

# Sabal minor

A bimonthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



VOLUME 12, NUMBER 3  
August - September 2009

The *Sabal minor* is now distributed electronically by email. All members without an email address will receive a paper copy. If a member with an email address wants to receive a paper copy, notify us at [info@fnps.org](mailto:info@fnps.org) or call 321-271-6702.

## August - September

Indigo snakes and other snake eggs are hatching, as are gopher tortoise eggs. Shorebirds and blue-winged teal arrive to winter on Florida wetlands and lakes. In late September, gray bats migrate to north Alabama for winter hibernation. Atlantic sturgeon begin fall migration from the Suwannee and Apalachicola Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. Lovebugs, or Bibionidae flies, mate in the middle of roadways.

Weed! Now is the time to plant ground cover and shade trees. As the summer rains slow and weather continues to be hot, water plants and trees planted within the last two years. The bigger the plant was when planted, the more carefully you need to water. Prune trees and shrubs for the winter now, there will be less freeze damage later.

Blooming: Meadowbeauty, *Rhexia* spp; black-eyed Susan, *Rudbeckia hirta*; ederberry, *Sambucus nigra* subsp *canadensis*; goldenrod, *Solidago* spp; partridge pea, *Chamaecrista* spp; maypop, *Passiflora incarnata*; fragrant white waterlily, *Nymphaea odorata*; beautyberry, *Callicarpa americana*; St. Johns wort, *Hypericum* spp; snowberry, *Chiococca alba*; fiddlewood, *Citharexylum spinosum*; white indigo berry, *Randia aculeata*; loblolly bay, *Gordonia lasianthus*.

## Message from the Executive Director

It seems like every individual has been impacted by the economic climate in one way or another. Our Vice President of Finance, Steve Woodmansee, and his committee have found ways that members can contribute to the Florida Native Plant Society in our day to day lives without spending extra funds. By simply searching the internet or purchasing goods online, we can raise significant funds for the Society.

A large percentage of us already make purchases over the internet on a consistent basis. Even more of us could change our purchasing methods and buy household green products online instead of driving to the store.

Here are the opportunities and how they work:

1. GoodSearch – Go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com), select the Florida Native Plant Society from the “Who Do You GoodSearch For” pull down menu and then type in your internet search key words. GoodSearch will donate for each search you make on the internet.
2. GoodShop – Go to [www.goodshop.com](http://www.goodshop.com), select the Florida Native Plant Society from the “Who Do You Support” pull down menu and shop online from such stores as Barnes and Noble, Amazon, Ebay, Expedia, Best Buy, Lands End, Gap, Home Depot, iTunes, L.L. Bean, Office Depot, Staples, Old Navy, PetSmart, Sears, Target, and Walgreens. Up to 30% of each purchase goes to the Florida Native Plant Society.
3. LetsGoGreen.biz – Go to [Letsgogreen.biz](http://Letsgogreen.biz), select purchases from environmentally friendly home, office and business products. When you submit an order, there is a pull down menu listing organizations. Select FNPS and 25% of your total purchase price goes into the FNPS account.
4. Earthshare – If you are a City, County or State employee or a private business and contribute to United Way, you can choose Earthshare and then the sub-category Florida Native Plant Society for your United Way donation.

Imagine if every FNPS member purchased household, personal, gifts and office products online. FNPS could receive significant fundraising dollars. It's simple to do, just a couple of clicks and our organization is supported by its membership's every day purchases. Give it a try.

**Karina Veaudry**

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*Sabal minor* is on-line at <http://www.fnps.org/sabalminor>. The on-line version has color photographs and other benefits. Enjoy!

