2000 Landscape Award Winners

Outdoor Classroom, Palm Harbor Elementary
The riot of plants in this landscape is a perfect complement to the enthusiasm and exuberance of the schoolchildren who planted it. Kudos to the community and Palm Harbor Elementary for coming together in a joyous native planting that clearly adds life to the landscape and is this year’s First Place Award winner in the School Yard Category.

Restoration, Upland: 1st Place
Sandy Ridge Sanctuary, Coral Springs
The citizens of Coral Springs can be proud of their purchase and enhancement of Sandy Ridge Sanctuary, a park that effectively meets the needs of people and wildlife and is this year’s First Place Award winner in the Upland Restoration Category. Originally destined to be a housing development, this pine flatwoods community has been enhanced with the creation of a pond (pictured) and extensive planting of native forage vegetation.

Mitigation: 2nd Place
Marion 1 Restoration Project
This land manager is understandably happy about his successfully re-established wiregrass community. Over 200 acres of Bahia grass pasture has been converted to native forage vegetation as part of a joint project between the Southwest Florida Water Management District and Florida Department of Transportation, this year’s Second Place Award winner in the Mitigation Category.

Residential, Non-Professional Design
Fred Mulholland
Water gardens are increasingly popular and especially valuable for attracting wildlife to our yards. This lovely pond is at the home of Fred Mulholland, Suncoast Chapter member and winner of this year’s First Place Award in the Non-Professional Residential Category.
Residential – Non-Professional Design, 1st Place: Fred Mulholland (Suncoast Chapter FNPS)
The first place winner in the non-professional residential design category illustrates the joy of watching a garden grow, develop, and mature. Fred Mulholland began his garden using hand tools, chainsaw, and winch to remove the original orange trees and exotic hedges. These were replaced with native plant species selected from the local area, and include a stunning display of our native rain lily. Over seventeen years later, the residence is a haven for screech owls, red-bellied woodpeckers, raccoon, mosquito fish, and zebra longwings. The plantings are now mature and require little maintenance, and the yard is a favorite destination of native plant enthusiasts.

Residential Non-Professional Design, 2nd Place: Don Kenzior
Don Kenzior described the original surroundings of his Broward County home as a generic high-maintenance, water-intensive, and wildlife-poor landscape. The challenge was to design a native landscape that would not only attract and provide shelter for wildlife, but also would complement the surrounding homes and residential neighborhood. Native plants have been carefully integrated into the yard and now comprise over 75% of the plantings. The grassed area has been reduced from nearly 100% to less than 5% of the total property, and is mowed in less than ten minutes with an eco-friendly manual mower. Yard waste is mulched and recycled back into the yard, and no pesticides are used on the property.

Residential Non-Professional Design, 3rd Place: Paul G. Lowry (Conradina Chapter FNPS)
Paul Lowry has used his yard as a demonstration plot to show both the beauty and diversity of native plant species. Plants that live in wetland areas to plants that live in dry upland habitats all happily co-exist within the boundaries of his property. There may be no grass in his yard, but there is a swamp and sandhill community. He has developed a versatile plant identification system for walking tours of the yard. A closely cropped Florida privet hedge (Forestiera segregata) and wildflower berms provide visual interest for everyone in the neighborhood to appreciate.

Residential – Professional Design, 1st Place: Elizabeth A. Gillick, Landscape Architect (Eugenia Chapter)
The owners of this property wanted to site their home in a manner that would both protect the existing tree canopy and ensure privacy along the rear of the house. Several months before construction was to begin, the existing oaks within the construction area were root pruned and carefully maintained to prepare them for relocation. A total of six mature live oaks weighing from 30,000 to 71,000 pounds were eventually relocated on site using a large crane. In addition, a planted berm was created along the rear of the property. The berm was carefully designed not to impact any of the existing red bays, cabbage palms, and oaks, while providing a dense visual and noise barrier. The result was 437 feet of colorful, 100% native plantings that provide both habitat for wildlife and privacy for the homeowners.

Institutional, 1st Place: Philippe Park, Pinellas County Parks Department Staff
The renovation of the Philippe Park parking lot required an innovative solution. The park generates high volumes of traffic, but the old dirt parking lot was nestled within an existing grove of stately oak trees. Asphalt and concrete were out of the question. Planted turf block was an option, but can become a maintenance problem due to tree roots lifting the pavers over time. Geoweb, a plastic grid filled with gravel, was found to be an ideal alternative that met all the engineering constraints while preserving existing oaks. After the parking construction was completed, additional plantings were installed to enhance the understory. These plantings are grouped according to water needs to reduce maintenance, and interpretive signage has been ordered that identifies each plant species and discusses the benefits of native plants in the landscape. Location: 2525 Philippe Parkway, Safety Harbor.

