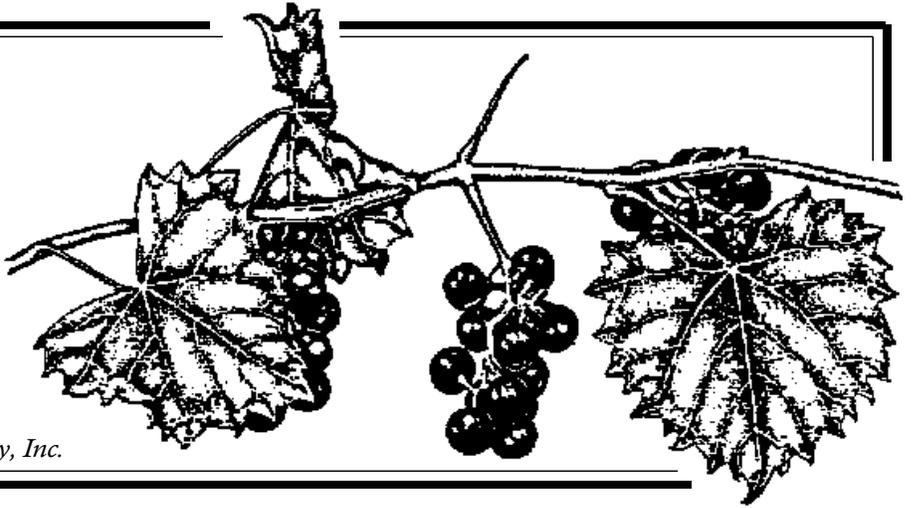


www.suncoastnps.org

The Suncoast Grapevine

Newsletter of the Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc.



Volume 31 Number 6

June 2014



Florida Wildflower Foundation

Presented by **Lisa Roberts**
Wednesday, June 18, 2014 @ 7PM
Hillsborough County Extension Office

Lisa Roberts, Executive Director of the Florida Wildflower Foundation, will be our June speaker. From the wildflower license plates to the roadside plantings and the education grants, the Florida Wildflower Foundation is making a difference in Florida. They are one of the important partners of the Florida Native Plant Society, the FWF mission attracts a lot of attention since wildflowers are the showy native plants that everyone admires and wants to see more of. The wildflowers also mean that more butterflies and other pollinators can find food and will be in the landscape for your enjoyment. They have several events throughout the year including the Wildflower Symposium which will be Sept. 19-20, 2014 at Bok Tower Gardens. (Doug Tallamy is scheduled to speak on Sept 19).



Lisa will be speaking about FWF's current programs. One of the newer programs is 'Wildflowers, Naturally!', it recognizes gardens dedicated to native wildflowers, flowering shrubs, grasses and vines. For more information visit flawildflowers.org/wildflowers_naturally.php. There are tips and basic landscaping plans available on the website.

She will be bringing some of the FWF's great handouts and answering questions as well. Their website flawildflowers.org is a wealth of information – from where to see wildflowers to research project results. You can also follow them on Facebook to see current pictures and articles.

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



FNPS 2014 Conference

SNPS was represented by 11 people at the 2014 conference in Ft Myers! We went on wonderful fieldtrips - mine was to Corkscrew Swamp (see page 9). After some great speakers, the Friday social was held at the Naples Botanical Garden, we ate under a large tent complete with flags and lanterns. Saturday, the general meeting took place and Troy Springer was recognized with a Green Palmetto award (picture on page 5). Devon was elected VP of Finance on the FNPS board. **More conference info starts on page 4.**

The Florida Gulf Coast University campus was very impressive, complete with a boardwalk though native plants and an edible garden. The facilities are relatively new and well designed. They have solar powered trash cans with compactors throughout the campus and require students to take an environment class. The dorms were a hoot and definitely took me back to my college days, except the bathroom was not too bad and it was in the room, not down the hall. The plant sale was outstanding and the vendors were varied. I bought several books from authors and the University Press which gave us a discount. The Coccoloba chapter did a great job of planning the conference, I appreciate all the work that goes into a conference much more since we hosted it in 2012.

See you in Tallahassee next year!

