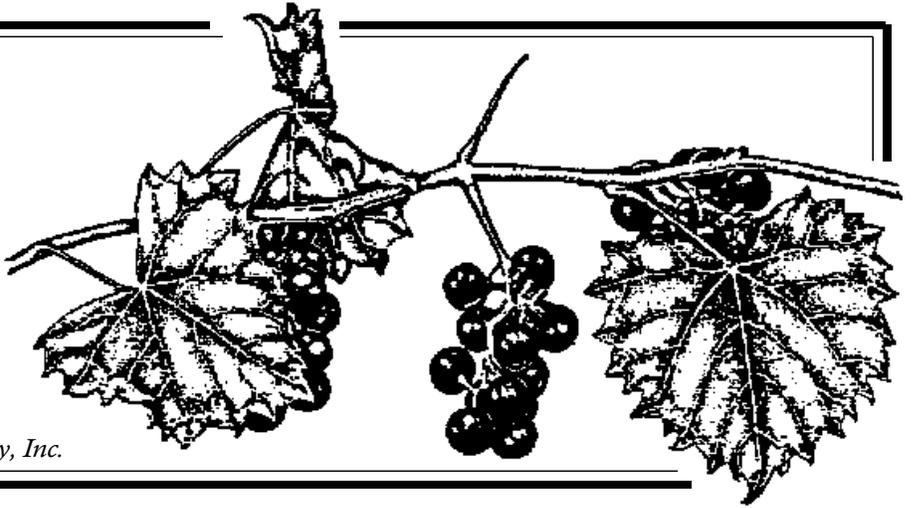


*www.suncoastnps.org*

# The Suncoast Grapevine

*Newsletter of the Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc.*



**Volume 34 Number 5**

**May 2017**



**MAY CHAPTER MEETING**  
At the Hillsborough County Extension Office

**Open Mic**  
Presented by YOU  
Wednesday, May 10, 7 PM

\*\*\*\*\* **THIS IS A WEEK EARLY!** \*\*\*\*\*

Our May Chapter meeting has been moved up one week due to the FNPS Conference. As usual we will have an Open Mic Nite. This is your time to make a short (10 minute) presentation, ask questions, show pictures, or discuss any topic related to the Florida native plants and the FNPS mission. **NO Politics or Sales Pitches Please.**

- ☆ Chris Kiddy from Hillsborough County Regional Parks and Nature Preserves will be showing a slide show on the native plant garden that SNPS helped to fund at EG Simmons Park.
- ☆ Tina Patterson will provide an update on our Native Garden at Lettuce Lake along with the success of our Native Plant Walks.
- ☆ Donna Bollenbach will be testing out the Plant Pictionary game she designed for the FNPS Conference social. She will split the room into teams and have a few rounds of fun.

*And, what will you add?*

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

*- submitted by Donna Bollenbach & 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](http://www.fnps.org)



## ASHE'S MAGNOLIA

by Devon Higginbotham

In the wee hours of dawn on April 17th, members of FNPS took off on our tour of north Alabama. By April 22nd, 6 days later, all returned home safe and sound and, speaking for myself, utterly exhausted. It was a wonderful whirlwind tour of the natural areas of our neighboring state with some non-plant activities thrown in, like the Muscle Shoals Sound Studio, the Ave Maria Grotto and the Huntsville Space and Rocket Center. After all, music, eclectic art and German beer are important human endeavors!

Looking back, several moments stand out, but one I remember distinctly was seeing the Ashe's Magnolia for the first time. Our guide, John Manion, curator of the Kaul Wildflower Garden in the Birmingham Botanical Garden, was regaling the group with stories of obtaining funding and building the Kaul Wildflower Garden and his distinct voice just trailed off in the distance when I caught drift of the aroma of some intoxicating flower. Inquiring to anyone listening (to me, not John) I was directed to a small tree that bore resemblance to our *Magnolia grandiflora* but without all the gloss on the leaves. These leaves were thin and delicate with a lighter green, but much larger than the grandiflora. Some looked to be a full two feet long. And the flowers were in their full radiant bloom, laid open on the lower limbs until the petals rested on the leaves and resembled an enormous dinner plate offering up an exotic dessert. I was entranced.

