

Sabal minor

A bi-monthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



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Message from the Executive Director

The Florida Native Plant Society has an amazing 32 year history. In that time, we've established chapters in every region of the state, have advocated for native plants on roadways and highways and in backyards and community parks. We've monitored natural areas and have identified plants in peril, rescuing and relocating, and lending a hand in restoring public lands.

We continue to identify those plant populations and natural communities in need of extra protective measures and, through the years, have aided the conservation of the rarest and most imperiled species held in public trust. We've become known as a source of expertise on natives, relied upon by cities, counties, and state governments. None of this would have been possible without the enthusiastic and skilled participation of our leadership.

Today, we are seeking greater participation from our membership to advance the protection of native plants and natural communities. Our efforts can be more effective with volunteer help on our committees that support our various programs. The Society has several vacant positions, including on the Policy, Education, and Communications Committees, and even Treasurer on our Executive Committee. Policy Committee Chair Gene Kelly works tirelessly to keep us apprised of what's going on in preservation and what is threatening good conservation, and recommends appropriate actions for the Society to take. If you have an interest in policy and some time to chip in, become a member of this important committee! Likewise, if you have a hankering to keep folks in the know, our Communications Committee would like to hear from you. And, importantly, if you have a propensity for numbers, a background in accounting or bookkeeping, or any interest in serving as Treasurer, please contact us.

The Florida Native Plant Society is strong, but we are only as strong as you, our member, make us. We are seeking passionate people who are willing to take the reins of leadership and provide direction for our programs. Please consider becoming more active in the Society at the statewide level and help us be as effective as we can possibly be. As a membership- and volunteer-driven organization, we are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Kellie A. Westervelt
ExecutiveDirector@fnps.org

Native Plant Raid *by Peg Lindsay, Lake Beautyberry Chapter*

Those of you who regularly follow the FNPS news know that Barbara Grigg of the Lake Beautyberry Chapter received a Green Palmetto Award at this past year's conference. One of the reasons the members of our chapter so enthusiastically nominated her for this honor is that she grows plants for donation to our chapter, for public gardens around Lake County and for our members' gardens. When we receive a plant from Barbara, it comes with detailed care instructions. And we learn.

But with the coming of the summer heat and hurricanes, Barbara and husband Tony have a liability around their home. Barbara literally has hundreds of containers of Florida native plants in pots on their small lot. Tending these becomes tedious in the heat. And the multitude of small containers may pose a real threat in the event of high winds from a hurricane. So on June 26, a few of the Lake Beautyberry members raided Barbara's private nursery.



Mary Remer, Peg Urban, Barbara Grigg

Between us, we took over 100 Florida native plants to be installed in public and private gardens around Lake County. Thank you, again, Barbara.

Rugel's Roundup *by Sande Habali, Pawpaw Chapter*

In May of this year, I participated in a survey for Rugel's pawpaw, a rare species endemic to Volusia County. It was an honor and privilege to participate in this event, but most of all it was fun! I am not an expert in plant identifications, but because we were well prepared, I felt comfortable to be considered a Citizen Scientist on this day.

Danny Young and Dr. Eliane Norman began our recognition training at our regular chapter meeting. But the most helpful part of the training happened when we were taken to Long Leaf Pine Preserve where we were shown the plant in its habitat. We learned, right in the field, how to look for the plant's characteristics and recognize the surrounding habitats. Danny also went over the correct way to document our findings.

Each group included people who had past experiences in identifying Rugel's, especially in the Tiger Bay Forest, where we had been assigned. Renee Owens and I were fortunate to have two experts in our group. Both Michael Jenkins and Paul Rebmann were experts in identifying our plant as well as the other vegetation found in the surrounding areas. Their enthusiasm for finding these little treasures was contagious. We had a few "false starts" as Renee and I leaned all the little intricacies involved in making a correct find. We all got down on the ground and discussed as a group a sort of "check-list"

(continued on pg 3)

Land Management Review of Crystal River State Park by Kevin Love, Hernando Chapter

On May 22–23, FNPS took part in a land management review of the sprawling Crystal River State Park (CRSP) in Citrus County. One of the largest parks in the system, CRSP consists of over 27,000 acres situated in an area of the Nature Coast covering over 90 square miles.

I was one of only five review team members taking part as we settled in at the park visitor center for the review orientation. First, Keith Singleton, DEP's facilitator for all state land reviews, gave an overview of the process. Next, Nick Robbins, park manager, introduced key park staff and gave a brief overview of the park, its management and the itinerary for the day's field tour.

Formerly a buffer preserve protecting the St. Martin's Aquatic Preserve and under the stewardship of DEP's Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas, the park was transferred back to DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks in 2004. Its purpose is to conserve the natural landscape of this coast including the aquatic preserve, spring runs and estuaries where manatees congregate; to protect natural lands that link with natural lands to the south; and to provide recreational opportunities emphasizing the natural history of the coast.

