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The Suncoast Grapevine

Newsletter of the Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc.



Volume 28 Number 11

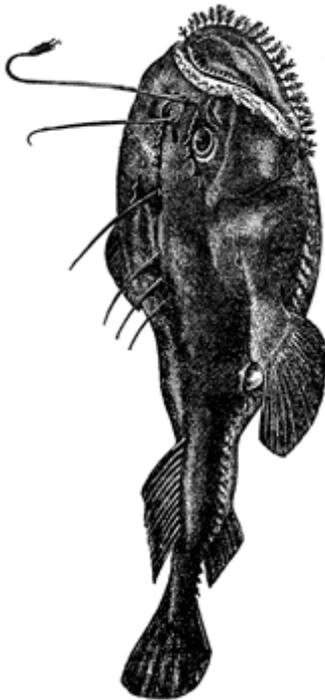
November 2011

Open Mic Night

Presented by YOU

Wednesday, November 16th @ 7pm
Hillsborough County Extension Service

This month's presentation will be by YOU, our dear membership!
What Florida native plant topics can you shine a little light on?



We'd like to keep all presentations focused on native plants, and preferably not get into other issues. Some examples of presentations we'd like to see include:

- ★ Presentations from grant recipients
- ★ Presentations about SNPS / FNPS projects
- ★ Powerpoint photo tours of your native plants
- ★ Discussions on problems with your native plants (and how you've overcome them, if you've been able to!)
- ★ Discussions on other aspects of your native landscape, including edibles, plant pests, beneficial insects/wildlife your natives may have attracted

Don't be shy, please come in prepared to share and help us foster a meeting with a lot of supportive communication and membership fellowship!

See you then!

- Submitted by Shawna Everidge & Troy Springer



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



ROLY POLIES IN MY POCKET

What is it that happens to the human brain on the way to adulthood that causes us to regard all insects as the creatures in the movie "Alien"? We start out life crawling in the yard, eating dirt and collecting all manner of bug material. Roly Polies, earthworms, fireflies, caterpillars all engage our interest for hours, much to our mothers' chagrin. But by the time we have a home and yard of our own, it's all out warfare against the alien bug world.

Doug Tallamy's book, "*Bringing Nature Home - How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*" makes it OK, even cool, to play with the bugs again. Most of the cultivated world has forgotten that bugs are good for us. Without bugs our flowers would not be pollinated and baby birds would starve. But we have come to regard bugs as bad for our garden. Let a caterpillar munch on their favorite bush and grown men have been known to squeal like school girls. We get out the spray can or look for plants that advertise "bug free".

One reason most non-native plants have less insects is because our bugs are not adapted to eating them. Florida insects have evolved to be selective in their plant matter consumption and when we introduce non-native plants our bug population dwindles, as does the available food supplies for nestlings and all other animals that depend on bugs for food. Ultimately we humans suffer, as so many animals depend partially or entirely on insect protein for food.



By planting more native species, we attract and feed more insects, hence more animal food supplies and healthier animals. But will insects take over the world, like in the sci-fi films of the 1950's? Nature has its own checks and balances to control insect populations, like the parasitic Tachinid Flies that lay their eggs on the Inchworm or the sawflies that are coveted by the nesting birds because they are soft and tasty.

By planting a diverse landscape of natives, we are providing a plant food source for the insects that convert this to animal protein for the birds, frog, lizards who in turn feed the.....you get the picture. But, unlike men, not all plants or bugs are "created equal". Some bugs are plant specific and others are generalists, meaning they will eat a range of plants. Few will eat the poison ivy or ferns but lots of bugs like the oaks, willows and cherries. Choose your plants wisely (not that you were planning on planting poison ivy in your back yard).

And, the next time you see a Leafhopper on your bushy perennial, give a bug a break and pat yourself on the back. You are helping the maintenance of biodiversity. And there is probably a Sparrow or other small animal nearby preparing for lunch!

- Submitted by Devon Higginbotham

We will be nominating and electing our new board of directors at the November meeting. The nominating committee has contacted many members, but it was impossible to contact everyone. However, we will be entertaining nominations from the floor, and if you are interested in serving your organization in this way, please let a member of the nominating committee know at the beginning of the meeting. Members are Harriett Wright, Mary Miller, and Mike Fite. The current slate, (in alphabetical order), consists of **Janet Bowers, Shirley Denton, Devon Higginbotham, Ron Huston, Carrie Laks, Daphne Lambright, and Yvette Wilmath.**

—submitted by Harriet Wright

Summary of Proposed Revisions to the Bylaws of the Suncoast Chapter

The DRAFT of the SNPS Bylaw Changes, which can be found in its entirety by logging on to <http://www.suncoastnps.org/Announcements/ByLawsChanges/ProposedBylawsChanges2011.pdf>, is submitted to the SNPS membership for approval at the November 2011 Annual Election Meeting. This draft includes all revisions, additions, and deletions to the Bylaws.

These proposed Bylaw changes will:

- ☑ Allow the membership to elect individuals as SNPS Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) in addition to SNPS Directors at the annual election meeting in November.
- ☑ In the current Bylaws, the membership elects the SNPS Directors each November, and then the new Directors elect the Officers at the following BOD meeting. Those Directors who are not elected as Officers remain as voting members of the SNPS Board of Directors.
- ☑ The proposed Bylaw changes will allow the SNPS membership to elect the Officers (and Directors) at the annual election meeting in November. The slate of nominees published will include the names of each nominee for an SNPS Office and the names of nominees for SNPS Director positions.