The first week after returning to Florida, the FNPS board met to vote on the upcoming Conservation grant awards which will take place at our annual conference in May. The Conservation Committee had already reviewed the grant applications and selected their nominee, but it was up to the board to make the final vote. To my surprise, one of the grant applicants was Dr. Gary Knox for the project: Exploration into the biology and ecology of the Florida endangered *Magnolia ashei* (Ashe's Magnolia). Dr. Knox applied to the FNPS Conservation Committee to receive a \$5,000 grant to determine the risk factors that contribute to its limited range and low population levels. The recipient of the Conservation grant will be announced at the conference.

If I had not seen the Ashe's Magnolia for myself in all its glory, I would have had no idea how beautiful this tree could be. If it had not been in bloom, I would have mistaken it for a shrub on steroids (or too much fertilizer). But I saw it at its most perfect moment and I understood Dr. Knox's passion to preserve this incredible species.

☆ For information on the upcoming September 2017 tour: Rainforests and Waterfalls of the Appalachians, contact Devon Higginbotham at [indigotravelcompany@gmail.com](mailto:indigotravelcompany@gmail.com) or 813-478-1183.

### UPCOMING SPEAKERS-

**June 21 – Cheryl Peterson, Bok Tower Garden's conservation efforts** with native plants endemic to the Lake Wales Ridge.

**July 19 – Ross Dickerson, 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, 5–6 pm, provide drinks and clean up from 8 to 8:30.

**August 16 - John McGee, Environmental Manager with Hillsborough County Public Works– Stormwater Services.** He coordinates the Stormwater Environmental Programs and environmental education programs such as the Lake and Stream Management Program, Adopt-A-Pond, and Stormwater Ecologist.



*Thanks for helping with the April meeting -*

**Virginia Overstreet, JoAnn Hoffman, Bunny Worth, Janet Bowers**  
for providing native plants for the plant auction

--> **Don't forget** that we need help from everyone bringing plants for the Auction!

**Joel Jackson** for auctioning the plants

# *Earth Day: A time to celebrate and educate.*

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## *Letter from the President:*

*In 1970 Jimi Hendrix died, the last Beatles album was recorded, the Vietnam war was vehemently protested, and Earth Day was born.*

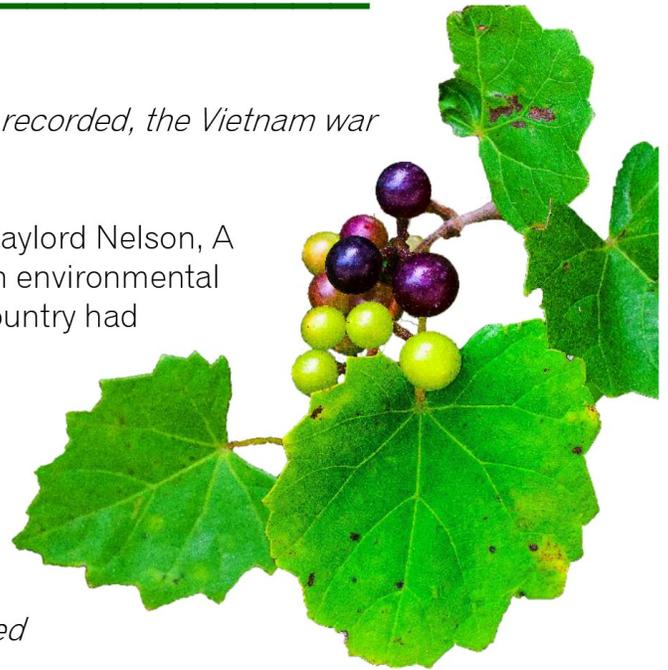
After a massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California, Gaylord Nelson, A US Senator, had the idea for a national day to focus on environmental issues, formed a committee and, April 22, 1970, the country had its first Earth Day, with over 20 million people across America demonstrating for a healthy and sustainable environment.

