

Sabal minor

A bi-monthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



Volume 16, Number 1
January–February 2014

Florida Native Plant Society • P.O. Box 278, Melbourne, FL 32902-0278 • 321-271-6702 • Fax: 815-361-9166

FNPS is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation registered in Florida as a charitable organization (CH3021).

www.fnps.org • info@fnps.org • President: Steve Woodmansee, email: president@fnps.org • Sabal minor editor, Stacey Matrazzo, email: sabalminor@fnps.org

Message from the President

Greetings and Happy New Year! The start of every new year tides in new beginnings. This year may well be one of the most pivotal in FNPS history.

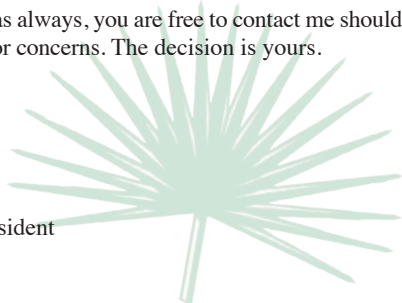
This August, the Board of Directors approved the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of all the chapter representatives. The committee is referred to as the Council of Chapters. While all current chapter representatives will remain on the Board, they will have additional meetings to formalize a Council as a standing committee whose focus will be on program elements of our mission. The Council will provide opportunities for communications and programming across all chapter boundaries. This was done now so that the Council will have easier transition should changes to the by-laws go into effect, establishing a smaller operational board with an important on-the-ground programming arm. As a result, the future FNPS Board of Directors would be more streamlined, while still maintaining representation from the chapters through at least three dedicated board positions from the Council of Chapters. Three FNPS board members would be selected by the council, one of which would be on the executive committee along with other officers. Already, the Council of Chapters committee has selected a leader, Julie Becker, as its Chair, and Scott Davis has agreed to be its recording secretary. Our Board of Directors has approved a recommended decrease in size of over 50 board members to fewer than 22.

It is my hope that come May, these and other results from our strategic planning process and implementation will further come to fruition. Our Board of Directors will meet again on the 8th and 9th of February 2014 to finalize our by-laws, conduct regular business, and work on our strategic programming. As a result, recommended by-law changes, and the accompanying Operations Policy Manual should be ready for review by the membership shortly after. These would then be dispersed to all FNPS members 3-6 weeks before a vote in mid- to late March, in accordance with last year's by-law changes. Last year we allowed for online or mail-in voting to any future proposed by law changes. Upon gathering the results of the vote in March, a slate of nominees will be presented to the membership for a vote in May during the election at the Annual Member's meeting at the Society Conference in Fort Myers.

I encourage you to follow our progress on our website forum located at: <http://www.forum.fnps.org/index.php#c2> scroll down to the FNPS reorg section, as well as our minutes section to follow what we are doing. And as always, you are free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns. The decision is yours.

Best Regards,

Steve Woodmansee, President
president@fnps.org

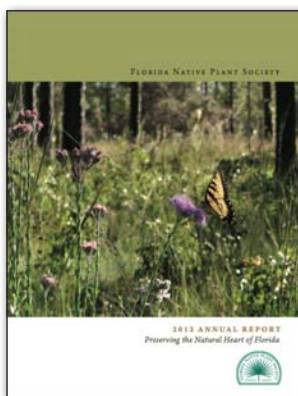


Reminder: NEW Changes to Chapter Support Check Procedures

by Kim Zarillo, FNPS Treasurer

Two important changes regarding Chapter Support payments approved by the Society's Board of Directors regarding timing of support payments and checks not deposited go into effect beginning 2014:

- Chapter Support checks not cashed in 120 days will return to the Society's Operating Fund.
- The BOD also agreed to change the Chapter Support payment schedule from quarterly to semi-annually. Under the new schedule, support payments will begin July 2014 and January 2015.



2012 Annual Report now available!

The Florida Native Plant Society 2012 Annual Report is now available for download. Members are encouraged to check it out!