-Submitted by Janet Bowers

UPCOMING SPEAKER-

July – Roger Hammer speaking on – Wildflowers of the Historic Everglades

Our joint meeting, SNPS hosting at Nature’s Classroom – potluck

Roger is an award-winning professional naturalist, author, botanist and photographer who lives in South Florida and is a long time FNPS member.



Thanks for helping with the May meeting to -



Cliff Brown, Shirley Denton, Bunny Worth, Janet Bowers
for providing plants for the auction.

Barbara Fite for bringing the refreshments

SNPS recognized Mike Fite for his many years of behind the scenes efforts !

A special thank you to our Open Mic Night speakers last month who took the time to put together pictures of their own yards, and share their successes, failures, goals and “aha” moments.

Janet Bowers
Joel Jackson
Kathleen Farr
Trisha McCarthy
Ileana De Jesus

-Submitted by Devon Higginbotham

Note from the Editor

Thank you for all the feedback I got from my short yard overview at the May meeting. I have been hesitant to get in front of the group to talk, but plants are probably the easiest topic for me to discuss. I could talk for hours about the plant projects and thoughts that I have had over the years of Master gardener talks, Epcot festivals and now the Native Plant Society. As a Biology major in college, I was always interested in plants and invertebrates, some of my favorite memories are the fields trips I took - one to the Florida Keys and another to an upstate NY bog. Somewhere in the middle of my life I got caught up trying to make a living and raising my wonderful children, I’m happy to be back and involved in learning about plants. I was lucky enough to spend some time at Little Manatee River State Park on Memorial Day with Carmel and Bunny - please check out the pictures on Facebook.

- Janet Bowers, Grapevine editor



Letter from the President



The Secret Native Plant Society

Pssst! Wanna know a secret?

Who isn't intrigued by this question? Is it the thought of being privy to something few people know or, perhaps, hearing some titillating story? But how many times has your mother told you, "Don't tell secrets"!

I remember the first time I learned about native plants and thought, "Where have they been all my life and how come I never knew about a whole category of plants that were right under my nose". I felt that I had discovered a secret!

For 30 years, Suncoast has been working tirelessly, planting and cultivating Florida's native plants, but have we been keeping it a secret? Is there some part of us that enjoys knowing what others don't know? Can we afford to remain a "secret society"?

As we watch the progression of civilization marching across Florida and the new comers bringing their gardening ideas from Indiana, India or Italy, it's apparent education is in order. Are we to remain on the sidelines with our secrets or is it time to share what we know?

I think it's time for all of us to engage in a bit of cathartic secret telling. Contrary to what your mother always told you, for once in your life, it's OK to tell secrets, and share the story of Florida's native plants.

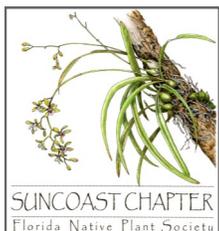
Are we telling others about the connection between the passion vines and Gulf Fritillaries, or what birds are really looking for in their yard? Have you told them why bugs and bees are such an important part of their landscape? Or, perhaps, they just need to know that butterflies flitting from flower to flower may be looking for something besides nectar.

The next time someone new moves into your neighborhood, take them a flyer on native plants, invite them to our meeting or on a fieldtrip, give them a membership application, or take them one of your "volunteer" plants for their yard.



Share your secret! I promise not to tell your mother!

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.

2014 FNPS Conference

What a weekend! It started on Thursday with a field trip to Matanzas Pass Preserve on Ft Myers Beach (a lovely beach which I would love to return to) , 60 acres that were purchased by the citizens of the area or donated to the city to provide the wonderful bay estuary we have today.



Traveling by car for 20 minutes farther south, we arrived at Lover's Key, a gulf island created by hurricane Donna in the 1960's, and were introduced to the ebb and tide of the ocean and its influence on coastal areas.

The Suncoast chapter is very excited to announce that our chapter had 11 members attend the 2014 conference. As far as I could tell, no other chapter, except possibly the host chapter, had more members attend. We are very proud of our Suncoast members and their commitment to native plants.