The very first Earth Day in the US was so successful that by the end of the year, it influenced the creation of the *Environmental Protection Agency* and the passage of the *Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts*.

In 1990 Earth Day went Global: 200 million people in 141 countries participated in demonstrations, educational events and celebrations to promote environmental protection and gave a huge boost to recycling efforts worldwide. Ten years later, in 2000, over 180 countries recognized Earth Day, and the message was *to* deal with global warming and clean energy.

Today, Earth Day is celebrated by more than a billion people each year. While challenged by those who deny climate change, and a less then receptive political climate, it still has a great influence on environmental policy and protection. 2020 will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first Earth Day, and in honor of this milestone the Earth Day Network ([www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org)) is already planning a worldwide strategy of collaborative initiatives.

SNPS participated in two Earth Day events this year. We are proud that we educated at least 100 people over two days. Some came on our Native Plant Walk, others attended our presentations, or stopped by our booth at the Community Gardens. Children planted native wildflower seeds, learned about native trees, and looked through a microscope in fascination of a world that may be all but invisible to them.



*Denna*



# FNPS News....

The 2017 Conference May 18-21

Submitted by Donna Bollenbach,  
SNPS Representative on Council of Chapters

**On-line Registration ends for the [Conference on May 10](#).** Members are encouraged to register before the deadline. Lodging is tight, but due to cancellations, you may be able to get a room of your choice. The conference website also lists other venues you can stay at. There is also a room sharing option: Click on "Find a Roommate" from the Lodging page.

While staying at the conference is fun, with the conference less than 2 hours away from Tampa Bay, you may also opt to drive in for the day. Suncoast will have a good representation at the conference, but we would like to see YOU there as well.

Due to the political climate that denies climate change, it is so important to learn what we can do to influence policy and protect the environment. Speakers at the conference will address ways we can manage lands to lessen the effect of global-warming and sea-level rise in Florida. They will also talk about Everglades restoration, responsible agriculture, landscaping for wildlife and the endangered species.

## Tracking Volunteer and Education Hours

Tina Patterson reports that she is receiving a good response for her request for volunteer hours from SNPS members. Thank you for everyone who is reporting their hours. Tina will send a reminder monthly. Please continue to send in your volunteer hours to her as requested.

## Council of Chapters Elections

The FNPS Council of Chapters election for a new Chair just ended. SNPS member and current Chapter Representative, Donna Bollenbach (me) was elected as the Chair of the Council of Chapters. Although I will no longer be President of the Suncoast Chapter in 2018, I will still represent SNPS at the state level, and I will represent the entire Council (chapter reps for all chapters in the state) on the Executive Committee. As your Council Representative, you need to let me know what discussions, direction or initiatives you would like to see in the future of FNPS. Please feel free to send me your thoughts:

[donna.bollenbach@gmail.com](mailto:donna.bollenbach@gmail.com).

## The Journey Continues

by Janet Bowers

My trip to St Joe Peninsula State Park started at Marianna Caverns State Park. Not really a direct path but I figured if I was going to the panhandle then I would check out some of the spots on my bucket list and the cavern was at the top.



Spigellia was on my plant list and there was a mass of it on the walk up to the visitor center. I got my cave tour ticket and was on my way to an underground adventure. The cave was actually warmer than the outside air that day, it stays about 65 degrees year round. The guide was a good story teller and we followed him along the winding path to rooms that got smaller and bigger just like Alice's Wonderland.

Outside the cavern I saw columbine and wonderful oakleaf hydrangeas. They were thriving and looking lovely with several blooms.

Down by the Chipola River, I saw where swamp milkweed (*Asclepias perennis*) really likes to grow in a floodplain area.



