ENDANGERED PLANTS
Permitting Procedures for Harvesting Plants on the Regulated Plant Index by Paul L. Hornby

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) is responsible for enforcing Chapter 581.185 of the Florida Statutes, ‘Preservation of Native Flora of Florida’. The Division of Plant Industry (DPI) provides recognition and protection of these native plant species that are endangered, threatened, or commercially exploited. A controlled procedure has been established to allow restricted harvesting of protected species from the wilds in order to encourage propagation of native species and prevent the wanton destruction of native plant populations. Copies of both Florida Statute 581.185 and Rule Chapter 5B-40, ‘Preservation of Native Flora of Florida’ may be obtained by writing the FDACS/DPI — Bureau of Plant Inspection at Post Office Box 147100, Gainesville, FL 32614-7100 or by phone at 904/372-3505.

Paul L. Hornby is originally from England, grew up in Miami, attended the University of Nebraska and received a B.S. in Agronomy. He joined the FDACS/DPI in 1983 and has worked as a district inspector in Ft. Lauderdale, Naples, and Gainesville. He is currently a Certification Specialist—Agriculture, working in the area of import/export plant quarantine requirements involving Florida plants and plant products.

GARDENING
Creating Habitats for Butterflies by Judy Morris

The two basic principles used in creating butterfly habitats are: 1. Caterpillars eat — larval food (green leafy) plants, and 2. Butterflies drink — nectar from flowers. Success in attracting butterflies to any area lies first in awareness of the insect-plant connection, which is evident in all four stages of the butterfly’s metamorphosis.

As well as offering food sources, a butterfly habitat needs to have:
- Sunshine — both for the plants and the butterflies;
- Shelter from wind;
- Moisture — butterflies drink from damp sand.

If the right plants are planted, the butterflies will come. Their caterpillars generally feed on specific plants, and the butterflies generally lay their eggs only on these plants. Butterflies nectar from a wide variety of flowers, with a strong preference for simple flowers such as asters and daisies, or cluster flowers such as milkweeds. Butterflies will visit a garden full of nectar plants, drink, and pass on, but they are more likely to stay around in the areas where they find the larval food plants for their caterpillars.

The only butterflies that will be attracted are those that occur naturally in the area, so the first step is to identify these butterflies — then plant both larval food sources (for their caterpillars) and a variety of nectar sources, preferably native plants in both cases. Using plants that flower in succession will help provide nectar throughout the year for the butterflies.

Why plant a butterfly habitat?
- To give the butterflies back some of the habitat that we have destroyed by coming to live here, and thereby help rebuild the butterfly populations. Butterflies in all stages of their metamorphosis play an important role in the food chain.
- To educate and to delight. People of all ages and from many walks of life (preschoolers, schoolchildren, homeowners, residents of senior citizen centers, to mention a few) can have fun learning how to attract butterflies. Our Butterfly Gardening Club at the Children’s Haven and Adult Center, an agency serving mentally and physically handicapped people, is very active; and club members love to give tours, identifying the butterflies and pointing out eggs, caterpillars, and chrysalises.

The most successful butterfly habitat that I have helped create is The Haven Butterfly Garden. On a sunny day, the area is alive with many varieties of butterflies, laying eggs, nectaring, and just dancing with joy. I think the secret lies in the location, which is a sunny, sheltered spot surrounded by native woods, — a perfect habitat for butterflies.

Judy Morris is president of the Florida Chapter of the American Horticultural Therapy Association and volunteer coordinator of the Children’s Haven and Adult Center Butterfly Gardening Club. She also helps in The Haven Plant Nursery, which specializes in growing butterfly-attracting plants, and designs and installs butterfly gardens. She was born and raised in England, lived in Zimbabwe, and has been in Florida for 14 years.

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GARDENING
Planning a Wildlife Garden by Judith Buhrman

Planning a landscape for wildlife, whether a whole yard or fifty square feet, means simply identifying the creatures you want to attract, analyzing your present landscape, and designing your new one to meet the needs of your desired "tenants".

Be realistic in your expectations. If the creatures you wish to attract have special needs you cannot fill or that are not found in your area, you won’t get these creatures no matter what you do. Keep wintering birds in mind if you do your plan when they are not around. Part of the fun in planning is observation to learn what wildlife is in the neighborhood that might be induced to settle down. This may entail purchasing or borrowing a couple of field guides and binoculars (you can get a good pair of binoculars for under $100).

Make a scaled drawing of your present landscape, noting structures, sidewalks and driveways, power lines, trees and other plantings, slopes, run off pathways, areas of perpetual sun or shade, and compass orientation. Decide what, if anything, is to be removed. Make several copies so you can play with alternate designs.

Do a soil test, and a drainage test if you are not familiar with your yard’s characteristics. Learn what plant community existed before development — in most cases, that will give you most of your plant palette.

Decide how you will provide water for wildlife. If you want something more elaborate than a simple birdbath on the ground, now is the time to plan it.

Now you can select your plants — keeping in mind the principles of biological, structural, and temporal diversity — to match the needs of wildlife for food, cover, and water within the constraints of your site.

Please yourself with your design, and put features such as brush and compost piles out of public view. Look at your design from inside your home as well as outside. Think about maintenance now, in the design phase. The plan should reflect the mature size of the plants you select, or you will be doing a lot of pruning and digging up. Think curves. They are pleasing to the eye, and give more "edge".

Also, know your local landscape code. A thoughtfully planned wildlife landscape, vibrant with song and motion and color all the year-round, will reward you with delightful surprises and deep personal satisfaction.

Judith Buhrman has been a member of FNPS since 1988 and was the founding president of Pinellas Chapter. She is an occasional contributor to The Palmetto and is a regular columnist for the St. Petersburg Audubon Society newsletter.