

FNPS HISTORY

by Don Lantz

The Florida Native Plant Society is fifteen years old this year. It was in 1980, in August and September, that a handful of concerned environmentalists met to organize the society.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary, in 1990, I wrote an article for *The Palmetto* sketching the history of the first decade. It seems appropriate now to bring that up to date — to document the significant events of the past five years.

1990.

The FNPS officers during 1990 were Steve Farnsworth as president, with Blaine Williams as vice president, and Carol Lotspeich as treasurer. Carol introduced the system of numeric codes for financial accounts, which has greatly benefited FNPS.

The FNPS Endowment Fund was established early in 1990. Its initial growth was slow, but by the spring of 1991 a list of contributors to the fund was included in *The Palmetto*.

FNPS memberships had reached 1700 in June of 1990. FNPS first achieved its 1800th current membership in November, 1990.

Two new chapters were formed in the autumn of 1990. The Pinellas Chapter was formed by FNPS members in Pinellas County. In Highlands County, an existing native plant organization formed the Dicerandra Chapter. The chapter in Volusia County amended its name to become the Volusia Pawpaw Chapter. FNPS now had 20 chapters.



Items from early issues of *The Palmetto* — including original artwork and the invoice for printing the first issue — were displayed at the 1990 conference.

1991.

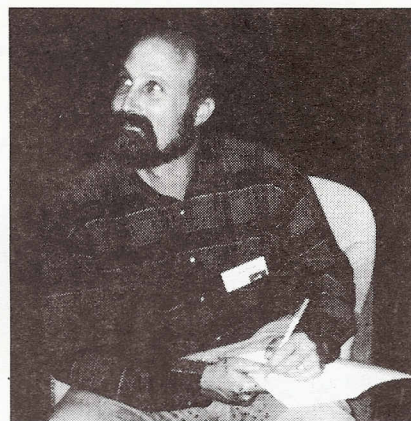
A new chapter was formed in Duval County in March, 1991, centered in the Jacksonville area. It was known for a while as Duval Ixia; but it soon became the Ixia Chapter, covering all of north-east Florida.

FNPS achieved its 1900th current membership in April, 1991.

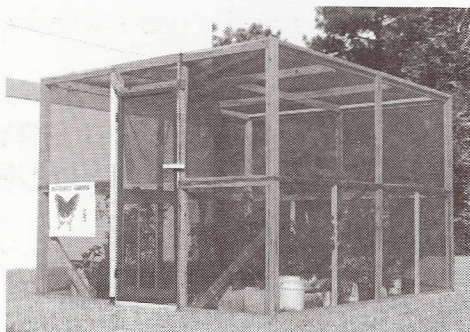
The 11th annual Spring Conference, hosted by the Tarflower Chapter, was held at Orlando in early May, 1991, at a Holiday Inn and the UCF campus. Debbie Butts was elected president, with Rick Joyce as vice president, and Paul Davis as treasurer.

The second new FNPS book was

published in time for the 1991 Conference. *Butterfly Gardening With Florida Native Plants*, by Craig Huegel, was an



Craig Huegel autographing *Butterfly Gardening with Florida's Native Plants*, first sold at the 1991 conference.



Tarflower Chapter built a butterfly exhibit for the 1991 conference.

instant success; it has been a popular book ever since, and is now in its sixth printing.

A new chapter was formed in Marion County, centered in the Ocala area. It was organized in August, 1991, and was soon named the Big Scrub Chapter. FNPS now had 22 chapters.

A new chapter was formed in

REVISITED

Osceola County in the late fall of 1991. Named the Kissimmee Prairie Chapter, most of its members had not been previously in FNPS. Meanwhile, the Pinellas Chapter had grown to over 100 members after only one year of existence.

FNPS selected a new Executive Director late in 1991 to replace Bob Craig, who had held the post for five years. Mike Mingea of the Orlando area became Executive Director in January, 1992.

1992.

FNPS achieved its 2000th current membership in March, 1992.

The 12th annual Spring Conference, hosted by the Pinellas Chapter, was held at St. Petersburg Beach in early May, 1992, at the Dolphin Beach Resort. Debbie Butts was elected to a second



Tarflower, Pinellas, and Suncoast Chapters combined to make a team that defeated Palm Beach County Chapter for first place in the volleyball tournament at the 1992 conference.

A new chapter was formed in Pasco and Hernando counties in the summer of 1992. It was soon named the Nature Coast Chapter, and brought the number of FNPS chapters to 24, the society's high-water mark.

FNPS joined the newly-established Environmental Fund of Florida (EFF) in the summer of 1992. This association of environmental groups acts as a fund-raising body, similar to United Way.

FNPS achieved its 2200th current membership in October, 1992.

1993.