## Mark Your Calendar

**May 13 Letter Carriers Food Drive** Put your nonperishable donation in a bag by your mailbox.

**May 18-21 FNPS Annual Conference** at Westgate River Ranch Resort near Lake Wales

<http://www.fnps.org/conference/2017>

**Sept 10-15** FNPS fall trip - Rainforests and Waterfalls of the Appalachians,

Call Devon Higginbotham Phone: 813-478-1183, or E-mail: [indigotravelcompany@gmail.com](mailto:indigotravelcompany@gmail.com)

**Sept 20 9 AM** Hillsborough County proclamation for Native Plant Month in October

**Oct 14-15** USF Fall Plant Sale - we need volunteers

**Oct 27-29** Fall camping trip at Myakka State Park, tent camp overnight or come for a day

**December 2 or 9** Holiday party

## May 13 Fieldtrip Wolf Branch Creek Preserve and E.G. Simmons Park

**Where:** North side of 19th Avenue NW, between Villemarie Road & Simmons Park  
**When:** 8:30 AM

Wolf Branch Creek, located near the coast in Apollo Beach, is a mosaic of coastal wetlands, sea grass beds and cabbage palm hammocks. Every season presents a new array of flora and fauna. It was the place where I first saw the Seaside Prairie Gentian, *Eustoma exaltatum*, a beautiful lavender bell-shaped flower with soft fleshy leaves. Also called the Marsh Gentian, flowers first appear in June and bloom through August. It is also an interesting salt marsh community with bright green and red glassworts, mangroves, cabbage palms and an assortment of coastal plants.

After exploring the salt marsh, we will carpool into EG Simmons Park to see the newly installed Native Plant Garden that SNPS helped fund, and we will enjoy a picnic lunch at one of the many pavilions (bring your own lunch). To get to Wolf Branch Preserve and EG Simmons park, turn west from US 41 onto 19th Avenue NW. (19th Avenue NW is located off US 41 between Ruskin and Apollo Beach.)

First we will enter Wolf Branch Preserve at a walk through gate located along the north side of 19th Avenue NW, between Villemarie Road and Simmons Park. (There are 3 entrances to the preserve: We will be using the entrance off 19th Ave, not off Villemarie Road.)

When we leave the preserve we drive west on 19th Ave (toward the Bay) to get to E. G. Simmons Park. **There is an entrance fee of \$2 per vehicle up to 8 people to get into the park.** Parking is limited along the road to get into the preserve, so car-pools are encouraged.

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



**More Journey....** Day 2 was in Blackwater River State Forest. I had no idea where to go but I had read on the Florida Hikes website that you could go to the ranger station and get a map to the white top pitcher plants so I did. I then drove my car on a forest road obviously not meant for a regular car and made my way to the recently burnt bog. Wow, I could see the water trickling down into bog where the fresh pitcher plants lived and saw my first white topped pitcher plants in the wild. The pitchers shared the bog with calopogon orchids and other bog plants.

Later on my adventure, I drove down another rural dirt/gravel road that skirted a low pond filled with white water lilies. Basically, it was a day of wonder.

The next day was at Grayton Beach State Park, another unique ecosystem of beach dunes and dune lakes, then on to meet the group via the Apalachicola National Forest route.

### 2017 Field Trip schedule



**May 18 & 21 FNPS conference** fieldtrips near River Ranch

**June 24 Bok Tower** - sign up email was sent, native plant garden, especially the new area, and the endangered plant program area; with 15 people we can get a discounted admission price of \$7 per person

**Aug 19** Nursery buying trip

**Sept 23** TBD

**Oct 27-29** Camping trip at Myakka State Park, reserve your site at Old Prairie camping area

**Nov 18** TBD

## ANOTHER INTERVIEW WITH OUR FEARLESS LEADERS (SUNCOAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

### Our VP, Virginia Overstreet

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

**Answer:** "I grew up in Sylvania, GA in a farming family. My father taught me the importance of land stewardship. He grew corn, soybeans and cotton and raised cows. Today my siblings and I grow pine and pecan trees. Our farm is alive with wildflowers, birds and animals. In April I was up there and found *Asclepias humistrata* (Sandhill Milkweed) growing on the side of the road. It's exciting to see native wildflowers in their natural habitats".