Institutional, 2nd Place: Gillespie Museum, Stetson University Students & Staff
The staff of Stetson University hopes to transform our attitudes toward urban landscapes by fostering a worldview that includes an appreciation for nature. With funds from a Hollis Renaissance Grant, the university’s Florida Native Landscape Project celebrates Florida’s natural heritage. As part of the project, exotic landscape plants were removed from the grounds of the Gillespie Museum and replaced with over seventy-five native plant species. To date, over 3,000 hours of labor have been logged, and interns are currently preparing a plant database, interpretive brochures, and a website (www.stetson.edu/departments/geography/native.html). Reclaimed water is used for irrigation and plans to expand the program by establishing a nursery, greenhouse, and composting facility are taking shape. Location: 234 E Michigan Ave, Deland.

Institutional, 3rd Place: Silver River State Park, Art Carlton, Park Ranger
The staff at Silver River State Park carefully designed the landscapes of the park’s entry feature and parking islands to serve as examples of the beauty of
the local flora. Plant species were selected for overall height and seasonal color. Careful consideration was given to views, framing signage, and the use of the plantings as an educational tool for low maintenance native landscapes. Location: 1425 NE 58th Ave, Ocala

Commerical - Professional Design, 1st Place: Morningside Inc., William F Bissett, Landscape Architect (Heartland Chapter)

Morningside is a Christian Science facility in Pinellas County. The owner expressed a desire to preserve the naturalness of the site, to restore the native understory, and to attract wildlife to the site. The wish for residents to use the grounds as a therapeutic experience was paramount. Providing wheelchair access and preserving the remaining native trees required an innovative site design. Pines that could not be preserved were relocated using a 25-ton crane to serve as snags for nesting birds, and a program of pine renewal plantings was also implemented. Sitting areas and destinations with views centered on areas of potential wildlife activity were considered critical and led to the creation of the bird garden, butterfly garden, and water gardens. The designer requested a variance to use native vegetation on the banks of storm water retention ponds rather than the traditional sod required by the county code. Within a few weeks, the ponds were used by an abundance of wildlife: ducks were splashing, turtles were sunning, and (although the residents weren’t told right away), snakes were snaking. There are now resident otters and osprey, and the area is one of the most popular destinations. Location: 6770 102 Ave N, Pinellas Park.

Commercial - Non-Professional Design, 1st Place: Beginner’s World Butterfly Garden, Donna Glann-Smyth (Conradina Chapter)

The project was started in 1992 as a butterfly garden for a daycare center. Plantings have been done in stages over the years, with help from the daycare’s children. The students were allowed to choose their own plants, and many have watched their original plant grow, spread, bloom and re-seed itself. The children use the garden to learn about the plants and their benefits to wildlife. Integrated pest management has been a successful goal of the garden. The garden, once a patch of barren earth and sand spurs, is now a source of color, shade, and pleasure for all to enjoy as well as an enjoyable teaching tool for the children. Location: 1628 Sarno Rd, Melbourne.

Restoration - Wetland, 1st Place: Pond Apple Slough, Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management

Palm Beach County’s freshwater chain-of-lakes has been channelized, dredged, and even filled. As a result, the quality of the lakes’ water continues to worsen and their value as habitat declines. The pond apple slough project included the removal of exotic vegetation, preservation of existing pond apples, and scraping uplands to create littoral shelves for 16,000 wetland plants. It will also serve as an outdoor classroom for the Palm Beach Community College environmental science students and faculty. An additional 32,000 plants and 1,600 feet of wetland plantings were also added to the adjacent Lantana Airport to serve as enhanced fishery habitat. The success of each of these projects was the result of collaborative efforts among the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Palm Beach Community College, Vessel Registration Trust Fund, and Palm Beach County’s Departments of Airports, Parks & Recreation, and Environmental Resources Management. Location: Lake Osborne, Palm Beach County.