By 10am, we set off for the field. A drive out West Ozello Road gave us an excellent feel for a signature feature of this distinctive coastal region: its spectacular vistas. From many vantage points along the drive one can take in miles and miles of bays, creeks, coastal marsh, mangrove swamp, hydric and cabbage palm hammock—to open gulf. The ecological value of this landscape is enormous, and the opportunities afforded for nature-based recreation appear nearly boundless. But of course, there are troubles in paradise. Brazilian pepper long ago invaded the coastal hammocks of the park and surrounding public and private lands. And the patchwork nature of park and private parcels magnified by the expanse of the infested area make control efforts daunting to say the least. But I was thoroughly

impressed with the outreach efforts, the dogged determination and the systematic strategy employed by the park to address the problem and the progress made in moving toward maintenance management. Another

problem discussed was the potential devastating impacts of sea level rise on the nature of the coastal communities, especially the shallow-soiled cabbage palm hammocks. Stay tuned.

After lunch we travelled north of Crystal River to observe the intensive upland restoration being done by the park. Uplands, while less than 20% of the park's area, are by far the most disturbed by human use, primarily fire exclusion and silvicultural practices. Through a comprehensive strategy using tactics such as mechanical vegetation management, aggressive prescribed burning, timber harvests and tree planting, the altered pine flatwoods and scrubby flatwoods are on the road to improvement. But it is a long road ahead.

CRSP is somewhat unique in the system in that it has very few developed recreational amenities. Rather, it features primarily passive access points and trail heads for fishing, hiking and biking. The team felt that the amenities were adequate considering the inaccessible and sensitive nature of the majority of the park's habitats, and were well maintained.

Bright and early the next morning the team sat down to a grueling, but very absorbing five-hour evaluation discussion. Nick, park biologist Keith Morin, and the rest of the staff were commended by the team for their management prioritization, prescribed burn program, restoration program including fire and silvicultural thinnings, and cooperative efforts to protect the park's cultural resources. Recommendations for improvement included efforts to increase park staff positions, institute vegetative sampling in the restoration zones and to use a broader tactical approach in wild pig control.

Thanks to Nick, Keith and Keith for an enjoyable and well-run review. For an old land manager, it was a blast!



Help locate plants for research

Habenaria repens populations



Habenaria repens
(Photo by Shirley Denton)

Mark Whitten, a botanist at the herbarium at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville, is collecting population samples of *Habenaria repens* for a taxonomic and molecular study being conducted by his Brazilian colleagues.

This species is often locally abundant; however, with current drought conditions, he has not been able to locate any populations in the localities he has known before.

If you are aware of *Habenaria* populations, please contact Mark via email at whitten@flmnh.ufl.edu

with details. (Once locations are identified, Mark will apply for the appropriate permissions and permits before collecting.

Callisia species

Iwan Molgo, PhD candidate at the University of Florida, is investigating relationships between *Callisia graminea*, *C. ornata* and *C. rosea* through both morphological and molecular analyses.

The goal of this research is to elucidate the systematic relationships between *C. graminea*, *C. ornata* and *C. rosea*. From a conservation standpoint, it is important to know what the relationships are among these taxa, particularly because they are endemic to the Southeastern U.S.

Iwan aims to locate as many populations as possible in order to collect tissue samples and voucher specimens for DNA analysis and study of morphological characteristics. Please email Iwan Molgo (imolgo@ufl.edu) if you know of populations.



Callisia ornata
(Photo by Shirley Denton)

Chapter Happenings

Magnolia Chapter The Magnolia Chapter is participating in a Northwest Florida Water Management District volunteer planting, Saturday, Sep 29 in Havana. The planting is funded by a \$500 La Florida, Land of Flowers, Community Program Grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation to encourage wildflower growth through Florida's 2013 quinquennial. Volunteers will plant wildflowers, including natives from Dan Miller's Trillium Gardens Nursery, in a water-conserving rain garden near the District's front door. The University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and the Natural Resources Conservation Service also offered to donate trial release plants for the garden.

The **Magnolia Chapter** will kick off their fall lineup of speakers with a special program aimed at reaching a wider spectrum of the community. Audrey and Frank Peterman are diversity consultants, assisting public and private conservation organizations to engage a more diverse cross section of people in the enjoyment and stewardship of our publicly owned lands. The Petermans became catalysts for change after embarking on a mid-life tour of national parks and seeing very few people of color at all the glorious places they visited. Returning home, they started a newsletter and tours to introduce African Americans and other people of color to the great outdoors. Since then, Audrey and Frank have developed into award-winning leaders in the conservation movement and co-authored *Legacy on the Land: A Black Couple Discovers Our National Inheritance and Tells Why Every American Should Care*. The Magnolia Chapter is honored to have the Petermans present their experiences at the September 6 Magnolia Chapter Meeting on the FSU campus. The Peterman's book will be available for sale. For more information on the Petermans, visit earthwiseproductionsinc.com and legacyontheland.com. For more information on the program, contact Leigh Brooks at lbrooks2wd@nettally.com or 850-663-4361.