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

**Answer:** "I retired as a Navy Commander in 2000. I transferred to McDill AFB in January 1997 and was amazed that Florida had blooming plants in winter. At first I bought both native and non-native plants for my yard in Seminole Heights and I made mistakes. But over time, I realized the native plants did better regardless of winters or summers.

When I retired in 2000 and started in the Master Gardener program, I knew I wanted to attract beneficial insects to my yard. I believe 'good bugs eat bad bugs' and spraying pesticides is not the answer. I also knew that birds needed native trees. The more I learned from the Master Gardener program, the more I needed native plants".

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

**Answer:** "As a Master Gardener volunteer I give presentations on drought tolerant plants, groundcovers, trees, beneficial insects and, of course, native plants. It makes so much sense to encourage homeowners to incorporate more native plants into their landscapes. Since natives use less (or even NO) water, pesticides or fertilizer and require less pruning than exotic plants, they are better for the environment and our budgets.

I hope to continue to bring in interesting speakers for our members. I encourage all members to contact me with suggestions for future topics and speakers."

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

**Answer:** "My favorite plant was Firebush until a couple of years ago. Now, it's Rosinweed. I grow it in my front yard and I've had neighbors ask if I got those yellow daisies at Home Depot. It's a great way to start a conversation on drought tolerant natives that attract pollinators. It's amazing how we can influence our neighbors. I used to give directions to my house by saying 'it's the only house on the block with no grass in the front yard'. I've very proud that is no longer true. Now, most of the yards in my neighborhood have no sod in the front yard. I talk to my neighbors when they are out walking or pushing a stroller down the road, and mostly I talk about native plants".

~ Devon Higginbotham

## Lettuce Lake Update

From Tina Patterson

The Earth Day plant walk on April 22 was well-attended. County Commissioner Stacy White spoke to the group before Joel's presentation and some members of the Soil and Water Conservation Board stopped by, including chair Mark Proctor. The native plant walk was part of the Hillsborough 100 project sponsored by the board.



County Commissioner Stacy White, SNPS president Donna Bollenbach and SNPS member/Letts Lake creator Joel Jackson

Conditions are very dry but the visitors enjoyed the button bush in bloom and looking at the difference between palmettos and cabbage palms and between live and laurel oak. There were many questions on landscaping with native plants.

May 27 is the next Letts Lake Walk.



## Plant City HCC/Community Garden News

The garden hosted an Earth Day event on April 23. We had several SNPS members help us. Niki Cribbs and Terri Nowik had a good turn out for the kids activities, they set up a planting station, coloring sheets, 'Tools Botanists Use' table and a Tree Bark Trek.



On April 29, Tina led a team of 8 in a United Way volunteer project at Plant City Community. Although hampered by a shortage of tools, her team cleared vines and Caesar weed from the area to the north of the native plant garden and assisted in hauling Brazilian pepper and other invasive plants which were cut down by the machete and saw welders. Karen says we will get a gravel walk at some time in the future. Per Tina, Everyone worked very hard and there were only a few poison ivy encounters.

~ Janet

**Plant Profile - Lizard's Tail - *Saururus cernuus***  
**Family - Saururaceae**

Lizard's tail is suitable for wet, shady areas and grows to 2-3 feet. Growing in mass it is attractive, especially when blooming. I've seen it in the floodplains in the panhandle, as well as Little Manatee River State Park locally and it can be found throughout the state. Pollinators use it for nectar. It can be a good groundcover in a wetland and is available for sale at native nurseries. It is one of the plants in our new Native Landscaping brochure.

Plant Atlas link -  
<http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/Plant.aspx?id=3598>

FNPS link-  
<http://www.fnps.org/plants/plant/saururus-cernuus>

~Janet Bowers



**St Joe Peninsula State Park Trip**

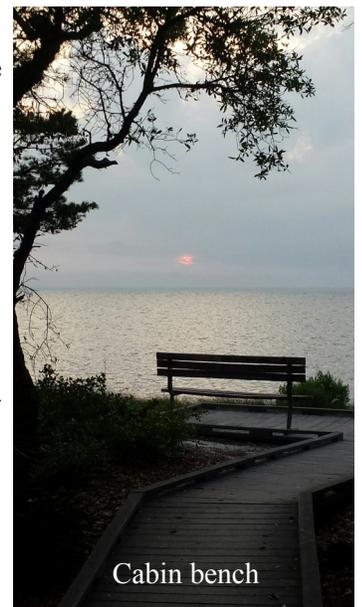
This park is out on the tip of a peninsula in an isolated area of the panhandle. Unique dune systems abound. They were a challenge to travel but several boardwalks were easier treks. The cabin had its own boardwalk ending in a bench and beach area on the bay side. Marine life and crabs on the beach were easily accessible. Sunset was followed by fireflies, it was quite relaxing.

One of our day trips was to the Sumatra area in the Apalachicola National Forest. Roadside botanizing at its best. I scored a new milkweed - Carolina milkweed, *Asclepias cinerea* and a new orchid - fragrant pogonia, *Cleistisopsis oricamporum*.



I am still reflecting on the plants and conversations of our latest camping trip. See you on the next one! -Janet

Janet, bunny,  
 Carmel & Devon



Cabin bench

# Coming up in the next 2 months -

## May 2017



## June 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 SNPS BOD & CHP MEETING Open Mic Night	11	12	13 SNPS Field Trip
14 	15	16	17	18 FNPS Conference	19 FNPS Conference	20 FNPS Conference
21 FNPS Conference	22	23	24	25	26	27 Lettuce Lake Plant Walk
28	29 	30	31			

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 	19	20	21 SNPS Chapter Meeting	22	23	24 SNPS FT
25	26	27	28	29	30	

See the Current issue of the Grapevine or [suncoast.fnpschapters.org](http://suncoast.fnpschapters.org) for details on each event.

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Business name or organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### Check pertinent category:

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

Make check payable to **FNPS**.

Detach and mail to:

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

## Activities & Committee Chairs

<i>Field Trips</i>	(813)
Shirley Denton	625-5031
Stephen Dickman	597-5888
<i>Librarian</i>	
Vikki Sinclair	989-2896
<i>Membership</i>	
Devon Higginbotham	478-1183
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	
Janet Bowers	759-2822
Mike Fite, Assistant	977-0892
<i>Publicity/ Social media</i>	
Donna Bollenbach	679-5597
<i>Outreach</i>	
<i>Open</i>	
<i>USF Plant Sales</i>	
Gar Reed	323-0927
<i>USF Botanical Garden Liaison</i>	
Kim Hutton	974-2329
<i>Chapter Representative &amp; Webmaster</i>	
Donna Bollenbach	679-5597

## Newsletter Submissions

Deadline for the next issue:

**June 1, 2017**

Please send articles and original artwork for The Suncoast Grapevine to **Janet Bowers**, by the deadline above- [jbowers27@yahoo.com](mailto: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.

## 2017 Board of Directors

### President

Donna Bollenbach  
[donna.bollenbach@gmail.com](mailto:donna.bollenbach@gmail.com)

### Vice-president

Virginia Overstreet  
[voverstr@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:voverstr@tampabay.rr.com)

### Treasurer

Gar Reed  
[gar0426@yahoo.com](mailto:gar0426@yahoo.com)

### Secretary

Tina Patterson  
[mablepatterson@hotmail.com](mailto:mablepatterson@hotmail.com)

### Board Members at Large

Andy Taylor  
[andytaylor6@gmail.com](mailto:andytaylor6@gmail.com)

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