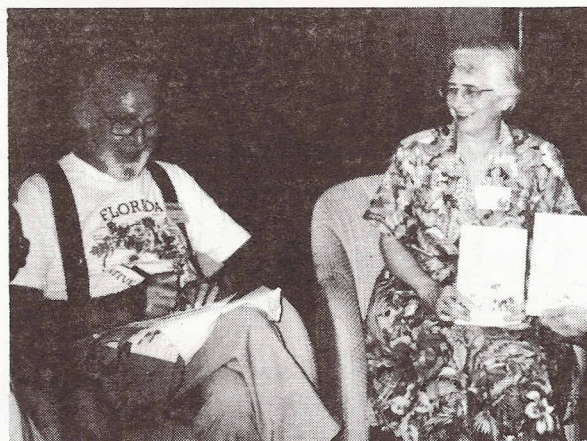
Early in 1993, FNPS lost a chapter when Uniola in St. Lucie County was dissolved. Its members were absorbed by the Eugenia Chapter, with some going to Martin Cocoplum.

FNPS achieved its 2300th current membership in April, 1993.

The 13th annual Spring Conference, hosted by the Heartland Chapter, was held in Polk County in mid-May, 1993, at the Grenelefe Resort. Rick Joyce was



Don Gann and Brightman Logan discussing the damage to Gann's Nursery caused by Hurricane Andrew in 1992.



Dick Deuerling and Peggy Lantz autographed *Florida's Incredible Wild Edibles* at the 1993 conference.

term as president, with Rick Joyce as vice president, and Paul Davis as treasurer.

FNPS achieved its 2100th current membership in May, 1992.

elected president, with David Pais as vice president, and Paul Davis as treasurer.

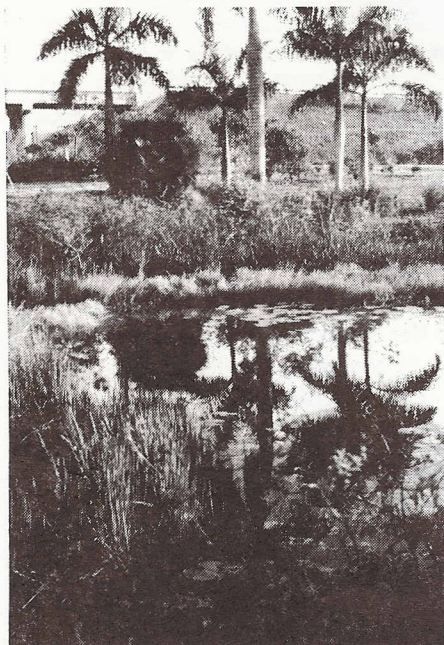
The third new FNPS book was published in time for the 1993 Conference. *Florida's Incredible Wild Edibles*, by Dick Deuerling and Peggy Lantz, was well received and is now in its second printing.

Late in 1993, FNPS decided not to continue Mike Minge as Executive Director, but to leave the position vacant while the goals, structure, and administration of FNPS were restudied.

FNPS achieved its 2400th current membership in November, 1993.



Participants on one of the field trips during the 1995 conference ate lunch overlooking the Apalachicola River near Alum Bluff.



Grand prize winner in the 1994 Landscape Awards was Gragny Expressway Wetlands in Dade County.

1994.

The Strategic Plan, developed by a committee late in 1993, was adopted by FNPS in 1994 to guide the society in reaching its goals.

The 14th annual Spring Conference, hosted by the Sea Rocket Chapter, was held at Cocoa Beach in late April, 1994 at a Holiday Inn on the ocean. David Pais was elected president, with Janice Broda as vice president, and Candace Weller as treasurer.

FNPS achieved its 2500th current membership in May, 1994.

In the 4th quarter of 1994, Claudia Guest, who had been the FNPS book-keeper for six years, resigned for health reasons.

Late in 1994, FNPS lost a chapter, when the Kissimmee Prairie Chapter in Osceola County was dissolved. Its

members were absorbed by the Heartland Chapter, with a few going to Tarflower. This left FNPS with 22 chapters across the state.

1995.

Early in 1995, FNPS employed a new administrative secretary, Betsy Bicknell. At this time, the FNPS mailing address and telephone number were changed, after having been the same for seven years.

Working in her home, Ms. Bicknell receives all FNPS mail and telephone calls, answers inquiries, fills book orders, and inventories and forwards checks received.

The 15th annual Spring Conference, hosted by the Magnolia Chapter, was held at Tallahassee in early May, 1995. David Pais was elected to a second term

as president, with Janice Broda as vice president, and Candace Weller as treasurer.

At the 1995 conference, President David Pais introduced a new award. The first Mentor Awards were given to Angus Gholson and Robert Godfrey.

FNPS achieved its 2600th current membership in May, 1995.

The fourth new FNPS book, published in June, 1995, was *Florida Plants For Wildlife*, Craig Huegel's second book for FNPS.

For similar highlights of the history of FNPS during its first 10 years, see the "Founding FNPS" article in *The Palmetto*, Summer 1990.