-submitted by Devon Higginbotham

**Back Row: Carmel vanHoek, Lucy and Frank Fuchs, Shirley Denton, Troy Springer, Stephen Dickman and Janet Bowers.
Front Row: Daphne Lambricht, Donna Bollenbach, Devon Higginbotham and Bunny Worth.**

What Plants Talk About

Dr. J.C. Cahill

I was looking forward to this talk after viewing the associated episode of PBS's Nature on the web. This talk did not disappoint me since it included my favorite combo of humor and science. Dr. Cahill is from Canada but he has been working on some universal theories about the behavior of plants. Previously, plants were just considered resources but Dr. Cahill is out to prove otherwise.

He illustrated several examples of behavior-

- ◆ All plants do not always react to their neighbors in the same way, they can distinguish genetically related ones and act less competitively
- ◆ Some plants (e.g. tobacco) react with a unique smell depending on what is damaging them so that predators of that particular attacker can be attracted to the area
- ◆ Plant 'movement' was shown in time elapsed video, while plants do not actually get up and move to another place, their root growth is capable of many reactions to nutrition, neighbors, micro rhizomes and other changes in the soil



This is an emerging area of botany that has potential agricultural applications. Some of the problems growing a monoculture of crops could be better solved using this new information if it can be adapted to large scale growing conditions.

I was fascinated by this topic and highly recommend that you watch the show on the web -

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/episodes/what-plants-talk-about/video-full-episode/8243/>

-submitted by Janet Bowers

Troy Springer Awarded a Green Palmetto for FNPS Service

A SNPS member for the past 10 years, Troy assumed the additional responsibilities of the Suncoast Board of Directors for 2006 – 2011 and, again this year, in 2014. He was Suncoast's president in 2009 and 2010. He broadened the concept of participating in local education events, sometimes representing the chapter singlehandedly.

As FNPS Conference Chair for 2012, Troy's leadership was instrumental in the evolution and execution of this very successful conference in Plant City. He led a two-chapter team during a time of transition between two FNPS executive directors when the team had to supply most of its own knowledge base to plan the conference.

Each spring and fall for the past 5 years, Troy has also been the Chair of our main fundraiser, the native plant sale at USF, a

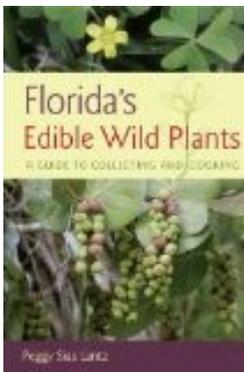
weekend long event that tests the stamina of any native plant enthusiast. He arranges for plants, picks them up from the nurseries, and returns any that did not sell. In many years, he has also organized the volunteers. His tireless work has led to financially successful and well attended sales.

He is also a vocal advocate for native plants through his business, Springer Environmental, using his landscaping skills to promote native plants and wildflowers. He readily speaks to both novices and experts, garden clubs, civic organizations, and FNPS chapters about his experiences in growing natives and creating landscapes that are locally appropriate and which change dynamically through the seasons. His personal garden brings many people into native plant landscaping. Troy also enjoys being in nature and is willing to delve into some of the densest and remotest thickets to find hidden botanical treasures.

The Suncoast Chapter wholeheartedly nominated Troy Springer for the Green Palmetto Award for 2014 and congratulates him on the award!



New book from Peggy Lantz



A new book is available from University Press and the SNPS library has a copy that members can check out. Peggy has over 50 years of experience eating wild plants and this expanded version has much more detail than the older version. She is a long time FNPS member and edited the Palmetto for 15 years. The drawings in the book are again from Elizabeth Smith (designer of our new logo).

The book includes information about what the plants look like, where to find them and how to prepare them. Often the scientific name is broken down into its parts and explained. In case you have an overabundance of things like Spanish needles and spiderwort like I do, now you can read about ways to do something besides put them on the compost pile. There is a separate recipe section in case you already have a plant and just want to know some ways to use it. A cautionary section towards the end mentions some things to avoid and an appendix listing plants by season, by plant part and by state region concludes this useful book.

-submitted by Janet Bowers

FNPS Fieldtrip: Hickey's Creek Mitigation Park (HCMP)



I chose the fieldtrip to Hickey's Creek Mitigation Park (HCMP) because it was being led by Dr. Walter Kingsley Taylor. I had never met him before, but I have been using his wildlife guides to identify plants for many years. HCMP is co-managed by the Lee County Dept. of Parks and Recreation and the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission. It consists of a variety of habitats including palmetto-oak scrub, pine flatwoods and seasonal wetlands. A mitigation park is an area purchased in attempts to offset the detrimental impacts of development on a certain species or native plant community. HCMP was mitigated to protect gopher tortoises, Florida scrub jay, and other flora and fauna that share the habitat they thrive in.