Restoration - Wetland, 2nd Place, Jupiter Inlet Natural Area Enhancement, Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management

The Jupiter Inlet Natural Area Enhancement Project involved the creation of two acres of estuarine wetlands and one acre of upland hammock habitat. Many of the mangrove seedlings used in the project were propagated and planted by volunteers, including the Boy Scouts and Jupiter High School Environmental Academy. Their efforts were also greatly appreciated by the local deer population, who consumed 2,000 of the red mangrove seedlings in their trays over Thanksgiving weekend. The project has become a great success for the local wildlife populations, and manatees have already been observed feeding in the newly created channels. The project was made possible through a cooperative partnership between Palm Beach County, the South Florida Water Management District, and the United States Bureau of Land Management. Location: West side of Intracoastal Waterway, north of County Road 707 Bridge, Tequesta, at Jupiter Inlet Natural Area.
Wetlands restoration in Palm Beach County required removal of exotics, preservation of native pond apples, and creation of new wetlands for fishery habitat and an outdoor science classroom.

**Restoration – Upland, 1st Place: Sandy Ridge Sanctuary, City of Coral Springs**

In 1994, the citizens of Coral Springs voted overwhelmingly to tax themselves 7.5 million dollars in order to help control urban growth and enhance the city's greenway system through the purchase and protection of privately owned Environmentally Sensitive Lands. Sandy Ridge Sanctuary, a forty-acre pine flatwoods community was originally to be developed as 195 zero-lot-line homes until the city successfully negotiated the purchase of the property. The city has since designated areas for passive recreation for the public and a protected preserve for wildlife. Public areas are attractively landscaped with native vegetation, while the natural areas have been enhanced by the creation of a water feature and the extensive planting of native forage vegetation. The park has also been designated as a sanctuary for the gopher tortoise endangered by commercial and residential development. Sandy Ridge Sanctuary offers tours to the public, and the city continues its work to provide educational, recreational, and wildlife habitat for all the residents. The judges commend the project for its successful integration of community and nature. Location: 8501 NW 40th St, Coral Springs.

**Restoration – Upland, 2nd Place: Andrew Dodge New Pines Preserve, Forest Resources Program, Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resources Management**

In 1900, there were about 180,000 acres of pine rocklands in Miami-Dade County. Today, only 2% remain, making his ecosystem one of the most critically imperiled in the world. The Andrew Dodge New Pines Preserve is a five-acre tract that had been illegally cleared and was subsequently donated in lieu of paying fines and restoration costs. The Forest Resources Program of the Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM) worked to develop a management plan and to implement prescribed burns on the site. It was dedicated in 1996 as a memorial to a DERM public information officer that had passed away earlier that year. Since then, DERM and local community volunteers have continued to replant the area with pine rockland species to enhance the site and in memory of other DERM coworkers. Today, the site is considered in maintenance condition with less than 5% invasive plant cover and a mix of pine seedlings with some at sapling stage. SW 248 St and 124-127 Ave, Miami-Dade County.

**School Yard, 1st Place: Outdoor Classroom, Palm Harbor Elementary, Nancy Dalton, Teacher, Sponsored by Palm Harbor Garden Club**

This remarkable project started when an enthusiastic Palm Harbor Elementary kindergarten teacher appealed to the Palm Harbor Garden Club for help in creating a bird habitat. Three habitats were created for the school and include a scrub community, pine flatwoods, and an area of mixed hardwoods. The garden has since taken off under the sponsorship of Nancy Dalton and teaching staff, Ben Mercadante, Lois Weber, and the entire community and shows no signs of slowing down. The school has used the garden as a working class room to teach everything from exotic pest control to why drainage is important to scrub plants. School children use the garden as inspiration for painted teaching walls, posters, and illustrated books. Now the children use the garden to teach other schools, garden clubs, and even the local community about the importance of native plants. A truly inspiring project! Location: Palm Harbor Elementary School, 415 15th St, Palm Harbor.

**School Yard, 2nd Place: Kenwood Elementary School Annex, Henry Block, Volunteer (Dade Chapter), Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

The new Kenwood Elementary School annex is sited next to the school's award-winning outdoor classroom. The new building was carefully located to avoid damaging the planting areas and some creative construction techniques were used to avoid damaging trees during the construction process. However, the new building’s proposed landscape plan was minimal and the plant species selection unremarkable. In response to suggestions from PTA volunteers, project manager Mario Gonzales Pola worked closely with nurseryman Mick Gnaegy, architect Rolando Silva, and contractor Ramiro Betancourt to create a new design with only native vegetation while still staying within tight budget constraints. The objective was to improve species selection, create a logical transition to the neighboring outdoor classroom, and protect existing native species in the area. The resulting planting plan is a great success, and demonstrates how lessons taught in the nearby outdoor classroom can have a tangible effect on local community attitudes. Location: Kenwood Elementary School, 9300 SW 79th Ave, Miami.
MITIGATION, 1ST PLACE: C-18 CANAL PROJECT, FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, DISTRICT 4 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OFFICE

