CALENDAR
May 3, 4, 5 — Spring Conference, Rollins College, Winter Park.
May 24, 25, 26 — Florida Folk Festival, White Springs.

A WISH LIST
Here’s a “wish list” from the FNPS office:
1. Six folding chairs.
2. A typewriter that types big letters, for typing name tags.
3. A CPA who would donate an audit to the Society.
4. A person with bookkeeping skills to be our next treasurer, who, for convenience, lives in the Winter Park area.
5. A computer — IBM pc or similar — or $5,000 to $10,000 earmarked for one, so we can go to a single billing system for state and local dues, and can do a better job of serving all our members.

Editorial
RESCUE OR ABUSE?
by Reed Noss

The conservation of native plants in situ is a major goal of the Florida Native Plant Society. Although individual species of plants could perhaps be perpetuated in botanical gardens, seed banks, and backyards, they fundamentally belong in natural ecosystems, interacting with other organisms.

Therefore, we must guard against abuses of gathering native plants from the wild. Collecting seeds or seedlings poses little threat, except possible damage from too many trampling feet.

The technology now exists, however, to remove and transplant even adult trees, and it is the collection of adult plants from the wild that is most likely to lead to abuse.

Even when we believe we are quite literally “rescuing natives from the bulldozer,” there have been cases when we have prematurely resigned ourselves to an area’s destruction, perhaps as an excuse to enrich our gardens or nursery stock.

A biologist working for the state told me recently that some nurseries are enthusiastically removing plants from tropical hammocks on North Key Largo that are privately owned and slated for development. But “slated” need not be destiny, for, at the same time, both state and federal agencies are pursuing acquisition of some of these tracts as habitat for rare and endangered species. Now the public will be inheriting an impoverished resource! Concurrently, rare orchids and valuable mahoganies are being poached from “protected” public land in this area.

Rescue of individual plants can be of positive value to conservation, but only if all possible means of preserving these areas have proven ineffective.

Many FNPS members also remove plants from the wild, either for sale or for transplanting to our own yards. We need to reexamine the potential impacts of this practice. Perhaps removal is justified only from areas unquestionably doomed to destruction, after all attempts to preserve the natural habitat have failed. In buying native plants from a nursery, a little judicious inquiry about where those plants came from may be in order, and perhaps (for nursery people) a little policing of our peers.

I was distressed to hear rumors that

HELP WANTED

Plants for Tomorrow, growers of many native seedlings and rooted cuttings, is looking for a person with a background in native plants to put on our staff. You should have a college degree and be a self-starter capable of working independently. You must be free to travel throughout Florida on a two-to-three day collecting trip once or twice a month (company vehicle will be provided). You must be able to conduct and document research projects. Interested persons should send a resume including salary requirements to:

Plants for Tomorrow
88620 Lawrence Road • Boynton Beach 33436
Toll Free in Florida 1-800-448-2525 • 305-737-4081
some individuals active in FNPS may be guilty of indiscriminate removal of plants from the wild. Although the credibility of these rumors, or what constitutes "indiscriminate," is uncertain, it still concerns me. When the matter was brought up at the FNPS board meeting in July, several in attendance knew of instances of abuse, though not necessarily by FNPS members or by nurseries specializing in native plants. The FNPS has a responsibility to deal with this problem.

I hope that none of us, in our zeal for growing native plants in our own backyard, lose sight of one of our more important missions: saving plants and associated organisms in natural ecosystems, where they fundamentally belong.

SCIENCE COMMITTEE

The "scientific papers" section of the annual conference is a valuable contribution, but there is a second concept that the Science Committee would like to propose for the future of the FNPS.

Scattered over the state are numerous amateur and professional botanists who have been making notes and records of the plants in their areas for several years. This is a proposal to make such work a function of the Society, perhaps through amateur and professional botanists who associated organisms in natural environments.

Encourage cooperation and contact among these botanists, and this may also be desirable to produce typescripts or even mimeographing. At present I would recommend that working checklists by county. Publication may be accomplished by offset printing of typescripts or even mimeographing. At times it may be desirable to produce lists for smaller areas. These lists could be sold at cost to interested individuals, or handled in some other manner. Not only would this engender cooperation among individuals within chapters, but it would encourage cooperation and contact between amateurs and professionals. It should be clear that the first drafts of the lists would be preliminary, since floras are continually growing. Yet, instead of this being a fault, the lists would give the individuals some guidelines to understanding what should or should not be found in their areas.

