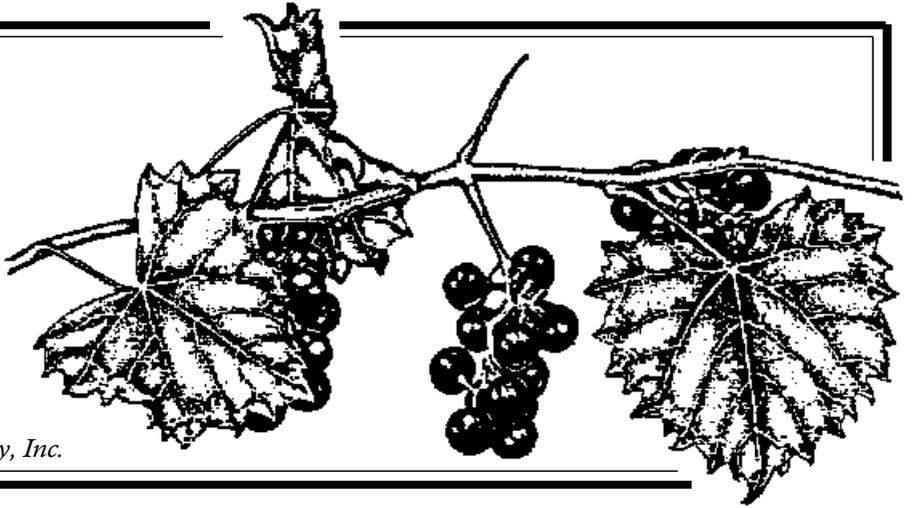


www.suncoastnps.org

The Suncoast Grapevine

Newsletter of the Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc.



Volume 35 Number 6

June 2018



JUNE CHAPTER MEETING

At the Hillsborough County Extension Office

Tampa Bay Watch

Presented by Rachel Arndt

Wednesday, June 20, 7 PM

Come learn about Tampa Bay Watch, Inc., a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to the protection and restoration of the marine and wetland environments of the Tampa Bay estuary through scientific and educational programs. Celebrating their 25th anniversary, Tampa Bay Watch performs habitat restoration and protection activities relying heavily on the efforts of community volunteers to help the bay recover from its historic environmental problems. Individuals of all ages from community groups, scout troops, schools and others participate in salt marsh plantings, storm drain markings, oyster bar creation, coastal cleanups, and wildlife protection each year, demonstrating environmental stewardship in its purest form. Tampa Bay Watch trains and organizes citizen volunteers, students, at-risk youth, and civic organizations to participate in environmental projects while heightening community awareness of the fragile nature and importance of the environment.

Rachel Arndt is the communications manager and has worked on Tampa Bay Watch communications since 2007. Her primary responsibilities include coordinating volunteers through weekly announcement of activities, writing the quarterly newsletter and gaining media interest for restoration projects.

Rachel received her undergraduate degree from the University of Florida and graduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has a wealth of working experience with non-profit and governmental agencies. Rachel is a runner and enjoys jogging along the downtown St. Pete waterfront and the Pinellas Trail. She is an avid sports fan and follows all of the local teams, especially the Florida Gators.

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

- submitted by Virginia Overstreet



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



Shirley Denton Gets Mentor Award at FNPS Conference

Our own Dr. Shirley Denton was awarded the FNPS Mentor Award at the recent state conference. This award recognizes distinguished individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the science and practice of native plant preservation, conservation and restoration.

This award is the highest honor the Society can bestow and is reserved for lifelong or career-long contributions. Selection of award winner is by a vote of the FNPS Board of Directors. Shirley has held many positions on the BOD of SNPS and is active on the FNPS board also. Currently, she is co-fieldtrip leader of SNPS and has taken us to many native hotspots. Her website of Florida native plants is a great reference to help ID plants and her photos have been used in several publications.

We are so proud of Shirley and so grateful for all she does for the Suncoast Chapter.

-Virginia Overstreet, Janet Bowers



UPCOMING SPEAKERS-

July 18 – Joint meeting with Sierra and Audubon, Audubon is host (see page 3)

August 15 – **NO MEETING**

September 19 – George Heinrich – Gopher Tortoises

October 17 – Ginny Stibolt – new book ‘A Step-by-Step Guide to a Florida Native Yard’

November 7 – **Note meeting date** – We will vote on the 2019 board, speaker tbd

December 1 – Holiday gathering at Brooker Creek Preserve



Thanks for helping with the May meeting -

Nanette Holland for bringing snacks

**JoAnn Hoffman, Bunny Worth, Cliff Brown
for bringing auction plants**

Special Thank Yous -

JoAnn Hoffman for being our extension liason and making our meeting place possible.