Deadlines for *Sabal minor* submissions: 1/15 for Feb-Mar issue; 3/15 for Apr-May; 5/15 for June-July; 7/15 for Aug-Sept; 9/15 for Oct-Nov; 11/15 for Dec-Jan

# Species Spotlight

*Bidens* spp.  
ASTERACEAE

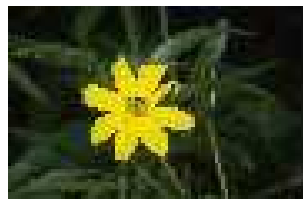
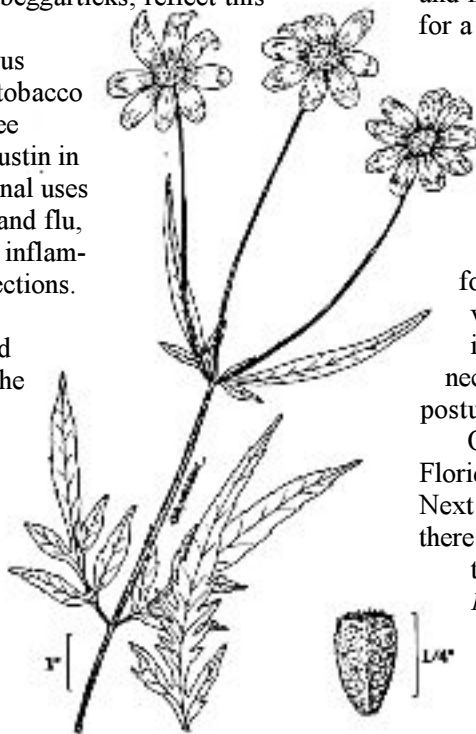
## Spanish Needle Salad Anyone?

Eleanor K. Sommer

*Bidens* spp. are abundant “pest” weeds in Florida and indeed all over the world. There are more than 40 native species in the United States alone and over 230 worldwide. These weedy plants thrive in warm climates and have traditions of medicinal and edible use wherever they are found. The botanical name, which describes the shape of the fruit (seed) comes from the Latin *bis* meaning two and *dens* meaning tooth. The bane of any hiker, *Bidens* is zoochorous, that is, it evolved to hitchhike on the fur of animals (and our socks). Some of its common names, such as Spanish needles and beggarticks, reflect this characteristic.

The dried leaves of various species have been used as a tobacco substitute, called “Fakahatchee Gold,” according to Daniel Austin in *Florida Ethnobotany*. Medicinal uses included treatment for colds and flu, hepatitis, bacterial infections, inflammation, and urinary tract infections. The Cherokee people used *B. bipinnata* to expel worms and chewed on the leaves to soothe a sore throat. In Florida the Seminole people used *Bidens* species, probably *B. mitis*, according to Austin, for a variety of complaints including headaches, high fever, and diarrhea. *B. pilosa*, which is not native but is often confused (and in some texts synonymous) with *B. alba*, reportedly has constituents that can depress the central nervous system and lower blood sugar. Because *Bidens* species seem to contain an amazing number of chemicals with biological activity, various species are the subjects of ongoing research, including use as an antimalarial drug (*B. pilosa*). *Bidens* species contain some powerful chemical constituents and should not be used medicinally without the advice of a skilled herbalist or traditional healer.

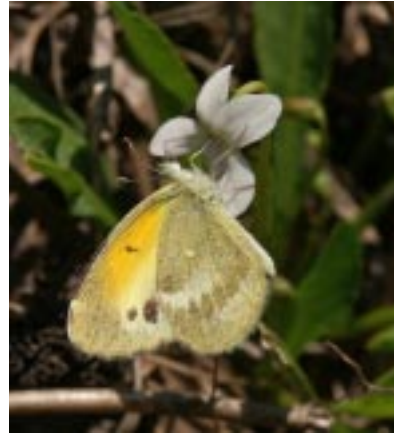
However, occasional snacking is fine. The flowers and tender young leaves and of *B. alba* can be added to salads, and the more mature leaves can be boiled or steamed as a pot herb. (Note that the yellow centers are coarse and



## Dainty Sulphur

Linda Cooper

Last issue highlighted one of the large sulphur butterflies, Cloudless Sulphur. Let's meet our smallest sulphur this issue. Dainty Sulphur, *Nathalis iole*, colonized the state in the early 1900s, probably from the Carribben. Its host plant, Spanish needles (*Bidens alba* var *radiata*), is abundant in Florida.



This tiny sulphur ranges statewide but is vulnerable to cold temperatures. It is usually easily found along roadsides and in other low vegetation where its host plant grows. Look for a very small yellow butterfly flying low to the ground.

It lands and closes its wings, as do all sulphurs, so you must identify it by its underwings (ventral surface). It varies seasonally from a greenish-gray form in the winter to a dingy yellow in the summer. The forewing is elongated, giving it a distinctive shape compared to other small sulphurs. It has dark wing tips and dark bars extend through its dorsal forewing trailing edges and hindwing leading edges, visible in flight. Several dark spots are usually visible on its forewings near the wing edge as it sits to rest or nectar, usually at its host plant. See photo of its typical posture.

Other small sulphurs do not have these spots. In south Florida, near Homestead, there is a population that is white. Next time you are sitting in your vehicle at a traffic signal, if there are *Bidens alba* blooming in the median, look for this tiny sulphur flitting among the blossoms.

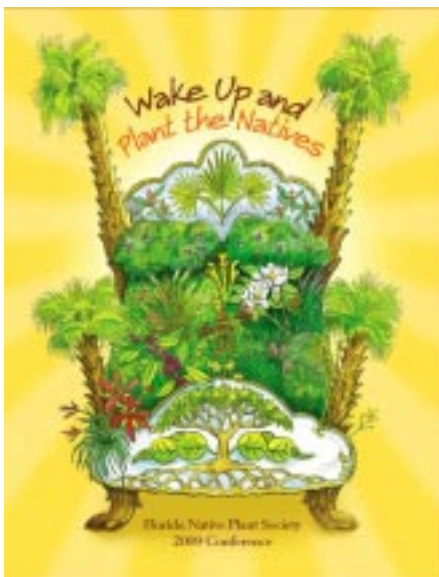
Photo by Linda Cooper

*Bidens mitis*, drawing and photo from USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / USDA NRCS. *Wetland flora: Field office illustrated guide to plant species*. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

some people prefer to pluck the petals for salads.) A mild tea can be made from the flowers, which purportedly also make an interesting wine.

Florida has seven native *Bidens*, of these *Bidens alba*, or romarillo, and *Bidens mitis*, or smallfruit beggarticks, are the most widely distributed across the state.

As always, cross-check with several references for the identity of plants before using them. If you are at all unsure, consult with experienced foragers and herbalists before eating or using plants from the wild.



## Recharging Passions at the FNPS 2009 Conference

*Stephanie Brown*

More than 375 people came to recharge their passions with all the possibilities presented at the FNPS 29th Annual Conference, which by many accounts was a real barnburner. Were you there when **Dr. Doug Tallamy** spoke to a packed ballroom about the urgent need for homeowners to restore native flora to save imperiled wildlife and greenway connectivity? His charming delivery of science-based data and humorous anecdotes culminated in a standing ovation, and set the stage for what became a remarkable conference. On Saturday, **Dan Austin** showed us that the tropics and the deserts do have plants in common and the native people of both areas used these plants for similar purposes. Conference attendees were delighted that Dan came from Arizona to visit with friends and colleagues.

Nearly 200 people came to evening social and toured our native plant garden. The catering by Café Cocomanut was outstanding and the band, “**The Weeds**,” rocked the house while people danced the night away. I even got a swing dance with **Dr. Walter Kingsley Taylor** who was signing copies of his new book *A Guide to Florida Grasses*. **Rufino Osorio**, **Mike Bodle**, and **Mike Manna** put on a challenging Plant ID contest.

The vendors were busy and happy to mingle with such a vivacious and interested crowd. Despite foul weather, people shopped the native plant sale and vendors were taking orders above the stock on hand. In fact, the hotel banquet captain who is a transplanted gardener from Vermont asked me if the hotel staff could participate in the plant sale, which they did!

The sessions were well attended, especially since more ISA and ASLA CEU credits were offered this conference than ever before. In fact, **Rufino Osorio**'s presentation on the horticultural and ecological roles of Florida wildflowers in gardens offered many CEUs and was standing room only! The University of Florida restoration horticulture seminar surpassed expectations as well.

