

The Quarterly Journal of the Florida Native Plant Society

Palmetto



2009 PALMETTO AWARDS

Each year at the annual conference,
The Florida Native Plant Society rewards the extraordinary
effort of members and chapters who have contributed
to the good of the Society.

GREEN PALMETTO AWARDS

Green Palmetto Awards are given to members who have provided outstanding support in the areas of service, education, science or technical expertise. The Green Palmetto Chapter Award is given to a chapter whose efforts have contributed significantly to the FNPS mission during the year.

Chapter Award: Pinellas Chapter

The Pinellas Chapter is involved with their community on a significant level that provides resources and guidance. They have a strong educational outreach program, including the PowerPoint presentation *In Harmony with Nature*, which gives viewers information on healthy landscapes and gardening with Florida native plants. *In Harmony with Nature* was developed in partnership with the St. Petersburg Audubon Society, and has been presented to thousands of people at environmental events, neighborhood association meetings, garden clubs, civic groups, and state conferences held by Audubon of Florida

and FNPS. Designed to make people aware of environmentally friendly approaches to home property management, it has also been a strong vehicle for introducing the Pinellas Chapter and its mission to the community and local government. The Chapter is a vital member of a county wide environmental coalition, The Alliance for a Livable Pinellas (ALP). The Alliance meets monthly to share news, discuss issues, and to coordinate advocacy strategies when appropriate. Just one result of these meetings is a forthcoming revised city tree ordinance which is more protective of the tree canopy.

Chapter President Bill Bilodeau (pictured right) accepted the award.





Chris Trost: Coccoloba Chapter

Chris Trost has been a stalwart member of the Coccoloba Chapter, serving on the Board of Directors in a variety of offices.

After many years of service on the executive committee she remains active in administrative roles, assisting new Chapter officers. Chris has always been one to see that the checklist of needed services required for plant sales, planting projects and outreach meetings was covered by members. Additionally, she has been politically active, attending meetings and organizing letter writing efforts to remind administrative agencies responsible for protecting native plants and their habitats that FNPS is monitoring their activities.

Chris Trost is one of the unsung heroes of FNPS. For more than fifteen years she kept us organized and helped further many successful projects that assist our mission.

Chris devotes her time to take the FNPS message to countless festivals, galas and other public events throughout the county in an effort to educate the public about the superior attributes of native plants and encourage new memberships. Chris will never let an issue go unaddressed and writes politicians and government officials on a nearly daily basis, defending our envi-

ronment, sustainability and of course demanding and encouraging the use of native plants.

George R. Kish: Suncoast Chapter

George R. Kish has been an FNPS member since 1999 and was active from the very beginning. He served as the Suncoast Chapter's newsletter editor from 2000 to 2002, and still provides plant profiles for the newsletter today. He joined the chapter board in 2000 as Secretary, and was president of the Suncoast Chapter from 2002 to 2005.

George is currently a member of Southwest Florida Water Management District's Green Industry Advisory Committee, representing the Florida Native Plant Society.

George Kish earned his M.S. degree in Environmental Science from Rutgers University, and a B.S. degree in Biological Sciences from Drexel University. He is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of South Florida and his doctoral dissertation will emphasize the relation between plant phenology and climate. George also taught an introductory course in environmental science at the University of South Florida, and is often a guest lecturer for courses in the department of geology.

George Kish regularly gives talks to FNPS chapters, non-profit groups, and community development organizations about native landscaping, native grasses, butterfly gardening, and Florida's ecosystems. He was instrumental in creating *Life in our Landscapes*, an outreach program funded by a grant from FNPS that encourages big box stores to use native plants in landscaping.

George is one of the authors listed in *The Right Plants for Dry Places* (second edition), and is one of the authors of *The Right Plants for Dry Coastal Places* (in preparation).

George has inspired many others to become active in native plant issues, and is one of the reasons the Suncoast Chapter has become so successful.



Marc Godts: Tarflower Chapter

From an early age Marc Godts was exposed to disparate Florida environments. His family spent most weekends camping throughout the state.

Marc earned a degree in Horticulture from the University of South Florida. Over 20 years ago he joined a large landscape construction company, Dobson's Woods and Water. Marc now manages the company and their two large nurseries. A little over 10 years ago, Marc and his wife Terry began their own nursery, Green Isle Gardens, to grow native plants exclusively. The nursery is located south of Groveland and is open to the public.

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Among the species they grow are scrub plants, Marc's favorites.

