BE A WATER-SAVER!

by Dr. Robert J. Black

The demand on Florida's limited water supply increases steadily as the population continues to grow and the state becomes more urbanized. This problem has been compounded by the recent drought. Water supplies are extremely low and restrictions on water use for irrigation of landscape plants are being enforced in many parts of the state.

The following are tips to help you use limited irrigation water as efficiently as possible.

- Stretch the number of days or weeks between watering to the longest suitable interval.
- Soak deeply. Light sprinklings waste water and do little to satisfy the water requirements of a plant.
- Adjust sprinklers to avoid waste to sidewalks, streets and gutters.
- Keep sprinkler heads clean to assure even distribution of water.
- Check hose and faucet washers.
- Water lawns in the early morning hours. Watering during the day can waste water through excessive evaporation.
- Remove thatch from turf. A thick thatch layer restricts water movement into the soil.
- Increase mowing height of lawns. This increased height allows the plant to develop a deeper root system.
- Control all weeds. Weeds exhaust water which may be needed to keep plants alive.
- Reduce fertilizer applications. Fertilizer promotes growth and will increase the need for water.
- Prune. If water supply is so limited that literal survival of plants is in question, appreciable pruning can be done at the peak of water shortage.
- Improve soil. The addition of organic matter (peat, compost, well rotted manure, bark, etc.) to sandy soil will increase its water retention and therefore reduce the frequency of watering.
- Mulch. Use 2 inches of mulch on annual bed areas and around trees and shrubs.
- Cull out poor woody plants. Don't waste water caring for marginal or undesirable plants.

NOTICE OF FNPS MEETING

A statewide meeting of the membership of The Florida Native Plant Society will be held at Highlands Hammock State Park on Saturday, September 19, 1981, for the purpose of electing a board of directors and officers, adopting the establishing resolution and by-laws, and addressing such other business as may come before the membership.

It. Dick Roberts, District VII Naturalist, will lead a field trip through the park during the day.

Overnight camping areas with tables, grills, and restrooms are available for $5 plus tax a night, up to four persons per campsite. $1 per person extra is charged for five to eight people. $2 more for electricity. Facilities open from 8 AM to 10 PM Friday and Saturday.

Primitive camping areas have outdoor restrooms and water by hand pump for $2 plus tax per night.

As of July 22, we have information on the following motel rates within a ten mile radius of Highlands Hammock (all $ plus tax):

- Safari Inn, 1406 US Hwy 27 No. Sebring, 813/382-1148
  - Double $32, Single $26
- Clayton's Motor Inn, 4867 Hwy 27 So. Sebring, 813/385-0135
  - Double $15, Single $14
- Miller Motel, 3751 US Hwy 27 So. Sebring, 813/385-5049
  - Double $20, Single $18
- Holiday Motel, 2919 Hwy 25 So. Sebring, 813/385-6111
  - Double $24, Single $22

Other motels within the same radius, but for which we do not have rates, include:

- Parkshore Motel, 125 Park St. Sebring, 813/382-1148
- Sunset Beach Motel, 2221 S.E. Lakeview Dr., Sebring, 813/385-6129
- Reed's Motel, Hwy 27 So., Avon Park, 813/453-3194