As most people know, a group of a dozen or so botanists are preparing a compendium of flora of the state. The lists would be one method of comparing what actually occurs in any given region with what the "scientific community" thinks grows there. All too often the floristic botanists rely almost completely on herbarium materials that barely reflect actual occurrence. The plant list method would be an active mechanism to encourage involvement of the Society in the flora and to update the information that will be included.

If the Society is interested in following this tack, I would be happy to serve as editor of the compendium. At present I have a list that is going to DNR for the Fakahatchee Strand State Park. This should be available soon. Lists for Broward and Palm Beach counties already contain well over 400 species each. Dade County now has a list being updated from the late George Avery’s notes that includes more than 700 species. At Fla. Atlantic Univ. we have the best collection in the state of Martin County plants, but it is only begun, and no list has been written.

The possibilities for contact and cooperation are limited only by the number of people interested in the topic.

*Dr. Daniel F. Austin

EDUCATION/LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

The Education/Legislation Committee is concentrating on the following endeavors:

1. Preparation of a collection of color slides of Florida’s native flora.* We are soliciting slides of native plant fruit (F), flowers (B), leaves (L), and habit (H). If you have quality slides, please forward a list of the species, indicating “F,” “B,” “L,” or “H” after the name and you will be contacted within a month regarding our needs.

2. Development of a self-paced computer program on Florida’s native flora for incorporation into the public school system.*

3. Identification of sites (preferably city, county, or state parks) which provide good examples of natural communities (as classified by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory) and are in proximity to elementary and secondary schools to serve as potential field trip locations.

4. Development of a Florida Native Flora Act for the 1985 Legislative Session and the securement of sponsorship for such a Bill.

5. Encouragement for local FNPS chapters to prepare a Florida flora flora concepts at the city and county levels.

6. Initiation of a pilot project with a vocational education program to raise seedlings of herbaceous native species from seed collected by local FNPS members for possible use in the DOT Roadside Beautification project.

* Tentatively we intend to compile these in the following formats:

- Florida Trees (according to the list developed by Ken Alvarez)
- Natural Communities (according to FNAI’s classification system)
- Special Plants (imperiled species according to FNAI criteria)

Anyone interested in participating in any of these projects should contact Sydney Brinson, 939 E. Jefferson St., Tallahassee 32301, 904/224-0693.

* Sydney Brinson

Education Chairman

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

In September, the 55 FNPS members who had expressed interest in the Conservation Committee were asked what they thought our priorities and activities should be. The responses showed overwhelmingly that the protection and preservation of native ecosystems is the matter of greatest concern. What can we do to further this goal?

Acquisition is the surest method. Local chapters can begin to identify tracts which exemplify the native ecosystems of their area. Then comes the task of arranging acquisition and planning for appropriate development in such a way that the system is maintained. A group of Palm Beach County environmental organizations has initiated such a "Wilderness Islands" program. It will be featured in an upcoming Palmetto.

Careful stewardship of public lands is essential. FNPS believes that public ownership should provide the highest degree of protection for native plant communities and for any rare and endangered plants they contain. We have recently urged the Department of Natural Resources to use the utmost care in locating facilities in Bahia Honda State Recreation Area where proposed roads threaten sensitive areas. Local chapters can offer their expertise to DNR, the Forest Service, and local governments so that destructive consequences of uninformed planning can be avoided.

Local legislation must stress the importance of protecting native habitats. Many comprehensive plans contain "motherhood" statements that natives should only be preserved, but enforcement is lacking. These situations require constant monitoring of site plans by concerned citizens. Bill Partington is making a collection of comprehensive plans, tree ordinances, landscape ordinances, land-clearing ordinances, etc. He will share these with you and he asks that you send him any good ones and your local government has passed. Sarasota County’s “Apoxsee” is an outstanding plan which Jeffrey Lincer explained in an article in the Fall '84 Palmetto. When development issues arise, you have unique expertise to testify about what proposed projects can do to the natural Florida which so many people enjoy.

Control of exotics which threaten native communities is a must. Someone recently said they are worse than developers. Aside from the "terrible trio," we hear new horror stories on every side. At the fall meeting, Allen Burdett urged us to beware of the skunk vine, Paederia foetida, which is running rampant in west central Florida. Local chapters can encourage removal of troublesome exotics from public property and promote prohibitions on planting certain species. On the state level, FNPS will be working to encourage IFAS and others to do research on biological control.

Rare and endangered species must be given special concern. We need to support enforcement of the Endangered Species Act. Of 1800 species indicated by