Joel Jackson for being the plant auctioneer.

All the people sharing pictures at the May meeting!



Speaker

Heather Young

Senior Environmental Planner
Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council

Organizing a climate compact
for our region, and setting up a
technical advisory committee:
How it's going, what's involved!

Tampa Audubon Society
With the Suncoast Native Plant Society and
The Tampa Bay Group Sierra Club

Invites you to the 2018

JOINT MEETING

Wed, July 18, 6 pm

UF/IFAS Hillsborough County

Extension Office

5339 CR 579, Seffner

1 mile South of Exit 10, I-4

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

5:30 pm—Arrivals. Please bring your pot luck dish to the Kitchen, the door on the main building on the north side of the building, close to Old Hillsborough Rd.

There will be tables in the Conference Center for sign-ins or displays, those can go directly to the Conference Center (through the black iron gates).

Please be sure to sign in with *all* of the organizations that you belong to!

6:15 pm—Pot Luck Supper—food will be served in the kitchen, tables will be spread through the kitchen, meeting room, conference center entrance and if the weather permits in the interior courtyard.

TAS will provide plates, utensils, cups, beverages. Please bring your favorite shareable food. A label would be useful for those with allergies...

7:30 pm—Introductions and announcements in the Conference Center

7:45 pm—Program: Heather Young, TB Regional Planning Council

We hope to see you there!



FNPS News....

The 2018 Annual Conference

by Virginia Overstreet

I had a wonderful time at the FNPS State Conference last month. The field trips, presentations and meetings with other chapter representatives kept me busy. I learned so much about orchids native to South Florida and to Cuba, the use of biological control of invasive weeds and restoration projects in Everglades National Park. It was very rewarding to see Shirley Denton presented with the FNPS Mentor Award. As we all know, she is most deserving of this prestigious award. I learned that many chapters do not hold meetings during the summer. Our Board has decided to not hold an August meeting. We will have our June meeting and our joint meeting with Sierra Club and Tampa Bay Audubon in July.

On Saturday June 2nd I was hiking with the Florida Trail Association at in Lower Hillsborough Wilderness Preserve. When we had a restroom break the other hikers noticed the garden we (and by “we” I mean Mike Fite and his helpers) maintain. They commented on the signs and what a great job we do with the native gardens at the parks. Thanks again to Joel for the incredible efforts to get the signs made and to All of you who maintain these gardens. The public notices and appreciates your hard work.

Are you all excited about our June trip to Troy Springer’s Open House on June 9th? I am so excited to hear that he is expanding into retail sales. I have a feeling that we will keep him busy. I’ll be there on Saturday with a shopping list. Hope to see you there!

SNPS News

- Don’t forget to **send Tina any volunteer hours** so that she can enter it on the FNPS website
- **There will not be an August meeting**
- Our November general membership and election meeting will be November 7. **We are looking for people to be on the Nominating Committee now. Contact Virginia or Tina.**



Ceraunus Blue butterfly caterpillars eat the leaves of some plants in the pea family, like this perky little Rabbit Bells.

TRAIL MIX

By John Lampkin

Peas for dinner tonight? How about peas for breakfast, lunch AND dinner, as well as your morning and afternoon noshes and raid-the-refrigerator-at-midnight-tide-me-over? If you are a Ceraunus Blue butterfly caterpillar that’s the diet your mother arranged for you. Well, not the peas themselves, rather the leaves of plants in the legume family. That family, Fabaceae, includes peas like Rabbit Bells as shown above with its distinctive pea-flowers. It’s a pity the caterpillars can’t enjoy the visual delight of the blooms—they don’t have good vision like

adults. They are simple eating machines, gobbling up the leaves until pupating. Then they metamorphose into the tiny flashes of blue dancing quickly through the pine flatwoods and meadows. The one shown above on a Yellow Hatpin flower is a freshly emerged male giving us just a peek of its brilliant blue upper side. The female is a beautiful but more subdued and brownish blue. When flying, these striking patterns may help them to find mates.

Rabbit Bells, *Crotalaria rotundifolia*, is a widespread Florida native plant. Because it keeps a six-inches-from-the-ground low profile it’s easily overlooked, despite its rich yellow flowers. Crotalaria is from a Greek word meaning “rattle” and refers to the way mature seeds rattle inside the plump pea pod. Rotundifolia equates to “round-leaved” although in reality, the leaves are often more lanceolate (skinny and pointy) than round.