Read about FNPS accomplishments during 2012, and take time to enjoy the beautiful photography and remember our educational and fun events. The report also includes a 2011-2012 financial summary. Actual financials are available to members upon request.

Visit fnps.org/news/society-news/2012-annual to download a PDF of the full annual report.

FNPS Treasurer seeks volunteer Asst. Treasurer

FNPS needs an Assistant Treasurer to help prepare updates to the budget, other financial reports, and attend BOD meetings in place of the Treasurer. Training is available. Please contact Kim Zarillo at Treasurer@fnps.org for more information.

Education Committee report

by Debra Klein, Education Committee Chair

The Chair is in the process of developing work plans that detail the following projects and what funding and assistance will be needed to bring them to fruition, including working with other FNPS committees:

- a. "Natives for Neighborhoods"
- b. K-12 Curriculum
- c. Films that document the varying "native plant communities" around the state
- d. Creating badges for Boy and Girl Scouts that answers the question: "Does the action further our mission?"

Anyone who is interested in working on the above projects should contact Debra Klein at greenmansion@comcast.net.

“Growing Native” Conference field trip Gator Hole Preserve by Marlene Rodak, 2014 Conference Committee Chair

Coccoloba Chapter has been busy planning the 2014 conference, including researching and developing some fabulous field trips. On November 19, members Jim Rodwell, Mick Curtis, Dick Workman, and Marlene Rodak climbed into a 4WD pickup “manned” by Laura Jewell to check out Gator Hole Preserve (GHP).

GHP is a Conservation 20/20-purchased property located a mere six miles from Florida Gulf Coast University, the conference venue. The 175 acres were purchased beginning in 2000, but as yet are not open to the public.

The Preserve consists primarily of wet and mesic flatwoods. Other natural plant communities include cypress dome swamp, depression marsh and wet prairie, as well as some disturbed areas related to historical farming. Fire is a critical management tool for GHP because of the dominance of flatwoods. The site boasts a huge variety of plants—over 250! The number of plant species has increased by over 100 since invasive exotic plants were removed, the palmetto cover reduced, and a prescribed fire program initiated.

The group headed down the trail in the massive pickup truck and stopped at the first intersection. A short hike down the road and into the thick brush led to the first of two cypress domes. We admired *Liatis spicata* (blazing star), *Pityopsis graminifolia* (silk grass), *Tillandsia flexuosa* (twisted air plant), and the bane of hikers, *Smilax laurifolia*, just to name a few.

GHP lies along the edge of a 60,000-acre wildlife corridor that includes Flint Pen Strand, Imperial Marsh Preserve, and Corkscrew

Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) lands. The seasonal wetlands, surrounded by intact upland communities, are of particular importance to amphibians and wading birds residing in the Preserve.

The management activities include a program to accommodate gopher tortoises, which were relocated to GHP for Lee County Department of Transportation road widening projects, as well as for future public infrastructure projects in Lee County. The perimeter of the Preserve is surrounded by fencing, buried deep enough to prevent the turtles from attempting to return to their former homes and to discourage them from wandering out onto Corkscrew Road. We also saw signs of some of the other 120 documented animals in the Preserve, including deer tracks in the mud. The beaten-down fences in many areas along the perimeter were another sign of deer—the ones that failed to clear the wire in their attempt to jump over!

Other plants we observed were *Tillandsia setacea* (Southern needleleaf bromeliad), the closely resembling *Vittaria lineara* (shoestring fern), *Tillandsia paucifolia* (potbelly bromeliad), the beautiful *Eriocaulon decangulare* (bog button), *Myrica pusilla* (dwarf wax myrtle), the rather rare *Nothoscordum bivalve* (crowpoison), and much, much more.

Because the “Growing Native” field trip to Gator Hole Preserve will be in large 4WD pickups, the seating is very limited. You’ll want to keep your eyes peeled for the opening of registration to make sure you don’t miss this rare opportunity to



Coccoloba members Jim Rodwell and Dick Workman, and Laura Jewell of Lee County’s Conservation 20/20

As we were bouncing down the muddy road in Gator Hole Preserve, Dick yelled, “Stop! Stop!”

