant Society through Sierra and Audubon. I saw the display at the joint meeting. I wanted to volunteer for something but most of the opportunities with the other groups were political and I wanted to work with my hands. Teaching school kept me indoors for most of my life. For years I’ve been telling people that when I retire, I’m going to volunteer at Lettuce Lake Park and through the Suncoast native plant society I was able to.”

**Question:** What are your goals and what do you hope to accomplish in 2017 on the Suncoast board?

**Answer:** “To get people that move to Florida to appreciate what we have here and then to work to preserve it. They don’t know how our ecosystem works or what belongs here and it’s important for the public to be aware. I’ve watched how hard Donna has worked to get our chapter out there in front of the public and I want to support that.”

**Question:** What is your favorite Florida native plant?

**Answer:** “One plant that always surprises me, and I like surprises, is Black root, *Pterocaulon pycnostachyum*. It’s so unassuming on the edge of the trail but then you realize it has:

- Winged stems
- White on the underside of the leaves
- Bloom is cone-shaped with tiny flowers

It’s very different and surprising!”

~ Devon Higginbotham
Plant City HCC/Community Garden News

We’ve had a fourth caterpillar in our area. This one is a monarch and was munching away on the small swamp milkweed (*Asclepias perennis*) last I saw it. The corky stem passion vine attracted a gulf fritillary soon after I planted it.

We had a great work day on April 2nd - more weeding, raking and organizing has happened. The pinxter azaleas have bloomed, the coffees are blooming now and the blue eyed grass flowers are opening every afternoon. The native petunia is lovely, next to the rosinweeds that are starting to bloom. We saw a zebra longwing butterfly flit through the area while we were there. There was also a snapping turtle watching us from the other side of the ditch. You never know what you’ll see in our small gardens.

The mimosa has exploded by the garden entrance, lots of powder puffs are popping out above the green carpet of leaves.

Coreopsis is showing its happy face in many beds.

The garden will be hosting an Earth Day event on April 23 (see above info), vendors will be there including SNPS from 11 to 4. There will be live music and food trucks- Hope to see you there!

~ Janet
Plant Profile - Netted Chain Fern - *Woodwardia areolata*

Family - Blechnaceae

This fern is common in our area, it can be up to a foot and a half tall and likes moist areas. It has fertile fronds instead of having spores on the back of all the fronds. The non-fertile fronds are shown below in the pictures. They are deeply lobed without the secondary divisions that some ferns have. Looking closely at mature leaves, you can see the reason it is named 'netted chain'. It spreads by underground rhizomes and can create a lovely ground cover in a shady, moist area. It is dormant in the winter and may disappear in colder weather.

It is widely cultivated and available for sale at Florida Native Plant nurseries.

Plant Atlas link -
http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/Plant.aspx?id=3686

FNPS link- 
http://www.fnps.org/plants/plant/woodwardia-areolata

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SNPS Earth Day Event, April 23, Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed at the Botanical Treasures Native Plant Garden in Plant City (HCC) for a special community Earth Day Event. SNPS will have a booth there, and we will be giving people tours of the native plant gardens, as well as selling books, tee shirts and tote bags. We will also have a children's activities table organized by Niki Cribbs and Terri Nowik. This is a great opportunity for us to show off the garden and talk to the community about planting natives in their landscapes. The event is from 11 - 4 but we will need volunteers there from about 9 am-5 pm including set-up and clean up. If you would be willing to come for two hours or more on Sunday April 23rd to help, sign up at the April meeting or email donna.bollenbach@gmail.com.

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May Fieldtrip

Donna Bollenbach will lead a hike into Wolf Branch Creek Preserve and E.G. Simmons Park in Ruskin (southwest Hillsborough County) In addition to the high diversity of salt marsh plants and trees at Wolf Branch, we may see Seaside Gentians in bloom. After hiking for a few hours in Wolf Branch, we will carpool over to Simmons Park to see the native plant garden that SNPS help fund, check out other native plants in the wild, and if desired, we will find a picnic table to eat lunch (bring your own.) More info coming in May newsletter and on website.
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 SNPS membership chair, Devon Higginbotham, at 478-1183.

Check pertinent category:
- Individual $35
- Business or non-profit $150
- Full time student $15
- Family or household $50
- Supporting $100
- Patron $250
- Gold $500
- Sustaining - $10 a month w/credit card
- Visa
- MC
- Expiration __________ Card # ________________________ Code ____

Make check payable to FNPS.

Detach and mail to:

FNPS
P.O. Box 278
Melbourne, FL  32902-0278

Join FNPS on-line - http://fnps.org/participate/membershipinfo

When it comes time to renew, FNPS will send you an email with a link in it. Your information will already be filled out, but you can edit it if it is out of date. This link is unique to you and not to be shared with others.

**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 SNPS membership chair, Devon Higginbotham, at 478-1183.

- New Member
- Renewal

Name ____________________________

Address ____________________________

City, State and Zip ________________

Home phone ________________ Email ________________

See the Current issue of the Grapevine or suncoast.fnpschapters.org for details on each event.

Coming up in the next 2 months -
Newsletter Submissions
Deadline for the next issue: May 1, 2017
Please send articles and original artwork for The Suncoast Grapevine to Janet Bowers, by the deadline above: jbowers27@yahoo.com

SNPS Web Address
http://www.SuncoastNPS.org

We're on Meet Up & Facebook

Regular meetings are in Seffner

Meetings are normally the third Wednesday of the month at 7 PM. (no December meeting)

DIRECTIONS TO:
Hillsborough County Extension
5339 County Road 579
Seffner

Take I-4 to Exit 10 (just east of I-75). Go south on 579 for two blocks. Turn left on Old Hillsborough Ave and park on the North side of the office.

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

Please deliver to: