

Native Plant Society Meeting
14 Jan 2010

The Longleaf Chapter of the Native Plant Society convened their monthly meeting in Jan 2010 at the newly opened Tryon Public Library. Twenty attendees were present; several were new to the organization.

Janet Nestlerode, Speaker Coordinator for the Chapter, has also taken on the role as web-mistress by developing a NPS Longleaf Chapter (LLC) Facebook Page – on which she has begun posting information on the meetings, field trips, outings, and other items of interest for the membership.

Amy Hines, President of the NPS LLC, is currently gathering historic data about the chapter for the state executive director – who is compiling a 30 year history of the NPS in FL. A. Hines was invited to attend the Feb 2010 FL NPS Board Meeting in Gainesville, FL. The membership was asked to make a motion, which was seconded and passed, to send A. Hines to the meeting as a representative. A. Hines will be carpooling to the conference with the new Panama City NPS Chapter President.

A treasurer's report was given, the chapter had \$1,068.82 in early 2009, and \$1,337.92 in Jan 2010.

The Chapter was informed that they have a tax ID number, which means that we could host/sponsor a plant sale and pay taxes at a later date.

J. Nestlerode is currently trying to secure speakers for the next few months. Members who may have some ideas on topics or speakers are encouraged to contact Janet directly. A. Hines has will try to publicize the meetings through print, radio, television, etc.

Upcoming field trips were discussed and are planned as follows:

- 1) Date: Sat, 23 Jan 2010
Time: 8:00 AM
Location: Scenic Hwy Bluffs Park, meet in the parking lot.

- 2) Date: Sat, 27 March 2010
Time: 7:30 AM
Location: Meet at the Target Parking lot on Nine Mile Road, inspect the ditch in front of a Mexican Restaurant in the area, then proceed to UWF Ed Ball Nature Trail, and finish up in Bldg 58 to visit the Herbarium, which currently houses 22,060 specimens.

- 3) Date Sat, 23 Jan 2010
Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon
Location: Pensacola Camellia Club is hosting a grafting demonstration and plant sale at the YMCA on Langley Ave.

Jim Burkhalter is looking for a field trip for April, and would like to partner with Morris Clark, Audubon Society, for the event. Ideas should be forwarded to Donald Ray and Leah McCue, the NPS Field Trip Coordinators.

Mike Aymond, Gulf Islands National Seashore (GINS) through the National Park Service (NPS), was the featured speaker during the meeting. M. Aymond has been with the Park Service for 25 years, mostly in the Gulf Coast Region but did spend one year in the Channel Islands off the coast of California. The Park Service began in 1908 and has the following mission: Conserve the land for the people and minimize the impact of all the people. The presentation was focused on the importance of fire as a conservation and management tool, and how the NPS incorporates fire into their programs. The GINS encompasses several islands in MS and FL. This area was part of the Longleaf Pine Ecosystem which once covered 75 M (million) acres from Virginia's coastline to Texas along the Gulf of Mexico. Today, the remaining longleaf pines in this area are less than 4 M. The decline of the longleaf pine was due to timbering which began in the 1800's and the turpentine trade.

The turpentine industry incorporated forced labor, requiring men to slash 700 trees/week by setting out and collecting turpentine from the pots they placed under the 'cat faces' of trees they cut. The turpentine industry dried up with the onset of petrochemicals. The steam engine really changed the timber industry by allowing trails to go in other areas away from rivers. Rivers had been the corridor of the timber industry, allowing trees to be floated to mills which were always located adjacent to rivers.

What we know today as Naval Live Oaks, was an old tree farm from the 1820's. This area was never a true plantation; instead it was an area with an abundance of coastal oaks in oak hammocks, flatwoods, and sand hills. Naval Live Oaks encompasses 1,300 acres and was named because the timber from this area was used to build the USS Constitution.

The Park Service continues to manage the land with fire, but technologies have changed since the area surrounding the park has become so urbanized. Smoke management and the urban interface are critical issues facing the Park and its use of fire, especially with heavily traveled Hwy 98 crossing through the center of the park. The Park prepares for fire by mechanical fuel reduction along park boundaries. Fire monitoring plots are established so that fire effects crews can inventory and monitor areas before and after burns.

Today's fire management plans include incident action plans, fuel load inventories, weather conditions, smoke management, and a host of other information to develop fire prescriptions – which must be established by a Burn Boss prior to striking the first match.

Two books were recommended for additional reading to learn more about fire ecology; [The Ecology of a Cracker Childhood](#) by Ginese Ray, and [Young Men and Fire](#) by Norman Maclean.