

The Quarterly Journal of the Florida Native Plant Society

Palmetto





by Jane Wallace

FNPS Chapter Grant Funds Signage in a Native Plant Garden

In 2008, the Mangrove Chapter began development of a garden at Cedar Point Environmental Park with three primary objectives – to create an exhibit of Florida native and endangered plants; to install larval food plants for native butterflies; and to provide interpretive signs and materials to educate the public.

Endangered Plants in the Garden

A grant from the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program and additional cash donations allowed us to purchase plants for the garden.

Other plants were donated. Cheryl Peterson, Bok Tower Gardens Conservation Manager, provided endangered plants from the Bok collection and supervised their planting. Many are not native to Charlotte County, and Chapter volunteers regularly report on their status to Ms. Peterson. This data will add to research being conducted on the requirements of endangered plant species growing outside their normal geographic range.

Designing the Educational Signs

Committee members toured local gardens to review signage systems and discovered that many signs contained a multitude of information but were also very large. Since our garden features a variety of plants of differing sizes, often growing close together, large signs are impractical.

We chose a basic 2 x 4 inch aluminum sign with a satin background and black text, mounted on an 18 inch stake. An FNPS Chapter Grant made the purchase of the garden signs possible. Since the cost of \$1,002.30 to purchase 94 signs from Precision Design Systems of Rochester, New York slightly exceeded our grant, the difference was made up from Chapter funds.

Each sign contains common and scientific names, and native plants are indicated by a solid black graphic of the state of Florida with the word *native* or *endangered* underneath. These designations were determined by using the *Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants*, which can be found online at florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

We considered showing plant distribution by county as depicted in the *Atlas*, but decided against doing so because of several factors – the state graphic is small, plant distribution is changeable, and Charlotte County is under represented with vouchered plants.

Endangered plants contributed by Bok Tower Gardens have a “courtesy” line under the scientific name. One definition of courtesy is “willingness or generosity in providing something needed” – that definitely fits the actions of the Conservation Program at Bok Tower Gardens.

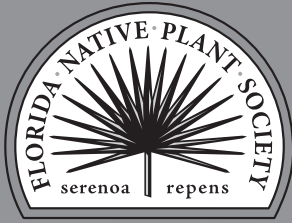
Select non-native species were planted to provide nurture for butterflies and their larvae, and signs identifying these plants include the word *introduced*. We felt this term a better choice than *non-native* or *exotic*, which could be misconstrued by the public.

One sign design has no graphic, and identifies associated plants as *common garden herbs*. I was asked several times if the fennel, parsley and rue we had planted as larval food were the same plants used in herb gardens. We used this signage to answer the question.

To complement the signs we created a garden guide that provides information about butterfly larval host plants and also gives us a way to monitor visitors to the garden.

We are very proud of our garden and its signage and invite you to visit. To see the garden online, go to the garden section of our website, mangrove.fnpschapters.org.

Jane Wallace retired to the Englewood area in 2004 and became a member of the Mangrove Chapter soon after. She began coordinating the establishment of the Chapter Garden in 2008.



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

Follow FNPS online:

Blog: <http://fnpsblog.blogspot.com/>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/FNPSfans

Twitter: twitter.com/FNPSonline

LinkedIn: Groups, Florida Native Plant Society



The Palmetto

(ISSN 0276-4164) Copyright 2014, Florida Native Plant Society, all rights reserved. No part of the contents of this magazine may be reproduced by any means without written consent of the editor. *The Palmetto* is published four times a year by the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS) as a benefit to members. The observations and opinions expressed in attributed columns and articles are those of the respective authors and should not be interpreted as representing the official views of the Florida Native Plant Society or the editor, except where otherwise stated.

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.

Editor: Marjorie Shropshire, Visual Key Creative, Inc. palmetto@fnps.org • (772) 285-4286 • 1876 NW Fork Road, Stuart, FL 34994