This unique project involved the creation of meandering wetland oxbows and islands from a typical sodded canal right-of-way. The mitigation area was designed in a manner that provided complex and high quality native habitat while still providing ample open space for use by the adjacent residential developments, a task which required careful public outreach and education. Care was taken to preserve existing vegetation while enhancing the wetland system with an abundance of additional plantings. Homeowners in the area have come to appreciate the enhanced recreational value of the project and have even constructed a bridge to the island to enjoy the new views, fishing opportunities, and bird watching. Location: on the South Florida Water Management District’s right-of-way along the C-18 Canal, southeast of Central Blvd Bridge in Palm Beach County.

MITIGATION, 2ND PLACE: MARION 1 PROJECT, LAND MANAGEMENT, FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, DISTRICT 4, AND SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The Marion 1 Restoration Project consisted of restoring 215 acres of improved pasture. Extensive investigation of historic aerials, soils, and topography were used to determine appropriate plant communities. Particular attention was given to the future role fire would play in the restoration of the plant communities and the provision of forage plants for local wildlife. The judges were particularly impressed with the successful re-establishment of a wiregrass communities in areas previously dominated by exotic Bahia grass. A prescribed burn was conducted in July 1999, and the plants continue to thrive and expand throughout the site.

TRANSPORTATION, 1ST PLACE: COMMISSIONER LORI ANN HARRIS, DISTRICT 4, MANATEE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Bayshore Gardens Parkway is located in Manatee County and was reconstructed as a four-lane divided highway in 1994. Using resources from the Tree Trust, a fund established to restore forested ecosystems lost to development, a total of ten median planting strips were replanted with 38 species of native plants. All native plants were grown from seed collected within a 100-mile radius of the site and no plants were collected from the wild. Goals for the project included integrating native plants into an existing exotic landscape to help restore habitat, providing a pleasing aesthetic and educational landscape, minimize construction costs, and creating a low-maintenance system. The landscape will be studied to compare the cost of typical irrigation systems with native landscapes (in which little watering is necessary). Assistance was provided by Sweetbay Nursery and Landscape and the Manatee County Transportation Department. Location: Bayshore Gardens Parkway between 34th St W and US 41 (Tamiami Trail) in southwestern Manatee County.

AQUASCAPES, 1ST PLACE: UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, TROPICAL AQUACULTURE LABORATORY, CRAIG WATSON, AQUA-MAN

The University of Florida’s Tropical Aquaculture Laboratory has succeeded in creating an unconventional and surprisingly inexpensive “aquatic xeriscape” for the entrance to its facilities. The group secured the assistance of the Tampa Bay Aquarium Society to excavate the existing uninspired landscape in front of its offices, and installed two liners filled with native wetland plants. Golden canna, water lilies, and pickerelweed among others put on impressive seasonal shows while providing habitat for frogs and fish. The system is kept watered by roof downspouts and air conditioning condensation lines. Insects attracted to the building’s security lights feed the pond’s inhabitants. Beyond its aesthetic appeal and minimal maintenance, the project also serves as a working lab for university students. Location: 1408 24th St SE, Ruskin.

Special thanks to following organizations for their support of the Design With Natives 2000 Program:
The Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens, Palm Beach County
The Association of Florida Native Nurseries
The Florida Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects

DESIGN WITH NATIVES 2000 COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Nadja Chamberlain, Palm Beach County Department of Environmental Resources Management
Joanne Davis, 1,000 Friends of Florida
Robert Hopper, Chair, South Florida Water Management District
Ray Miller, South Florida Water Management District
Jane Thompson, Indian Trails Native Nursery
Suzanne Travis, Florida Department of Transportation

DESIGN WITH NATIVES 2001 COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS:
David Drylie, Landscape Architect and Owner, Green Images Native Nursery; and
Katherine Pordell, St. Johns River Water Management District (and former secretary, FNPS).
Fred Mulholland's home landscape, FNPS 2000 First Place Award Winner, Non-Professional Residential Category. Fred's home welcomes screech owls, woodpeckers, zebra longwings, and even mosquito fish. A lovely border of rain lilies greets visitors.