Laura lifted up on the accelerator before smashing it back down. “I can’t stop here. We’ll get stuck.” She gassed the truck through the mud and stopped about 15 feet ahead, safely out of danger.

Upon stopping, Dick jumped from the passenger seat, running away from the road at the soft spot. He reached down, pulled, and then waved a three-foot *Melaleuca* tree in the air. As he returned to the group, Laura explained that although they’ve made tremendous progress in the heavily invaded area, there are still a lot of *Melaleuca* “babies” to manage.

Just then Jim said, “What’s that smell?” And, as if on cue, he was answered by a long “oooooooooooooooooooooooooooo.” At that point, we realized we were close to the edge of the Preserve, where on the other side of the fence, cows were grazing. Besides the potential damage from cows and feral pigs, the massive mines adjacent to the property pose a serious threat to the remarkable restoration that is taking place within the Preserve’s borders. Laura expressed concern that the deer-beaten fence may not continue to be enough to protect Gator Hole Preserve. At the same moment, we looked up and saw a magnificent rainbow, with both ends overtop this magical piece of property.

tour a preserve not generally open to the public.

Of course, if you do miss a seat on this trip, there will be plenty of other great field trips to choose from during the 34th Annual FNPS “Growing Native” Conference, May 15-18, 2014 at Florida Gulf Coast University.

FNPS Members in Action—Valerie Thomas of Sparkleberry Chapter brings native plants to school

Last spring, Sparkleberry Chapter member Valerie Thomas decided to convert a regularly mowed area of the school grounds where she works into something more useful and attractive. Being an avid birder and native plant enthusiast, a garden of native plants that would attract birds,



butterflies and other pollinators was her first thought. The huge project got underway in late January with a an Audubon Collaborative Grant and a volunteer group of students, teachers, members of Four Rivers Audubon and FNPS Sparkleberry Chapter, and local Master Gardeners. Most of the native plants used in the garden were donated by Sparkleberry Chapter and its members. Additional donations, including bird houses and feeders, came from the Four Rivers Audubon and others. A variety of native trees, shrubs and

Ft. White Middle School “Native Plant, Bird & Butterfly Garden” by Valerie Thomas

How fortunate were we all? To have such a lovely rain-filled summer to help all of our beautiful plants grow like crazy? I have plants that have bloomed that have never done a thing before. It just tickles me so to walk around and see every growing thing, thriving and blossoming.

I should mention that we no sooner got the first plants in the ground than we had a hard freeze

wildflowers were planted by the volunteers over a period of weeks in the hot sand on the south side of the classrooms. The planting was completed and mulched in May. Then, the school closed for the summer. The newly installed plants were left, without irrigation, to fend for themselves during the hottest part of the year. The expectations were not overly optimistic at that point, but what she found when school reopened in August was remarkable. Here’s Valerie’s report:

and every single thing turned black and looked like death. These plants were the foundation of the garden: small trees and shrubs, and hardy coonies. We continued to hand water, however, and plant wildflowers as well as larger plants like sumac and beach sunflower. You can really see the results; after abundant showers, everything is growing and gorgeous. Photos can’t really do it



CHAPTER HAPPENINGS...

Cocoplum Chapter has chosen endemic plants, or “Special Plants, Special Places” for their 2013–2014 season’s theme.

Chapter members continue to represent FNPS in the community: **Joan Bausch**, the chapter’s conservation committee chair, sent a letter of support to USACE regarding their progress in getting the Central Everglades Planning Project integrated into the Water Resources and Development Act. She has also been actively collecting signed petitions for Florida’s Water and Land Legacy Amendment. Member **Greg Braun** continues to work on the Champion Tree Project for Martin County.

Conradina Chapter’s December meeting featured “Making Holiday Wreaths with Native Plants.” The Chapter provided participants with the wreath and native plant decorating material.

The Chapter is also giving away a scholarship for one class in the Florida Master Naturalist Program. They accept applications through January 15, and announce the winner at their February meeting.