If these SNPS Bylaws changes are approved by the SNPS membership at the November 2011 Annual Election Meeting, the SNPS membership will elect SNPS Officers and Directors at the 2012 Annual Election meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

SNPS Board of Directors

October 17, 2011

SNPS: Giving Back to the Community in 2011

The Suncoast Chapter has helped create two Florida native plant gardens in local public parks.

The first garden was designed and installed by Vice President **Troy Springer** (Springer Environmental Inc.) at the Hillsborough River State Park near the Administration Building. SNPS Refreshment Coordinator **Bunny Worth** volunteered to water and maintain the area at its critical initial stage.

Our second garden was a joint effort with the Tampa Audubon Society at Hillsborough County's Lettuce Lake Park's Visitor Center. **Joel Jackson** and Troy Springer worked together providing site design and vegetation procurement. SNPS members who also labored were **Barbara Jackson, Gail Parsons, Chapter Librarian Vikki Sinclair** and **Mike Fite**.



- Submitted by Mike Fite, photo by Mike Fite



Lake Louisa State Park: Field Trip Recap

There were ten individuals on the field trip to Lake Louisa State Park, including 3 of us from SNPS on our joint field trip with the Lake Beautyberry chapter. We started off with an excellent overview from Edward Boyd, a park ranger who told us about the history, culture and natural history of the park. It is about 4500 acres in size and a large part of it was formerly a Citrus grove and some of that still remains. A lot of it has been restored and more of it is slated to be restored. Edward also showed us some very good books, including some about invasive plants.

Some of the plants we saw included *Asimina pygmaea* (with flowers), *Rhus copallinum*, *Vaccinium myrsinites*, *Ilex cassine*, *Balduina angustifolia*, *Spartina bakeri*, *Trichostema dichotomum*, *Elephantopus elatus*, *Pityopsis graminifolia* and *Ceratiola ericoides*.

- Submitted by Ron Huston

Announcements

THANK YOU to **Lucy & Frank Fuchs** for providing the refreshments at October's meeting. We would also like to recognize **Vikki Sinclair** for donating some ink cartridges, which help us lower the cost of printing the Suncoast Grapevine newsletter.

And a very special  *Merci* to Fred Mulholland for providing many, many plants for the SNPS Plant Auctions this year; he has helped us to raise some much needed, very important funding for our chapter!

- Submitted by Mike Fite

Holiday Gift Buying at the November Meeting

A great selection of books and seeds will be available at the November meeting for your holiday shopping. Come and support SNPS and buy some unique gifts!

-Submitted by Janet Bowers



PLANT PROFILE

Common name: White crownbeard

Botanical name: *Verbesina virginica* L.

Synonyms: Frostweed, iceplant

Family: Asteraceae (Aster)

Plant Habit: Upright annual or perennial wildflower

Habitat: Open woods, thickets, disturbed sites

Size: 5-7 ft. (h)

Leaves: Alternate, hairy, toothed; larger leaves are lobed

Bloom: Dense, white masses of ray and disk florets on long stalks in terminal corymbs

Flowering time: Late summer through fall

Wetland status: Facultative; equally likely to occur in wetlands or non-wetlands

Distribution: Throughout Florida; Pennsylvania to Florida and west to Texas

Growing conditions

Light: Part shade to full sun

Water: Drought tolerant to moist

Soil: Organic to well-drained

Propagation: Seed

Motility: Moderate spreading by self-sown seeds

Maintenance: Deadhead spent flowers to encourage blooms

Availability: Native plant nurseries

Comments: Of the 6 native species in Florida, only *V. virginica*'s range extends into the central peninsula; rivals dotted horsemint (*Monarda punctata*) for attracting pollinators; stem has fleshy "wings"; shortly after a hard frost, the stems may rupture as frozen water emerges in whorls – to view this phenomenon, visit

http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=VEVI3

Verbesina virginica

Photo by Keith Bradley



References:

- Osorio, R. 2001. *A Gardener's Guide to Florida's Native Plants*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL.
- Taylor, Walter Kingsley, 1992, *The Guide to Florida Wildflowers*: Taylor Publishing Company, Dallas, Texas, 320 p.
- Wunderlin, R.P. 2003. *Guide to Vascular Plants of Florida, Second Edition*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL.
- Wunderlin, R.P. and B.F. Hansen. 2011. *Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants* (<http://plantatlas.usf.edu/>).

Information compiled by George R. Kish

Photos by Keith Bradley

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

Ron Huston 951-0946

Publications

Dick Wunderlin 977-6484

George Kish 920-0853

Librarian

Vikki Sinclair 989-2896

Membership

Shari Blisssett-Clark

Newsletter Editor

Shawna Everidge 659-4298

Mike Fite, Assistant 977-0892

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Troy Springer 967-4538

Publicity

Shawna Everidge 659-4298

Outreach

Ron Chicone 803-603-8912

USF Plant Sales

Troy Springer 967-4538

USF Botanical Garden Liaison

Kim Hutton 974-2329

Chapter Representative

Troy Springer 967-4538

Webmaster

Shirley Denton 986-6485

Conservation

Open

Newsletter Submissions

Deadline for the next issue:

DEC 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>



Board of Directors

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Vice-president

Troy Springer

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Devon Higginbotham

archiveproperties@comcast.net

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Janet Bowers

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