Paynes Prairie Chapter In cooperation with the City of Gainesville and the Friends of Nature Parks, the Paynes Prairie Chapter will hold its 2012 Fall Native Plant Sale on Friday, October 5, and Saturday, October 6, at Morningside Nature Center (3540 E. University Ave., Gainesville). Our annual Spring and Fall sales are the largest native plant sales in North Central Florida. We will have more than a dozen plant vendors, as well as booths selling wildflower seeds, nature books, and botanical art. The Friday portion is an exclusive members' only sale, open 4:30-6:30pm to members of the Florida Native Plant Society and the Friends of Nature Parks only. The Saturday portion is open to the public from 8:30am to 12:30pm. For more information, visit www.natureoperations.org.

The **Paynes Prairie Chapter** hosted a booth for National Bee Day on August 18. The event was sponsored by the Gainesville Bee Club and ran from 10am-4pm at the Alachua County Extension Office. Bee day activities included information on local bees, bee nesting, honey tasting, arthropod petting zoo, guest speakers, and of course native plants that attract pollinators.

Tell us what YOUR chapter is up to. Send your Chapter Happenings to Sabalminor@fnps.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WINGS AND WILDFLOWERS FESTIVAL



Lake County's inaugural birding festival will be held September 28-30, 2012 at beautiful Hickory Point Park in Tavares and will offer visitors an opportunity to fall in love with Lake County's birds, wildflowers and natural areas.

The festival will feature specialty field trips to area preserves and pristine public lands, as well as unique birding programs by kayak, pontoon boats and seaplanes. This event will also include workshops, exhibits, live entertainment and a host of renowned speakers.

For more information and to view the full schedule, visit http://www.lakecountyfl.gov/bird_watching/wings_and_wildflowers/.

SUSTAINABLE AND AUTHENTIC FLORIDA CONFERENCE



No one knows better than FNPS members how beautiful, life-filled and vibrant Real Florida is and can be. Native plants, of course, are vital to the equation, and we've worked for years to bring them to the attention of our largely plant-blind population. The values of authenticity and sustainability are now getting the attention of visionary economic leaders as well as environmental advocates.

This October 17-19, 2012 in Anna Maria Island, real imagineers from communities around the state will come together to explore how Florida's economic, social and environmental challenges can be solved by promoting Real Florida in all its beauty and function. Lend your passion and voice to the discussion.

Find out more at sustainableandauthenticflorida.com

(Rugel's continued from pg 1)

as we confirmed it was indeed what we were looking for. Then we worked together to document our findings, including the surrounding environment. Both Michael and Paul had been in the forest before, so we used their past experiences to look for the plants. We also used Danny's maps, as well as a GPS device to search for the Immokalee soil, so often found with the Rugel's.

The day was a long one, but it was very satisfying. Not only did I learn about *Deeringothamnus rugelii*, but I learned about many companion plants in the process. I also had confirmation on the importance of using controlled burns when it is necessary to bring a habitat back to the condition for which it was intended. Sometimes our little "treasures" need a bit of help from us. This was, indeed, a treasure hunt worth conducting!



Deeringothamnus rugelii
(Photo by Michael Jenkins, courtesy of Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants
at <http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu/>)

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Download the GoodSearch – Florida Native Plant Society – Melbourne toolbar at www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/florida-native-plant-society-melbourne and FNPS will earn money every time you shop and search online — even if you forget to go to GoodShop or GoodSearch first!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities to get involved in the Society, from working at the chapter level to serving on one of our statewide committees.

Positions are available on Education, Policy, and Communications committees. Please consider volunteering with us to help make the Society the best it can be by contacting ExecutiveDirector@FNPS.org.

2012 BOD Meeting Schedule

OCT 13: Executive Committee Meeting
Florida FFA Leadership Training Center
5000 Firetower Road, Haines City, FL 33844

NOV 17: Board of Directors Meeting
IFAS Extension Building, Orlando

FEB 08–10, 2013: Save the date!
FNPS ANNUAL RETREAT (Meeting: Feb 9)
FFA Training Center, Haines City
This is an excellent opportunity for Board Members, Chapter Representatives and FNPS members to focus on the FNPS mission and identify strategies to move the organization forward.

**Meeting locations are subject to change.*

Want your publications in digital form?

We hear you! FNPS has responded to our members' desire to get their publications in digital form by encouraging chapters to go green with their newsletters (and many do) and by providing our *Sabal minor* in digital form. By default, if we have an email address for you, the *Sabal minor* is emailed unless you specify that you request otherwise.

We would eventually like to offer a digital option for the *Palmetto* and we are exploring ways to provide it in print and online in a quality format. While we're not yet ready to implement this option, we'd like to hear from members who would be interested in a digital option.

Let us know your preference by sending an email to info@fnps.org, or if you prefer, call FNPS Administrative Services at 321-271-6702. Remember to clarify which publications you wish to receive by email (chapter newsletter, *Sabal minor* and/or *Palmetto*). **Thank you for helping us serve you better.**

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