Dade Chapter will hold their annual Native Plant Day on March 22, 2014, at Elaine Gordon Enchanted Forest Park in North Miami. Watch their web site for details to come: dade.fnpschapters.org.

Hernando Chapter continues its ongoing partnership with various civic and conservation organizations to restore the natural heritage of Chinsegut Hill. Take a look at their website (<https://sites.google.com/site/hernandochapter/news/nativeplantsandhistoryatchinseguthill>) to see an article by Chapter President Judith Simpson on the history and current status of rare plants found there, especially the Brooksville bellflower.

In 2014, they will begin a major project of conducting a plant survey on Cypress Lakes, a county-owned preserve. Members of other chapters who would like to help with plant identification or in other ways are welcome. Field trips to this beautiful property are also planned during the year.

Mangrove Chapter participated in three plant surveys during the month of November: They will provide plant material as well as educational information to help a local community “put back the natives” where a large stand of Brazilian pepper had been removed. Members have begun conducting monthly phenological surveys of native plants at a local county park; they will record blooming and seeding data and use it to create a “what’s blooming” guide for visitors. And members have begun assisting in the establishment of a memorial ethnobotany trail in a small local

park. The first stage involved identifying and flagging native species. Their “homework” is to identify how each plant was used by the Native Americans, pioneers and others so that signs and other educational materials can be provided to park visitors.

Naples Chapter in partnership with the Naples Botanical Garden invites you to their annual banquet featuring Dr. Douglas W. Tallamy’s presentation, “Are Alien Plants Bad?” The banquet at the Garden’s Kapnick Auditorium on Friday, February 28, 2014 begins with a full dinner and silent auction featuring native plants, artwork and special garden objects. Dr. Tallamy’s presentation will discuss data that shows us how we can determine the overall impact of alien plants on our ecosystems only by comparing what is gained from their use with what is lost when they replace native plant communities. For more details and ticket reservations visit www.NaplesFNPS.org or call 239-597-7222 before February 15.

Pawpaw Chapter continues to innovate their monthly meetings. In 2014, their “Plant of the Month” feature (where members research a plant, which is then sold at auction) will take on a different tone as “Plants That Get No Respect.” Members will introduce favorite plants they use, but that the general public may think of as “weeds.”

Their second Sunday Seminar and Plant Sale was held on October 27 at the Piggotte Center in South Daytona. The day included speakers such as Kevin Bagwell of Full Moon, Paul Rebman with photos and a talk about plants only found in Florida, and Tom Bartlett who spoke of honeybees, as well as vendors and plants for sale. Visitors were encouraged to enjoy their demonstration garden just a few blocks away in the Park of Honor.

In partnership with Halifax Aududon, the Chapter was asked to help establish a butterfly garden at Ormond Beach Elementary for Mrs. Shaina Belsky’s third grade class. Audubon donated several “bird-friendly trees,” and Pawpaws donated butterfly plants.

Pawpaw Chapter members Dot Backes, Sonya Giudry, Don Spence, Mark Wheeler, and Danny Young have worked with Volusia County Land Management on their monthly “Bio-Blitz.” This was a great opportunity to learn and give back to the community. Said one volunteer, “*It never failed, those bird specialists were always out early and long gone while we plant folks still plugged away at completing our plant lists.*”

Tell us what YOUR chapter is up to.
Send your Chapter Happenings to Sabalminor@fnps.org.
 The deadline for the March–April 2014 issue is February 1, 2014.

justice. I invite everyone to stop by and see!

I talked with some of our students about our garden, to get their impressions. Here are the results:

Audrey, 7th Grade: “The garden looks really good! Everything has grown a lot since last spring. You mean you haven’t watered at all over the summer? That’s amazing!”

Beth, 9th Grade: “I’m glad we planted natives, they are really good for the creatures, like birds and bugs.”

Mac, 8th Grade: “It is a privilege and honor to have such a cool garden at school. We can get in it to study an ecosystem, not just read about it in a book. It’s great to see birds here, and lots of butterflies. The native plants belong here, and the pollinators that came in help our vegetable plants. I loved working in the garden and I hope we can continue to build on the foundation we have.”