Many “firsts” at the conference showed that innovation comes from interaction. We used online registration for attendees and vendors. The conference postcard notice and email registration confirmations saved roughly 48,000 sheets of paper. **Matt King**'s online field trip maps have become the new standard. The conservation panel and **Dr. Harold Wanless** were professionally videotaped. **Ray Miller** expertly launched 20 field trips. I am so proud of everyone who worked on the conference. Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have big hearts and lots of stamina!

## Fun at the FNPS Children's Conference May 2009

*Lynn Sweetay*

Activities on the first day included a field trip to the new environmental elementary school at Pine Jog, led by Kristi Martin and her graduate student Nia. While there, the kids did water studies, netted fish and insects, and then spent time with the Forest Rangers from the Everglades District learning about fire ecology.

Stories read by Shari Rodgers of Palm Beach chapter finished off the first day.

On Day 2 we were joined by Carsten and Conner Thompson and Sam Loper.

Led by Suze Peace, an award winning art teacher and member of Lyonia Chapter, the children created original hats and paintings. After lunch a trip to the Library was in order, since it was pouring rain. Upon their return, they were treated to a show-and-tell session on snakes. Sharing information and real live snakes, Megan Lynch of Orlando and her partner Dave were a big hit!

The children finished the day with environmental songs led by Karin Layton. The children took home wildflower seeds to plant in their gardens.

*Photo: From Left to right between the forest rangers the kids are: Nolan Kiefer, Liam Rodgers, Seth Rodgers and Sarah King.*



## What Is All the Twittering About?

*Cindy Liberton*

Chapters have started a conversation in the Twittersphere, and report connecting with interesting people from across Florida and the nation. Twitter offers a way to reach out to a new audience to talk about the mission and activities of FNPS.

You've probably heard a lot about it, and here's how it works. Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service. Once you have an account, you send out "tweets" (up to 140 characters) that are delivered to other users who have subscribed to them (known as followers). Senders can restrict delivery to those in their circle of friends or, by default, allow anybody to access them. Users can send and receive tweets via the Twitter website, Short Message Service (SMS on phones) or external applications.

The service is free to use over the Internet, but using SMS may incur phone service provider fees.

### So How Does a Chapter use Twitter?

1. Although individuals may tweet at will, your board should decide who in your Chapter is the head Twitterer. This

- person should oversee official posting and response to relevant messages, even if you have a team doing the tweeting. It takes some judgement to twitter strategically.
2. Set up your Chapter Twitter at **twitter.com**. You will need a user name for your account, an email and a password. A good short name for your Twitter Profile is your Chapter Name + FNPS (e.g., HernandoFNPS). If you use your Chapter email address, you may be able to invite all your members (gmail, yahoo, etc) automatically.
3. Complete your profile  it is free advertising! You may decide to select the "Protect my updates" checkbox. This means that only people you approve will receive your tweets. Depends on how you will use Twitter! If you want members only, check the box.
4. Customize your Twitter site by going through all the settings. See <http://twitter.com/HernandoFNPS> for an example of what you can do.
5. Twitter away. Once you are logged in, your Chapter can send announcements about meetings and events, start discussions, find people by name or interest and invite them to follow you, or chose to follow them.

*Need help? Want to learn more about Twitter? Look for the Twitter Factsheet on the web, under Chapter Resources at [fnps.org](http://fnps.org).*

## Travel with FNPS What Would You Like? Please Respond to This Survey!

FNPS has hosted several successful tours to such places as Belize and Costa Rica over the years. The people who have gone on these trips have shared their enjoyment of their experiences. The trips also have been useful fundraisers for the organization.

The tours have not been regular annual events. They have been organized and offered by fellow FNPS member or members who did the work to make it happen. And occasionally, even when a trip was offered, it just didn't work for enough people to go.

What we would like to know is, What *does* work for our members, to make these trips happen? Tell us what your needs and wishes are!

Please email me, Rosalind Rowe ([rosrow@comcast.net](mailto:rosrow@comcast.net)), with your replies and with any comments you'd care to make. For those of you with the paper version, feel free to write on this page and mail it to Rosalind at PO Box 630, Babson Park, FL 33827.

1. I'd have to keep my budget to (circle one): \$1500, \$2500, \$3000, \$3500, \$4000.
2. (True/False) I'd want to travel with a companion, and that affects my budget limit.
3. I'd need to limit my time away from home to (circle one): 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14 days.
4. I can only travel in (circle one): summer, fall, winter, spring.
5. (True/False) I'd need to know a lot more about the safety/social/political situation of the country before I could begin to consider going. If True: Who would you trust for such information?
6. Rank your preferences for these trips, 1-6 (1 - First Choice; 2 - second choice, and so on; however, put a Zero if it's a trip you'd never be interested in taking).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Nicaragua
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Venezuela
  - \_\_\_\_\_ British Guyana
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Panama
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Costa Rica
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Euro-Mediterranean region
7. If your #1 country is not on this list, please tell us what it is: \_\_\_\_\_

## New Florida Friendly Landscape Bill Passed - But with a Price

Gene Kelly and Karina Veaudry

FNPS was extremely excited by the provisions of the bill that will now advance the use of Florida Friendly Landscaping; however, the addition of a last-minute amendment corrupted the bill and FNPS had to reverse its support and ask that the Governor to veto it. This was a bill that we were working towards for many years.

The amendment to the new law gives the executive directors of Florida's five water-management districts the sole power to approve water-use permits for large projects and developments. Until now, water-management districts had governing boards with a public input process. The members of the boards are appointed by the Governor to represent the entire breadth of the public interest. Their authority to approve or deny the issuance of water use and wetland permits, exercised in the context of a public meeting, is an important element of representative democracy and "government in the sunshine." The good water conservation policy provisions do not outweigh the destructive loss of public access to agency decision-making. FNPS does not agree that the Executive Directors of the water management districts should have sole power to approve the issuance of water use permits.

With all that said, however, we do appreciate the implementation of a more sustainable approach to landscaping. Huge quantities of water may be conserved, to the benefit of the natural systems that are as dependent on water for their health and survival as are our human communities. Conservation is the least expensive and most environmentally friendly new source of water, and changing the way we landscape is simply the best way to conserve.

The good policy language in the new law is the promotion of "Florida Friendly" landscaping. A few highlights include:

- 1) The Water Management Districts are responsible to write a model code that cities and counties can follow or they can produce a more stringent code. (FNPS is collaborating with others to propose language for this.)
- 2) Landscape and irrigation designs must follow Florida Yards and Neighborhoods guidelines.
- 3) Projects that are considered "smart irrigation systems" with soil moisture sensors will be exempt from water restrictions based on days of the week. Cities and counties must keep a data base of these projects and they must be inspected by a Engineer or Landscape Architect once a year. A sign must be posted on the project.
- 4) Homeowners associations can no longer require homeowners use St. Augustine or other sod in their landscape □ in fact,

*A deed restriction or covenant may not prohibit or be enforced so as to prohibit any property owner from implementing Florida-friendly landscaping on his or her*

## Chapter Tips & Tricks

Keep track of your volunteer hours! Have some fun with that, and have use some incentives to get people to report. Set up an awards program for different categories, such as most hours for the year or for one month, or most hours weeding, most hours on signage, organizing programs, and so on.

Have fun! The **Hernando Chapter** has an annual Summer Garden Party in July, and features photos from the



Photo from C.Liberton

membership's landscaping projects and their favorite gardening hats. This year, their newspaper announcement drew many new people with an interest in adding the right natives to their Hernando County yards. The event also included the Chapter's first-ever native plant auction, which featured large specimens of several species; in addition to being lively, the auction brought in seven times the revenue of historical raffles. (Hernando thanks the **Suncoast Chapter** for telling them about their own successful auctions! If your Chapter hasn't tried one yet, we recommend it!)

### Landscape Bill, *continued*

*land or create any requirement or limitation in conflict with any provision of part II of this chapter or a water shortage order, other order, consumptive use permit, or rule adopted or issued pursuant to part II of this chapter. ... A local government ordinance may not prohibit or be enforced so as to prohibit any property owner from implementing Florida-friendly landscaping on his or her land.*

This is a big step forward. But this does not mean that we immediately remove all turf and replace it with mulch and two plants. "Florida friendly" landscaping can look just as pleasing as the wide expanses of lawns.

You can learn more about our new "Florida Friendly" landscape bill that Governor Crist signed into law by visiting our [fnps.org](http://fnps.org) website.

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Grants Available

Proposals due August 19, 2009

\$1,000 - \$24,000 awarded

25% non-federal cost-share required

Section 6 funds are awarded first to various states, and then the states award these "Nontraditional" funds for: **Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance, Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition, and Recovery Land Acquisition.** Individuals or groups such as land conservancies, cities, counties, community organizations, or conservation organizations, work with a State agency that has a cooperative agreement conservation efforts that are mutually beneficial, as a subgrantee (in this case, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission -- the FFWCC). The assistance provided to the State agency can include animal, plant, and habitat surveys; research; planning; monitoring; habitat protection, restoration, management, and acquisition; and public education.

Go to <http://www.fws.gov/angered/grants/section6/index.html> (or to [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov)) for more information.

In Florida, proposals must be submitted to the FFWCC. Contact Tom Ostertag at FFWCC ([Tom.Ostertag@MyFWC.com](mailto:Tom.Ostertag@MyFWC.com) or 850-410-0656 ext 17340) for the exact submission information.

To discuss potential project proposals or to get technical assistance in preparing the proposal, contact Lorna Patrick, a biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Panama City; her contact information is 851.769.0552 ext 229 or [lorna\\_patrick@fws.gov](mailto:lorna_patrick@fws.gov).

## Mark your calendars!

The 2010 FNPS Conference  
will be held at the  
Leon County Civic Center  
Tallahassee  
May 20 -23rd

## Florida Entomological Society

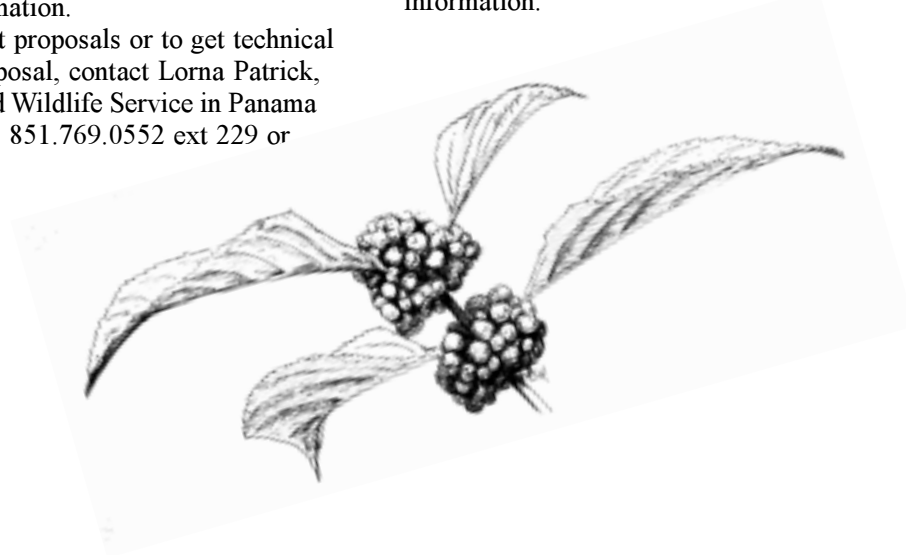
*Claudia Larsen*

If you are interested in pollination biology, you should check out the Florida Entomological Society.

They just had their Annual Meeting, July 26-29 at the Sanibel Harbour Resort and Spa in Ft Myers.

One of the tracts was about pollinator interaction with native plants. Presentations and discussions included research using Florida native plants.

Check out their website, [www.flaentsoc.org](http://www.flaentsoc.org), for more information.



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