I arrived at HCMP when it opened at 7 am, over two hours earlier than the rest of the FNPS group. I wanted to hike and take some images in the early morning light. After studying the map, I decided to visit the fishing pier and hike Hickey's Creek Trail, about a 2 mile loop. Along the boardwalk I saw lots of buttonwood in bloom. At the fishing dock, overlooking the creek, a beautiful White Milkweed vine (*Sarcostemma clausum*) was in bloom. The trail followed the creek for awhile, where I saw lots of wild coffee, ferns, Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) and Forked Blue Curls (*Trichostema dichotomum*). After leaving the creek side I hiked through scrubby flatwoods. There I saw beautiful Scarlet Ladies Tresses (*Saciola lanceolata*), and a Downy Yellow False Foxglove (*Aureolaria virginica*).



After hiking the loop, I went back to the parking lot to meet the rest of the group. A native wildflower garden there had Lanceleaf Blanketflower (*Gaillardia aestivalis*), and the more common Blanketflower (*Gaillardia pulchella*). Annisa Karim, the park biologist, and our contact for this trip, announced that we carpooling to an area at the south end of the scrub for our plant walk with Dr. Taylor.

As expected, the scrub was very hot, but intermittent spring showers helped to cool us off. Dr. Taylor identified many plants for us. He was extremely approachable and very nice. Some of the wildflowers we saw were White Beardtongue (*Penstemon multiflorus*), Pitted Stripeseed (*Piriqueta cistoides*), Florida Native Ironweed (*Vernonia angustifolia*) and Pineland Hyacinth (*Clematis baldwinii*). The fieldtrip was also a great way to meet FNPS members from other chapters. It was a great start to my first FNPS conference.



-submitted by Donna Bollenbach

Council of Chapters Information on FNPS.org

Take a look at the new council of chapters area on the web (<http://council.fnpschapters.org/>). Items being worked on include a spreadsheet of past speakers to share amongst chapters looking for speakers for their meetings. If you are a speaker or know of a good one, please update the spreadsheet.



Fieldtrip- Sunday, June 22 to Fish Hawk Nature Preserve

Where: parking lot for Creative World Day Care Center at 5525 Osprey Ridge Dr., Lithia, FL
When : 9AM

We will explore some recently burned sand hill habitats and the interesting hardwood forest adjacent to Fish Hawk Creek and the Alafia River. Shortly after 9AM , we will form a carpool and transport from the Creative World parking lot to the power line right-of-way to the north, then drive west for a half mile to the access point. If you have a 4 wheel -drive vehicle and are willing to assist with transportation, please let me know. The expected time in the field is 3 to 4 hours. Bring insect repellent, water, snacks. Wear close-toed hiking shoes and a hat.

Donna Bollenbach is the contact (813 679-5997). Look for more info on Meetup or suncoastnps.org

2014 Field Trip schedule

Saturday July 19th - Buying trip -- possibly Pine Lily nursery. The nursery is pleasant and has a good variety, also they have recently burned. 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., Troy is coordinating this.

Saturday August 23rd – TBA

Saturday Sept. 20th – Balm Scrub Preserve, Balm - Scrub, flatwoods and scrubby flatwoods, this is a 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.

Mary Miller Recognized by Hillsborough Parks, Recreation & Conservation Department



Mary was recognized as the Volunteer of the Month for February 2014. She volunteers over 20 hours per month at Flatwoods Park--Wilderness Site. She has designed and constructed 43 Blue Bird houses. She along with her husband, John installed the houses around their 7 mile loop at Flatwoods Park. Mary monitors and maintains the houses every week during the Blue Bird Season and at the end of the week she submits a detailed report on the Blue Birds. Also in addition Mary is a member of the Florida Native Plant Society. Mary has helped park staff design and construct several Native Gardens within Wilderness Park and helps park staff maintain these gardens. Mary volunteers a great deal of time throughout the year.

For more information about volunteer opportunities at Flatwoods Park--Wilderness contact Eddie Anderson at 813-987-6211.