Marc and Terry created the first educational slide show for the Tarflower Chapter, and it has remained the standard for subsequent editions. For the past 18 years Marc has planned and coordinated the plant sale portion of our booth at the giant H. P. Leu Gardens annual sale, held each March in Orlando. He selects plants, collects them from several nurseries, and arranges and prices them for the sale. Marc also guides our team of volunteers and shares his encyclopedic knowledge with us and those seeking to buy native plants for their home landscapes. During the history of our participation in the

Leu Gardens plant sale, we estimate that he has generated close to \$45,000 for our chapter, though no price tag can be placed on the generous way he shares his love for native plants.

Gayle Edwards: Coccoloba Chapter

Gayle Edwards, a member of the Coccoloba Chapter for the last decade, has indefatigably conducted research and demonstration landscapes for butterfly gardening at schools and parks throughout the region. Her crusade to educate Southwest Florida's new residents about pest plant species and native landscape alternatives has recruited many new members to the FNPS.

As an IFAS extension service volunteer she has kept the FNPS message in the forefront, and influenced IFAS programs to be more natural systems friendly.



SILVER PALMETTO AWARDS

Silver Palmetto Awards reward members of The FNPS Board of Directors who have provided exemplary service.

Robin Caple: Marion Big Scrub Chapter

As a founding member of the Marion Big Scrub Chapter, Robin's energy, effervescent personality and hard work assisted the chapter in becoming an immediate success.

This year, when chapter leadership waned, she almost single handedly brought it back to life and recruited volunteers to assume officer positions.

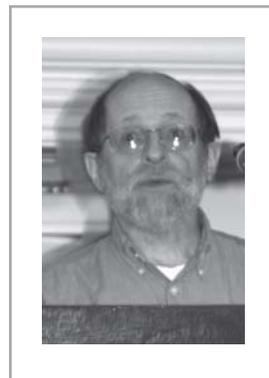
Robin is instrumental in managing chapter programming and education and outreach events. Recently, she represented the chapter in the *Levy, Alachua and Marion County Florida Forever Listening*, a joint project between FNPS and The Nature Conservancy. Robin assisted in the local organization and publicity to produce this event.

As an FNPS Chapter Representative, Robin has participated in discussions and provided helpful recommendations

on a variety of issues. She diligently provides an excellent communication link between the chapter and the Board of Directors.

Paul Schmalzer: Sea Rocket Chapter

Long time member Paul Schmalzer has dedicated great effort to the improving the FNPS Science Advisory Committee's activities. He has streamlined the conference research sessions, expanded the base of science committee contacts throughout Florida and within various university systems, and has contributed his keen insights



and recommendations to the Society on a regular basis.

In his role as Sea Rocket Chapter Representative, Paul has rarely missed an Executive Committee meeting or a Board of Directors meeting, and is always an active participant in the meetings.

Paul's professionalism and scientific background have elevated The Florida Native Plant Society to new levels, and have contributed to its effectiveness as an advocate for native ecosystems.

Shirley Denton: Suncoast Chapter

Shirley Denton has been an integral part of the Society's success for years.

During her tenure as Past President she worked to improve the FNPS web site by creating an online membership renewal system and an online donation system. Her efforts to develop opera-

tional progress within the Society keeps FNPS strong and our technology up-to-date.

Shirley is a member of the Chapter Grants Committee, and leads the FNPS Nomination Committee. She is a valuable part of the FNPS leadership team and is dedicated to the success of the Society.



Shirley is a multiple award winner, having received Silver Palmetto awards in 2003 and 2005.

Mary and Ron Echols: Naples Chapter

Over the past several years, Mary and Ron Echols have served the Naples chapter in many leadership capacities. Both Mary and Ron have served as Chapter President.

Ron is currently the Chapter Representative on the Board Of Directors.

Mary attends Board meetings as well, and their wise input is an asset to the Board.

Their consistent leadership has provided the Naples Chapter with good decisions, excellent education and outreach projects, and chapter guidance.

Mary and Ron are stewards at an area preservation site and nature center and continuously spend time educating the general public about the importance of conservation, facts about native plants and native plant communities. They inspire many in the Naples area. ❁



**Join us in congratulating
this year's Palmetto Award recipients.**



Palmetto

The purpose of the Florida Native Plant Society

is to conserve, preserve, and restore the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

Official definition of native plant:

For most purposes, the phrase Florida native plant refers to those species occurring within the state boundaries prior to European contact, according to the best available scientific and historical documentation. More specifically, it includes those species understood as indigenous, occurring in natural associations in habitats that existed prior to significant human impacts and alterations of the landscape.

For more Information:

<http://fnps.org>

To become a member, contact your local Chapter Representative, call, write, or e-mail FNPS, or join online at www.fnps.org/join

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The Palmetto

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Editorial Content

We welcome articles on native plant species and related conservation topics, as well as high-quality botanical illustrations and photographs. Contact the editor for guidelines, deadlines and other information.

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