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The Suncoast Grapevine

Newsletter of the Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc.



Volume 29 Number 6

JUNE 2012

Birds of Prey

Presented by Steve Davis
Wednesday, June 20th @ 7 PM
Hillsborough County Extension Service



Twenty-eight years ago, Steve Davis was talking with a friend who worked as a wild game officer when a call came in about an injured bird in the Lake Thonotosassa area. Steve rode along out of curiosity... and ended up taking the bird home and caring for it himself! Back then, there were no established rehabbers to take the bird to.

Before the bird was well enough to release, Steve was hooked. He got his permits and licenses and continues caring for sick and injured birds to this day.

Join us as Steve shares his story of involvement with birds of prey - and maybe, just maybe - he'll bring along one of his patients!

- Submitted by Devon Higginbotham



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



FNPS: Progress on the Web

FNPS created its first website around 1999. It consisted of a loose collection of pages that chained from one to another with no consistent style and no menu. By 2001, FNPS had paid a designer to add 4 buttons on the home page so that there was at least a grouping of items when the user first came to the site. At that time, we were paying both to have the site hosted on a small private server and to have someone maintain the site. Things began to change in 2002 when the first real menu that sat on all pages was imposed, and the site was moved to a corporate server (hosting donated). This represented the beginning of a series of upgrades in capabilities, and also represented the last of the programming charges (all subsequent programming has been donated by members). By 2005, the current web team was in place, and we were using an established hosting provider.

As the head of the FNPS Website Committee, I came into the picture in 2002 as someone with both computer programming skills and enough html and php skills to believe that we could have an organized site and that it was appropriate for key FNPS leaders to handle most of the posting of content to that site. Cindy Liberton got involved in 2003 as we decided to give the site a new look and again further its capabilities which grew to include what became known as "chapter pages" which were editable by chapter leaders. Paul Rebman began to volunteer in the mid-2000s (2005?), and rapidly became the go-to guy for assisting people with passwords, answering how-to questions, and posting content.

It is hard to believe, but our home-grown content management system survived to 2012. That is a long time in internet land. We went from a world of no programming (html only), no style (no css), and no javascript to a world where all of them had changed several times over. In fact, we went through several time periods with everything would "break" as new editions of these basic web design tool would come, and the new one would not be compatible with the previous versions (sigh). The last two years have been particularly intense with the growth of new web standards, huge increases in css and javascript capabilities, and a plethora of browser upgrades -- you've likely noticed this as web sites have gained slide shows, videos, and oh, people trying to use them from mobile phones and tablet computers.

Last year, even when some of the most recent changes were still not readily available, FNPS decided to upgrade its site. I decided to upgrade it to as modern as we dared go.

On June 1, we released the new site. Let us invite you to explore and contribute. Lots of things are new:

- ☆ A focus on telling the world who we are, what our mission is, and how we accomplish it
- ☆ Plenty of modern touches such as slide shows -- you'll see one on our home page.
- ☆ Useful tools and information -- check out the "resources" tab to find lots of information on native plants, native plant communities, and where to go to learn about them. I am particularly pleased with the plant pages which provide colorful photographs and tons of information about natives that are used in landscaping projects...."plants for your area" along with a tool for matching up your site conditions and landscaping goals with the plants.
- ☆ Connections to social media (you'll find the latest blog post on our home page)
- ☆ Tools for society and chapter leadership (login required, but find in menus near the bottom)
- ☆ Information on how to participate -- check out the "participate" tab
- ☆ Behind the scenes, we have a modern login and permission system, administrator tools to edit almost anything without needing to program them, and lots of flexibility not offered by typical content management systems...and all of it easy to use!

We hope you take the time to explore, to enjoy the site, and to contribute to its future growth. If you'd like to make any comments or volunteer, send an email to webteam@fnps.org.

- Shirley Denton, Website Committee Chair

2012 FNPS Conference Report Part I

After two years of planning, worrying, and hard work, May 17th - 20th of 2012 finally arrived for our **FNPS State Conference**. Our team hit the ground running nonstop for this four day event. At first, it seemed as if the whole works were imploding on us. There were some glitches in some AV equipment and we were concerned whether some of our speakers would ever arrive. However, what seemed like a disaster to us appeared to be very minor to our participants. The rest of the conference seemed to go off very smoothly.



Everything about the **Trinkle Center** made this facility a great place to have a conference. The staff at the center was very friendly and helpful, and they contributed so much to make our conference successful. The **University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences** donated the use of the facility, which gave us the ability to develop an exceptionally high quality event. We are very thankful for their support!

The conference team that was comprised of members from the **Suncoast Chapter** and the **Hernando Chapter** has to be one of the most talented, dedicated, and ambitious teams I have ever



worked with during my ten years of civic service. I am so proud of the hard work this group put forth to produce our conference. From the comments I have received so far, this is one conference that will forever be in our memories as special. As a member of **SNPS**, I hope you are proud that our chapter took the lead in producing this conference and showcasing our precious natural and cultural treasures of our community!

I want to thank everyone that participated in this event and give a special thank you to the dedicated people from both the **Suncoast and**

Hernando Chapters that worked so hard to make this conference one of the best. It was an absolute pleasure meeting and working with the volunteers from the **Hernando Chapter**. There is so much talent and dedication in that chapter; the hardest part about finishing the conference is not seeing and working with the Hernando volunteers on a regular basis anymore!