This past week, after a brief talk about why we planted native plants at school, I accompanied two sophomore biology classes on a biodiversity study in the garden. The number of insects (yes, including love bugs) was amazing! The students got some awesome photos of bees, butterflies and dragonflies working



the native wildflowers. I’ve been keeping track and fourteen species of birds have been spotted using the garden, feeders and birdbath. So from nothing but some Bermuda grass and a few fire ants to the bounty that we have today, I’d say that’s progress! Thanks to the Sparkleberry Chapter, and many generous member contributions of plants and labor. You have really made a difference, and we may even be raising up a new generation of native plant lovers!

Would you be interested in reading your *Palmetto* on an iPad or other tablet computer and saving the Society some much needed funds to put into other projects? We’ve already reduced expenses by sending out the *Sabal minor* via an email link to a PDF.

Let us know your communication preferences by sending an email to info@fnps.org and telling us your DIGITAL or PAPER preferences for your chapter newsletter, the *Sabal minor* bi-monthly newsletter, and the *Palmetto* quarterly magazine.

We are recording your preferences in your membership profile. While the *Palmetto* is not yet available in digital form, and won’t be for some time, FNPS is looking to the future and wants to know how many members would like this service.

Call for Research Papers and Poster Presentations for 2014 Conference

The FNPS Annual Conference will be held at Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers, May 15-18, 2014. The Research Track of the conference will include presented papers on Friday, May 16 and Saturday, May 17. The poster session will be on Saturday May 17.

Researchers are invited to submit abstracts on research related to native plants and plant communities of Florida including preservation, conservation, and restoration. Presentations are to be 20 minutes in total length (15 min. presentation, 5 min. questions).

Abstracts of not more than 200 words should be submitted as an MS Word file by email to Paul A. Schmalzer (paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov) by February 1, 2014. Include title, affiliation, and address. Indicate whether you will be presenting a paper or poster.

2014 Endowment Grant Research Awards and Conservation Grant Awards

FNPS maintains an Endowment Research Grant program for the purpose of funding research on native plants. Grants are \$1500 or less, awarded for a 1-year period, and intended to support research that forwards the FNPS mission, which is “to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.”

FNPS Conservation Grants support applied native plant conservation projects in Florida. These are small grants (\$1500 or less) awarded for a 1-year period. These projects promote the preservation, conservation, or restoration of rare or imperiled native plant taxa and rare or imperiled native plant communities. To qualify for a Conservation Grant, the proposed project must be sponsored by an FNPS Chapter.

Application guidelines and details are on the FNPS Web site (www.fnps.org), click on ‘Participate/Grants and Awards’. Questions regarding the grant programs should be sent to info@fnps.org.

Application deadline for the 2014 Awards is March 7, 2014. Awards will be announced at the May 2014 Annual Conference in Fort Myers. Awardees do not have to be present at the Conference to receive award.

Correction to Nov-Dec issue: In “Is your chapter on Facebook,” Suncoast Chapter was inadvertently omitted from the list of chapters who have Facebook pages. The editor apologizes for this oversight.

Florida Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 278
Melbourne, FL 32902-0278

SAVE THE DATE! FNPS 34TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, MAY 15TH -
SUNDAY, MAY 18TH,
2014

FLORIDA GULF
COAST UNIVERSITY,
FORT MYERS, FL



HOSTED BY THE COCCOLOBA CHAPTER

WWW.FNPSCOCCOLOBA.ORG WWW.FNPS.ORG/CONFERENCE



Follow the conference on Twitter (@FNPSConf2014)
and Facebook (FNPS Conference 2014).



2013 BOD & Ex-Comm Meetings

January 11: Ex-Comm tele-
conference

February 8–9, 2014: Board Retreat
Polk County Nature Discovery
Center Circle B Bar Reserve
Lakeland

May 15, 2014: BOD meeting
2014 Annual Conference,
Florida Gulf Coast University
Ft. Myers

Check the Society Calendar at
fnps.org/events/eventlist
for updates.