Although the Ceraunus Blue larvae only chow down on the leaves, the beautiful Ornate Bella Moth larvae develop inside crotalaria pods as well, munching on the developing seeds. If several larvae eat in the same pod it could get crowded. The situation could turn nasty, caterpillar fights could break out and then the collateral damage would be... Black-eyed Peas.

John Lampkin, notoriously capable of writing an entire column for the sake of a single bad joke, leads monthly interpretive walks on the Sun City Center Nature Trails. Contact him at JohnLampkin@JohnLampkin.com

Mark Your Calendar



- June 23 Lettuce Lake Walk 9:00 AM**, meet by the Audubon Resource Center building
- June 27 SNPS BOD meeting** at 5 pm at Beef’s on MLK in Seffner, anyone can attend
- **No meeting in August** ---
- More Lettuce Lake walks 9 AM** - September 22, October 27, November 24
- October 13 and 14** USF Plant Sale
- October 13 and 14** Tampa Bay Birding and Nature Festival
- December 1** Holiday gathering at Brooker Creek Preserve

You're Invited to an Open House at Troy Springer's yard in Dover to see how great natives can look! Plus a plant sale so that you can take some of them home to your yard.



There will be a variety of native plants for sale to suit any location and condition. Troy will be on hand to answer questions and make recommendations. See you there!

June 9, 9 AM to 3 PM

13831 US-92, Dover, Florida 33527

www.springerenvironmental.com



Lettuce Lake Update

From Tina Patterson

The tarflower and button bush put out sensational blooms in May, but the heavy rains meant you had to see them quickly before they washed away. There is also more water hemlock this year and we watched black swallowtail caterpillars munching them up. One formed a chrysalis on the plant.



JoAnn Hoffman donated a royal fern and Tampa vervain for the Lettuce Lake garden. This month a turkey hen, marsh rabbits and baby armadillos, as well as hummingbirds, showed up in the garden and Tina acquired an 18 pound cat that someone apparently abandoned there.

The next walk at Lettuce Lake is June 23. This will be the last one until September. The walk is free but there is a \$2 per car entry fee. See you there!



2018 Field Trip schedule

July - no field trip, this is a good month to visit your local native nursery during the rainy season

August - no field trip, no meeting

September 22 - Polk county sites -more info to come

October 27-29 - Silver Springs State Park camping, we have 2 cabins reserved - \$ 62.73 per person

(4 per cabin) Camping reservations for RV or tent sites can be made on your own, but should be made soon. The park entrance, campground restrooms and cabin areas were landscaped with donations from FANN and feature an incredible display of garberia which we hope will be blooming when we are there. The park staff does a good job of burning the sandhill and an October visit gives us a great chance to see prolific fall wildflowers.

Contact Tina Patterson, mablepatterson@hotmail.com for cabin reservations.

November 17 - Blackwater Creek Preserve

VOYAGERS IN LIFE



The tour was supposed to be about plants. The idea was to travel to the Appalachians for a few days of botanizing and find spring wildflowers, plants we don't see in Florida because it's too warm, too coastal or too close to sea level. But like all things in life, the tour ended up being about people too. When you spend 6 days together in a motor coach, you get to know one another. All those travelers that started out strangers, are now friends for life. Whenever they run into each other, they will reminisce about the Rain Forests and Waterfalls Tour in May 2018 and catch up on each other's life in the interim. "Oh my gosh, I haven't seen you since the trip to the Appalachians. How have you been....."

Sure, we stopped at Anna Ruby Falls and found David Carswell a wonderful guide for the gorgeous mountain stream filled with Trilliums, Jack-in-the-Pulpit and Foam flower. Malcolm Hodges and Sean Beeching taught us how to ID lichens at Brasstown Bald, whether they are on trees, fence railings or trash cans. Their appreciation for each other was almost as great as their interest in the lichens. You could tell they thoroughly enjoyed each other's company and teaching others what they knew.

Susan Sunflower joined us the evening we arrived in Sylva, North Carolina. She is a member of the North Carolina native plant society and would be our guide through the Blue Ridge Parkway along with Dr Dan Pittillo the next day. Susan has travelled extensively and taught in foreign countries. Listening to her stories made me want to hear more. When Dr Dan arrived the next morning, you could immediately tell she adored him and respected his knowledge of plants. Dr Dan did an extraordinary job of guiding us to fantastic blooms of spring blossoms, wowing the group with Dwarf Larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*), Pink Shell Azalea (*Rhododendron vaseyi*), Squirrel Corn (*Dicentra Canadensis*), a plethora of Violas and Trilliums, Wild Oats (*Uvularia sessilifolia*), Sundews (*Drosera*), Wood Betony (*Pedicularis Canadensis*) and showing us where to find Grass of Parnassus (*Parnassia asarifolia*) in the fall.