Here are some significant milestones of FNPS for the past 15 years:

PRESIDENTS

1981 - 1983 Bill Partington
 1983 - 1984 Richard Workman
 1984 - 1986 Sherry Cummings
 1986 - 1987 Terry Mock
 1987 - 1989 Richard Wunderlin
 1989 - 1991 Steve Farnsworth
 1991 - 1993 Debbie Butts
 1993 - 1994 Rick Joyce
 1994 - 1996 David Pais

TREASURERS

1982 - 1985 Gen Pratt
 1985 - 1986 Terry Mock
 1986 - 1987 Dexter Bender
 1987 - 1989 David Drylie
 1989 - 1990 Blaine Williams
 1990 - 1991 Carol Lotspeich
 1991 - 1994 Paul Davis
 1994 - 1996 Candace Weller

FNPS FOUNDERS STILL MEMBERS

Franklin Adams (Naples)
 Taylor & Edith Alexander (Dade)
 Jane Brooks (Eugenia)
 Ella Clark (Martin Cocoplum)
 June Cummings (No chapter)
 Margaret Gilbert (Heartland)
 Charles & Carol Harper (London)
 Alyene Hays (Tarflower)
 Allen & Mary Jelks (Serenoa)
 Carol Lotspeich (Tarflower)
 Jean & Carlton Lynn (Conradina)
 Harold Nett (Volusia Pawpaw)
 Bill Partington (No chapter)
 Karsten Rist (Dade)
 Daniel Ward (Paynes Prairie)
 David Wilson (Charlotte Harbor)
 Richard Workman (Coccoloba)

GREEN PALMETTO AWARDS

1986 - Georgia Tasker; David Wilson
 1987 - David Hall; Bill Hammond
 1988 - Steve Christman; Margaret Hames
 1989 - John Beriault & Elizabeth Smith;
 Joyce & Don Gann
 1990 - Ted Center; Rosa Durando
 1991 - Craig Huegel, Nancy Bissett
 1992 - Dick Deuerling; Sidney Bacchus
 1993 - Dan Austin; Ken Alvarez
 1994 - No awards given
 1995 - Roy Woodbury; Chuck Salter;
 Dan Austin

SILVER PALMETTO AWARDS

1986 - Terry Mock, vice president
 1987 - Ralph Ranney & Joe Cascio
 1988 - Peggy Lantz, publications
 1989 - Don Lantz, membership
 1990 - Blaine Williams, treasurer
 1991 - Carol Lotspeich, treasurer
 1992 - Janice Broda, vice president
 1993 - Paul Davis, treasurer
 1994 - No award given
 1995 - Peggy Lantz, publications

GREEN PALMETTO AWARDS -

CHAPTER

	1993 - Pinellas
1991 - Suncoast	1994 - No award
1992 - Palm Beach	1995 - Naples

SPRING CONFERENCE LOCATIONS AND HOSTS

1981 - Winter Park, Rollins campus; FNPS
1982 - Gainesville, UF campus; FNPS
1983 - Naples, The Conservancy; Naples
1984 - Boca Raton, FAU campus; Palm Beach
1985 - Winter Park, Rollins campus; Tarflower
1986 - Tampa, USF campus; Suncoast
1987 - Lakeland, FSC campus; Heartland

1988 - Gainesville, UF campus; Paynes Prairie
1989 - Fort Myers, ECC campus; Coccoloba
1990 - Miami, FIU campus; Dade
1991 - Orlando, Holiday Inn; Tarflower
1992 - St. Pete Beach, Dolphin Inn; Pinellas
1993 - Polk County, Grenelefe Resort; Heartland
1994 - Cocoa Beach, Holiday Inn; Sea Rocket
1995 - Tallahassee, Ramada Inn; Magnolia

The Orlando Sentinel, Tuesday, September 26, 1995 **C-5**

Price soars for 'aphrodisiac' palmetto berry

ASSOCIATED PRESS

IMMOKALEE — The secret to incredible sexual powers, or so some in the Far East believe, is the berry of the saw palmetto, a plant that grows in abundance from South Florida to southern Georgia.

European pharmaceutical companies also buy the berry to make an extract for a drug that combats inflammation of the prostate.

In this small farming community, a shortfall during the berry harvesting season from July through September sent prices soaring to \$3.50 a pound — briefly. When that hap-

pened, homes emptied on weekends as entire families beat the bushes to make as much as \$200 to \$300 a day harvesting the berries.

The berries also are a money-maker in areas around Daytona Beach, Tampa and Albany, Ga., said a buyer for a North Carolina company. A French buyer who has been coming to Immokalee for 14 years says his company also buys the berries in Jacksonville and Lake City.

The saw palmetto's scientific name is *serenoa repens*. It also is called the "plant from hell" by those who try to exterminate it because of

its sawlike, razor-sharp thorns. Developers annually bulldoze thousands of acres of saw palmettos.

The drug made from the berries and sold in Europe is not available in the United States. But U.S. health food stores, capitalizing on the palmetto berry's fame in the Far East as a cure-all and an aphrodisiac, offer the crushed-up berries as a food supplement.

For many years, the berries sold for 10 cents a pound, but that changed this year when something made the plants' flowers drop off too early in May.