We are still working on gathering all of the information needed to give a full report on the success of our conference. Stay tuned next month for a full report. **Meanwhile, you can see photos from the event at our Flickr site: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/fnps>.**

- Submitted by Troy Springer, top photo Lori Sheldon, bottom Paul Rebmann

Note: Next month's meeting will be a joint meeting between SNPS, Tampa Audubon and the Sierra Club. Audubon is hosting. It will be held on the SECOND Wednesday, July 11 at Nature's Classroom.

Happy Birthday, Shirley Petty!

Some SNPS oldtimers will remember Shirley Petty, who was an early member of the chapter, and a great lover of traipsing about in Florida's wild places. Shirley was also active in *Learning in Retirement*, now known as *Osha Lifelong Learning*.

On Friday June 1st, Shirley's sons Harvey and Eddie threw a big birthday bash to celebrate her 90th birthday at Harvey's home in South Tampa. Among the many attendees were SNPS members Dick and Trevetta Wunderlin, Fred & Barbara Mulholland and Harriett Wright, as well as some of her old friends from LIR including Osha director Ara Rogers.



- Submission and photo by Harriett Wright

USF Botanical Gardens 14th Annual Butterfly, Herb and Native Plant Fair

The University of South Florida Botanical Gardens is hosting its 14th annual Butterfly, Herb and Native Plant Fair June 9-10.

Along with butterfly gardening and herb growing tips, vendors at the fair will be selling a variety of butterfly plants, herbs and native plants.

On Saturday, June 9, there will be five workshops: *Tea Talk* by Kalaisia Teas at 11 a.m., *Growing Tea Plants and Butterfly Gardening with native plants* at noon, and *Growing Herbs for Teas, and Butterfly Garden Tour and Talk* at 1 p.m.

Admission for the general public is \$5 and free for children 12 and under and USF Botanical Gardens members. Parking is free. Proceeds support the USF Botanical Gardens.

The USF Botanical Gardens are located at 12210 USF Pine Dr. For more information call (813) 974-2329 or visit the garden's [website](#).

- USF Botanical Gardens photo & press release



Plant Profile

Common name: Beach verbena
Botanical name: *Glandularia maritima* (L.) Small
Synonyms: Coastal mock vervain, seaside verbena
Family: Verbenaceae (Vervain)
Growth Habit: Perennial creeping groundcover
Habitat: Beach dunes, coastal strands, maritime forest
Size: 1 feet x 3 feet
Leaves: Dark, glossy green leaves
Bloom: Five lobed, rose-pink to purple one-inch flowers in flat-topped clusters
Flowering time: Spring; sporadically throughout rest of year
Landscape use: Good groundcover for well-drained slopes; can be trimmed back severely. Its flat-topped flower clusters are attractive to butterflies



Growing conditions

Light: Full sun
Water: Drought tolerant after establishment
Soil: Sandy, alkaline, well-drained
Salt Tolerant: Yes

Propagation: Seed, creeping stem cuttings

Motility: Spreading occasionally by self-sown seeds; roots along stem as it spreads

Maintenance: Removal of spent plants at end of growing season

Availability: Native plant nurseries, occasionally from other nurseries

Comments: Beach verbena occurs primarily along the east coast of peninsular Florida. It is similar in description to Tampa mock vervain (*Glandularia tampensis*) of the central peninsula, but Tampa mock vervain does not tolerate salt or drought and has a more upright growth habit.

Note: *Beach verbena* is one of the 33 plants featured in the soon to be published Suncoast chapter book, *The Right Plants for Dry Coastal Places: Native Plant Landscaping with Salt Tolerant Plants in Peninsular Florida* by Richard P. Wunderlin and George R. Kish.

References:

Osorio, Rufino, 2001, *A Gardener's Guide to Florida's Native Plants*: University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, 345 p.

Wunderlin, R.P and B.F. Hansen, 2011, *Guide to Vascular Plants of Florida*, Third Edition: University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, 783 p.

Wunderlin, R.P. and B.F. Hansen. 2012. *Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants* (<http://plantatlas.usf.edu/>).

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:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Renewal \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Not-for-profit organization \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full time student \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business or corporate \$125 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library subscription \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family or household \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Donor \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$75 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life \$1,000 | |

Make check payable to **FNPS**.

Detach and mail to:

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Newsletter Submissions Deadline for the next issue: **JULY 1**

Please send articles and original artwork for The Suncoast Grapevine to **Shawna Everidge**, by the **deadline** of this month. **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...

severidge@plantcitygov.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](http://www.SuncoastNPS.org)



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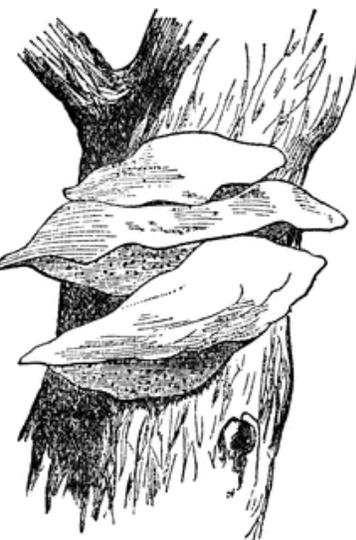
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