The following day, we met David Cozzo, our Eastern Bank of the Cherokee Indian plant expert. Not a native Indian himself, David probably knows more about the Cherokees and their plants than most Cherokees. He guided us through Mingus Mill in the Smokys identifying and describing all the various uses Cherokees derived from their plants. Dog hobble (*Leucothoe fontanesiana*), Wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*), Solomon's-seal (*Polygonatum biflora*) bloomed all around us.

Adam Bigelow and Doris Gove met us for lunch at Clingmans Dome and each took a group on a tour of the high altitude forests. Doris is particularly adept at finding salamanders and turned up a Pigmy and a couple Red-Cheeked on the Spruce-Fir nature Trail, carefully placing them back in their homes and rolling the logs gently back so as not to squish them.



Adam's group explored the vast blooms of Spring beauties (*Claytonia caroliniana*) and Fringed Phacelia (*Phacelia fimbriata*), before catching back up with our group in the Oconoluftee area for more botanizing. As though on cue, the Elk wandered across the road, with assistance on controlling traffic by the park rangers, and nonchalantly meandered right past our group. The cows will have delivered their calves by now and will hide them in the woods until they are deemed old enough to be paraded before the tourists.

Our final day in the mountains took us back south to Georgia to explore Tallulah Falls State Park, where we found Little Brown Jugs (*Hexastylis arifolia*) in various stages of bloom and another Trillium, Catesbyi. The group had a quick tour of the visitor center and jog across the suspension bridge, down to the gorge, all 350 feet and a bazillion steps. What a great feeling to be in the bottom of the gorge with a thunderstorm rumbling in and the falls roaring by.

But all good things must come to an end. The group had been told there was one last stop, a tattoo parlor for a group tattoo, but as the coach skirted off the highway and scrolled through the rural roads of Tiger, Georgia, the thunder clouds rolled in again. Past farms and rolling green hills, we finally pulled into Stonewall Creek Winery for a last celebration. No tattoos this trip.

The thunderstorm moved in shortly after we arrived. A perfect ending to a perfect tour!!

-Devon Higginbotham





Plant Profile - Blanketflower

Gaillardia pulchella

Family - Asteraceae

Blanket flower is an annual that reseeds and will spread. It is about 15 inches tall and is salt tolerant. It likes sun, drier conditions and is often used for roadside or coastal plantings. Pollinators are attracted to it and the flowers are bright and cheery.



Plants and seeds are readily available from Native Nurseries and Native Seed providers.

Plant Atlas link -

<http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/Plant.aspx?id=730>

FNPS link -

<https://www.fnps.org/plants/plant/gaillardia-pulchella>

~Janet Bowers

Native Garden at Flatwoods Park

An update from Mary Miller

When I first arrived I was taking some pictures of our native garden, when I spotted our first ruby-throated hummingbird of the season feeding on the firebush that are now in bloom. Last year we had as many as 15 hummers in the garden at the same time, mainly feeding on their favorite plant, the firebush. Welcome back, little hummers! Once on the trail, 2 wild turkeys crossed in front of me and I



also saw 2 red-shouldered hawks. The park is awash in yellow with our State wildflower, tickseed, coreopsis leavenworthii, and also abundant were the black-eyed Susans, *Rudbeckia hirta*.

Joel Jackson's new signs are out and everything looks wonderful!

Mary Miller used a Suncoast grant to buy new passionvine and other natives for the Flatwoods garden and invites everyone to stop by and see the happy butterflies.



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.



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>	
Andy Taylor	
<i>Outreach</i>	
Open	
<i>USF Plant Sales</i>	
Open	
<i>USF Botanical Garden Liaison</i>	
Kim Hutton	974-2329
<i>Chapter Representative</i>	
Virginia Overstreet	
<i>Webmaster</i>	
Shirley Denton	625-5031

Newsletter Submissions

Deadline for the next issue:

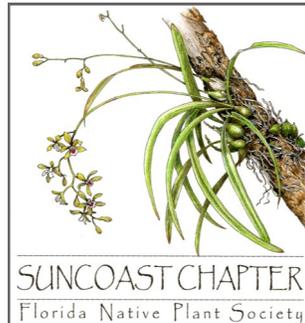
July 1, 2018

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

SNPS Web Address

<http://www.SuncoastNPS.org>

We're on Meet Up & Facebook



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
Go south on 579 for two blocks.
Turn left on Old Hillsborough Ave and park on the North side of the office.



2018 Board of Directors

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Open

Vice-president

Virginia Overstreet
vaoverstreet@gmail.com

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Niki Cribbs
cribbs813@gmail.com

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