- from the Hillsborough Parks Dept. newsletter

Dates to remember



- June 14-15** USF Butterfly, Herb & Native Plant Fair
- July 16** Joint meeting with Audubon and Sierra Club at Nature's Classroom
- Sept 19-20** Wildflower Symposium at Bok Tower, Doug Tallamy is scheduled
- Sept 27** Plant City Gardenfest
- Oct 11-12** USF Fall Plant Sale

THE DRIVE TO 4TH PLACE!!!



The members of SNPS are our best cheerleaders and our biggest asset. They know more about Florida native plants than most native Floridians. So when I was thinking of ways to increase our membership, it seemed right to go to the experts.

Starting May 21st and running until our Christmas party in December, we will be having a membership drive. The goal is to move from 8th place (according to the April 2014 Summary Membership Report) to 4th place. If all the other chapters remain at their current membership, we need to recruit 17 new members to reach 4th. Of course, if any of the other chapters would like to challenge us, we are prepared for the race. Bring it on!!!

According to the FNPS April 2014 Summary Membership Report, the breakdown by chapter for the top 8 chapters is:

Paynes Prairie	285
Dade	240
Pinellas	231
Palm Beach	148
Magnolia	140
Serenoa	136
Tarflower	135
Suncoast	132

At our December Christmas party, the top 4 recruiters will have the opportunity to choose from the following prizes:



- * \$75 gift card to a native nursery
- * 1 day 2015 conference registration
- * 1 hr yard cleanup by Springer Environmental with a 3 man crew
- * Signed and framed Scrub Jay print

Suncoast is one of the oldest chapters in the state and covers all of Hillsborough County where 1,300,000 people reside. Currently our members total .01% of the population, so there is plenty of room for recruiting.

Talk with your neighbors, friends, co-workers and family. Take along the FNPS membership application which you can download at <http://fnps.org/society/docs> It's about half way down on the left side. Be certain to write in "Suncoast" under chapter and put your initials by it.

Volunteer for one of our outreach events where we have interested parties and don't forget to ask, "Are you a member of the Florida Native Plant Society?" "Would you like to be?"

-submitted by Devon Higginbotham

Hillsborough County Wildflower Initiative

Through the urging of the Suncoast NPS, Hillsborough County recently enacted the Florida Wildflower Foundation's Resolution to protect roadside wildflowers. However, the county has gone a step further and is establishing 4 roadside "plantings" of wildflowers throughout the county with signs designating the "Do not Mow" areas. Suncoast is working with the county to determine the best type flowers, most ideal planting dates and methods of cultivation to get these natural areas started and to continue this project in perpetuity.

-submitted by Devon Higginbotham



Hillsborough Co Crew seeding a new wildflower site

Places to see Natives - Corkscrew Swamp

I'd never been to Corkscrew, so when I saw it as one of the 2014 FNPS conference field trip choices, I had to go with it. We hiked single file into a non-public part of the park where we saw a lot of cypress, tillandsias and ferns. This Audubon sanctuary has cypress trees 700 years old (they would be older but the original forest burned down). We helped measure a large cypress at the end of the trail, it was over 20 feet in diameter. My favorite plants were the many strap ferns and pond apples.



Strap fern



After lunch, part of the group walked the boardwalk and I highly recommend doing that if you get a chance.

Lots of scarlet hibiscus were nearby (only 1 bloom), alligator flag and even alligators. In a dwindling pool we saw birds feeding. Farther on, we saw a barred owl up close. At the end of trip we saw 3 deer near the walkway. There were several orchids along the way but they were not blooming at the time.



Sky flower

There is a nice visitor center and gift shop. I will be going back soon.



Barred owl

-Submitted by Janet Bowers

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
Stephen Dickman 326-0221

Publications

Dick Wunderlin 977-6484
George Kish 920-0853

Librarian

Vikki Sinclair 989-2896

Membership

Open

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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archiveproperties@gmail.com

Co- Vice-presidents

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Janet Bowers
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Bunny Worth
msworth@tampabay.rr.com

Treasurer

Gar Reed
gar0426@yahoo.com

Board Member

Donna Bollenbach
donna.bollenbach@gmail.com

Newsletter Submissions

Deadline for the next issue:

July 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: