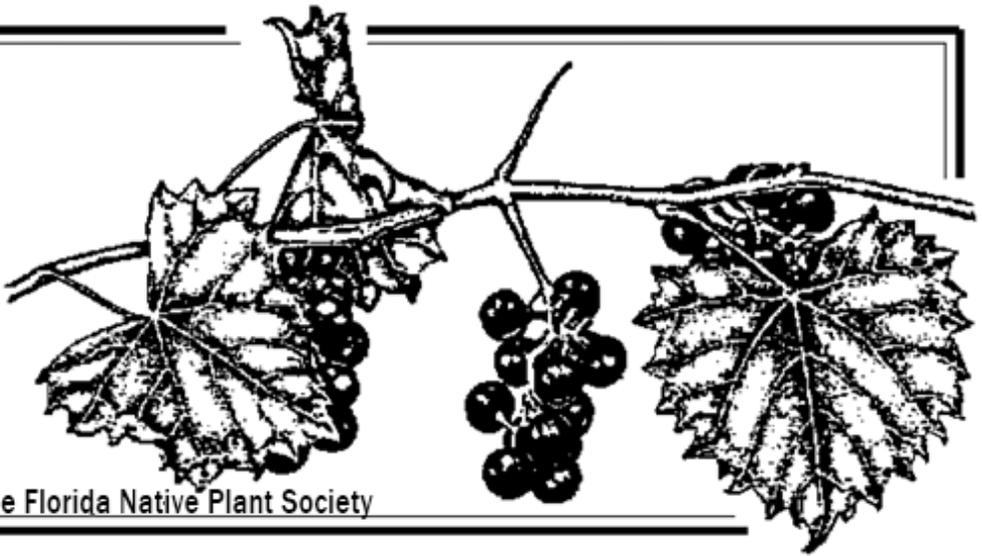


The Suncoast Grapevine

Newsletter of the Suncoast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society



May 2021

Volume 38, Number 5

*This is an online meeting. We will send you a link the day before the meeting.
We will be back with in-person meetings as soon as our venues are open and safe.*

May 19, 7:00 pm

Program

History of Lettuce Lake Park

By Joel Jackson

In 1977 Joel Jackson was hired by Hillsborough County to manage a \$10 million bond program to design and develop nature parks for the county. Some of these parks included Lettuce Lake, Upper Tampa Bay, Edward Medard and Alderman's Ford Parks. This program was designed by Joel to illustrate the design features and guidelines that made Lettuce Lake Park become the most visited public nature park in the state.

Joel is a lifelong resident of the area and in 1970 he became the first park and recreation planner for the City of Tampa. In 1984, he drafted Hillsborough County's "Jan Platt Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program" (ELAPP) and is still active on the program's advisory committee. Since 1985, this program has acquired over 63 thousand acres of conservation lands for preservation.



Joel is a founding member of the Suncoast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society chapter and is currently a member of both the Suncoast and Nature Coast chapters. In 2016 he was honored with a well deserved FNPS Green Palmetto award for service.

May Field Trip 1

Saturday, May 8, 9:00 am

Register by May 1 and Get Directions; Contact Tina at 305-298-6381

FNPS Members Only, Social Distancing and Masks Required

We will be visiting Split Oak Forest (SOF) and the trip comes before our monthly meeting. Split Oak is a large local conservation area south of Orlando. You may remember that Valerie Anderson talked about it at our July 2020 joint meeting.

We will have buggy support, and there is enough seating, with social distancing, for 16. Reservations are required. Contact Tina at 305-298-6381.

Starting time: 9AM Saturday, May 8. Please be on time. Note: there are NO restrooms at SOF so please plan accordingly.

The site is generally shady, but the buggy is open, so your sun hat and sunscreen are important. Long pants for the field & sturdy boots/hiking shoes are also advised. Insect repellent is optional. Bring your own drinking water and snacks/lunch.



Split Oak photo by Shirley Denton

Several of us are planning to camp at Moss Lake Park when we do our Split Oak field trip. Contact Steve Dickman or Shirley Denton for updates. You should make your own reservation. Moss Lake is an Orange County park, and we don't anticipate that it will be crowded in May.



Board Meeting: May 11, 7:00pm

All members are welcome. You can propose agenda items. Contact Tina Patterson for more information. This will be an online meeting.

May Field Trip 2

Thursday, May 20, 8:30 am

Ferns and Sinkholes

To Register and Get Directions to the Site, Contact Tina at 305-298-6381

Join geologist and author John Miller and state forest biologist Colleen Werner on a hike to visit sinkholes, limerock formations and ferns and native plants of the southwestern section of Withlacoochee State Forest.

There are two sink holes each with a rock face and lots of boulders. There are some interesting plants that include: *Justicia pringlei*, *Trichomanes petersii*, *Asplenium abscissum*, *Peperomia humilis*, *Adiantum tenerum*, and *Scutellaria ovata*. There are also some lovely swamp chestnut oaks (*Quercus michauxii*). Prepare for some rough walking and possible mud or wet areas.

Priority is for members of Suncoast Chapter, but the trip is open to any FNPS member. Carpooling is encouraged. Parking is on the roadside of CR 491 so cars should be kept to a minimum. A map of the general area is available to registrants and upon request.

Registration is required. The trip is limited to 10 participants who should be FNPS members. To sign up, contact Tina (Mable C) Patterson at mablepatterson@hotmail.com or call (305) 298-6381 (leave name and message). You should include full name, contact information and membership chapter.

Joel and Barbara Jackson Win Water-Wise Award

Suncoast members Joel and Barbara Jackson just won Pasco County's 2020 residential Tampa Bay Community Water Wise Award. The Tampa Bay Community Water Wise Awards are a partnership between Tampa Bay Water, UF/IFAS Extension Office and the region's counties.

This award is given annually for residential landscapes that promote efficient use of water and Florida-friendly landscaping. Joel and Barbara Jackson use an average of less than 3,000 gallons of water a month. The award is for 2020 due to Covid prevention delays. Their landscape is both Florida-friendly and a great demonstration of native plants in the landscape and their support for wildlife including birds, butterflies and native bees.



Joel and Barbara Jackson with the award. Photo by Karen Wright

The FNPS Conference is Coming Up – Join Us for the First and Maybe Only On-line Conference



FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
40TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MAY 14 - 16, 2021

This is an On-Line (Virtual) Conference

Registration fee: \$35

Join us for Florida’s premier event focusing on the preservation, conservation and restoration of our natural lands, ecosystems, and local communities. The 40th annual conference of the Florida Native Plant Society is focusing on “40 Years of Celebrating Native Florida. Please share the news about this important conference with your colleagues and neighbors.

There is something for everyone at this conference, including:

- Amazing speakers on a wide range of subjects: major conservation initiatives, restoration projects, public policy, and regional initiatives (Friday and Saturday)
- Cutting-edge research
- Current issues in restoration and conservation
- Landscaping for homeowners and urban planners

See
<https://fnps.org/conference>
for more info and to register

Tentative Schedule		
May	8	Field Trip – Split Oak
	14-16	FNPS Conference – virtual
	19	Meeting Topic: History of Lettuce Lake Park – Joel Jackson
	24	Bonus Field trip – Ferns and Sinkholes
June	16	Meeting Topic: USF Natural Area – Jeannie Mounger
	19	Field Trip– TBD
July	14	Joint meeting with Sierra and Audubon – Audubon is the host – it will be virtual
		Field Trip– TBD
August		Meeting Topic: Council of Chapters – I'd like one of the Council leaders to speak
		Field Trip–Split Oak Forest? Depends on COVID-19 status
September		Meeting Topic: TBD
		Field Trip– TBD
October		Plant Sale – USF
		Meeting Topic: TBD
	22-24	Camping Trip– Highlands Hammock
November		Meeting topic: Elections, program TBD
		Field Trip– TBD
December	TBD	No meeting – Holiday Party
	9-13	Camping Trip – Collier-Seminole & Fakahatchee Strand

Camping Trips

We have several camping trips planned this year.



1. Highlands Hammock – October 22-24.

Visit primeval live oak forest, walk the boardwalk, and visit an ancient Lake Wales Ridge scrub filled with rare plants. We arrive Friday evening and depart Sunday around 1 pm. The park is varied and the walking is easy.

2. Collier-Seminole State Park and Fakahatchee Strand – December 9-13.

Plan on camping in a semi-topical setting and going on a compass wade into Fakahatchee Strand. We will arrive Thursday evening and depart Sunday morning giving ourselves 2 full days in the woods. Plan on wading in deep water and mud.

We recommend that you make reservations for the two state parks now. Tina has reserved several sites – contact her for information (we can put 2 tents and up to 8 people on each site).

Giant old live oak at Highlands Hammock State Park. Photo by Shirley Denton

Social Media Opportunity

Do you enjoy using Facebook to create events and special notices? We could use your help in maintaining and improving our chapter's presence on Facebook. This is a fun way to volunteer!

You can work at your own schedule and you don't need to know the scientific name of every plant you see. Believe me, I certainly don't!

If you think you would enjoy helping with our Facebook page, please contact Virginia at vaoverstreet@gmail.com or 813-541-3187



**Suncoast Chapter of the
Florida Native Plant Society**

@suncoast.fnps · Nonprofit Organization

Events in Review

USF Botanical Gardens Plant Sale

We had the run of the Gardens where staff treated us as highly valued guests.

The plants sold quickly, and few were left over at the end of the sale.

Thank you to the many volunteers who made it successful.

Thanks to all.



Plant sale photo by John Miller

Cypress Creek Field Trip



Cypress Creek Preserve photos by Virginia Overstreet. Great bunch of butterfly orchids, *Encyclia tampensis*, on the right!



The mission of the Florida Native Plant Society is to preserve, conserve, and restore the native plants and native plant communities of Florida

Tarflower (*Bejaria racemosa*)

By Shirley Denton

Family: Ericaceae

Type of Plant: Long-lived shrub, 6 to 8 ft tall by 4 to 6 ft wide.

Leaves: Simple, alternate, often whitish to pinkish below and with stiff hairs. Twigs with stiff pubescence.

Flowers: White to somewhat pink, often with pink highlights, sticky, fragrant. Blooms mid-spring through mid-summer.

Fruits: Small capsules, noted for being sticky.

Habitat: Found in open settings especially scrubby flatwoods but sometimes in scrub and dry flatwoods.

Soil: Sandy, prefers acidic soils.

Light: Full sun to light shade.

Water: Thrives in dry settings.

Propagation: Seeds and cuttings.

Landscape Uses: Noted for being difficult to grow, but beautiful on the right spot.

Availability: Available from a few native nurseries -- Green Isles Gardens (Groveland) and The Natives (Davenport).

Wildlife uses: Used by native bees and flies which sometimes get stuck on the flowers.

Native Range: Peninsular Florida extending north into Georgia. Not found in the Florida panhandle or in the Keys.

KEY REFERENCES

<https://www.fnps.org/plant/bejaria-racemosa>

Wunderlin, R. P., B. F. Hansen, A. R. Franck, and F. B. Essig. 2021. Atlas of Florida Plants (<http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/>), Institute for Systematic Botany, University of South Florida, Tampa.



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Newsletter Submissions

Deadline for June Newsletter: May 20

Send contributions to Shirley Denton at ecotypes@outlook.com.

Contributions should be original, with references where appropriate. Photographs and drawings should belong to the submitter or submitted along with written permission from the owner and be of appropriate resolution for printing (a width of 1000 pixels is generally adequate for this newsletter, but err toward larger so that they pictures can be cropped if needed). All submissions should be in formats standardly used in documents and readable on Windows PCs.

Submissions will be reviewed for accuracy with preference for being relevant to the FNPS mission and local environmental events.



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