

Message from the President by Anne Cox, FNPS President, 2014-2016

Dear fellow FNPS members:

The FNPS 35th annual conference in Tallahassee on May 28–31 was an amazing event. The downtown event was different from other conferences with the state capitol building, the Challenger Learning Center and the Chain of Parks only blocks away from the conference hotel, the Aloft. Friday and Saturday night social venues, Wakulla Springs and Tall Timbers Research Station, were in opposite directions and the activities at each were well worth the half-hour drive. The presentations on Friday and Saturday were educational and inspiring, as were the Thursday and Sunday field trips. A special thanks to Marlene Rodak, FNPS conference chair; Kim Zarillo, treasurer; Donna Bollenbach, silent auction coordinator; the numerous Magnolia, Sarracenia and Suncoast chapter members; and members from chapters all over the state for their contributions to the conference. These FNPS members helped make the 35th annual conference a success. Thanks to all who participated and to the members that came to the conference, as this was truly a group endeavor.

The FNPS annual meeting of members was held at the conference with the following outcomes:

FNPS bylaws amendment. FNPS members to amend the bylaws to approve the addition of a president-elect board position. The president-elect will assist with presidential duties, provide continuity of succession, and get an opportunity to become familiar with the organizational operations for one year before becoming president. See article on page 2 for more details.

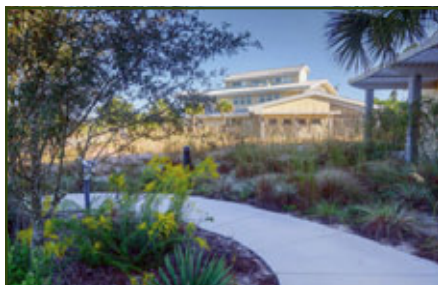
2015 board and officers nominations.

- Vice President for Administration, **Debbie Chayet**
- Treasurer, **Kim Zarillo**
- Director at Large (2015-2016), **Winnie Park Said**
- Director at Large (2015-2017), **Peter Rogers**
- Council of Chapters Director, **Dave Feagles**
- President-elect, **Catherine Bowman**

Please see the FNPS website (www.fnps.org/news/society-news/meet-our-newly-elected-officers) for bios of our new officers.

2015 Landscape Awards.

- **John Henkel** residence, Grant-Valkaria
- **Kim Johnson** residence, Ormond Beach
- **Mary Ellen Gotto** residence, Trinity
- **Archbold Biological Station**, Venus
- **Florida International University Nature Preserve**, Miami



2015 landscape award winner
Archbold Biological Station

2015 Palmetto Awards.

- **Public Service**, **Marc and Terry Godts**, Lake Beautyberry Chapter
- **Mentor Award**, **Carmel VanHoek**, Suncoast Chapter (Read the nomination letter at www.fnps.org/news/society-news/2015-mentor-award)

- **Green Palmetto**, **Joan Bausch**, Cocoplum Chapter
- **Silver Palmetto**, **Marlene Rodak**, Coccoloba Chapter (Marlene was given this award in acknowledgment of her extremely hard work in leading two consecutive conference teams to success.)
- **Silver Palmetto**, **Karina Veaudry**, Tarflower Chapter (Karina was given the award for her guidance and support for our president, Anne Cox, and for her multiple years of service to FNPS as chair of the FNPS Landscape Committee.)

2015 Science Awards. Presented by Paul Schmalzer, Science Chair. See details on page 3 of this issue.

2015 Conservation Awards. Presented by Juliet Rynear, Conservation Chair. See details on page 3 of this issue.

2015 Plant ID awards, Professional

- 1st Place, **Danny Young**, Pawpaw Chapter
- 2nd Place, **Walter Taylor**, Tarflower Chapter
- 3rd place, **Jack Putz**, Paynes Prairie

2015 Plant ID awards, Amateur

- 1st Place, **Steven Dickman**, Suncoast Chapter
- 2nd Place, **Eric Powell**, Sea Oats Chapter
- 3rd Place, **Susan Deans**, Palmetto Chapter

Below are summaries submitted from board committees. These and others are available for all members to review on the Forum at www.forum.fnps.org/index.php?topic=1089.0.

Communications Committee (Chair: Shirley Denton, Suncoast Chapter). The internal group discussion site (www.facebook.com/groups/FNPSdiscussions/) continues to get little use. If we want it to work, we have to push it. Discussions are easy, but it is a closed Facebook group and you must be invited to join. Just create a Facebook persona (if you do not already have one) (no need to put anything on the Facebook page if you don't want one), friend a member of the group (and we suggest letting that person know) and the "friend" can send you an invitation. **We need someone to be an official contact.**

Council of Chapters (Julie Becker, Tarflower Chapter). The Council of Chapters has completed a revision of its SOP. It will be voted on in June. Dave Feagles has been elected as the council's chairman. The council is working hard on its landscape initiative and the creation of six regional brochures. The council is looking forward to the membership drive and is striving to support the mission of the Florida Native Plant Society.

Education Committee (Chair: Debra Klein, Cocoplum Chapter). The committee is working on distribution of the film, *Walk in the Florida Dry Prairie*. The uncompressed film was previewed at the 2015 conference. The committee has requested approval to distribute the film via Vimeo. Once the film is uploaded on Vimeo, the committee will provide the link and instructions on how to set up a public screening. This will go out in the email announcement to chapters and other interested persons. Additionally, it will be made available via CPALMS.

(continued on page 2)

(President's message, continued from page 1)

Finance Committee (Chair: Devon Higginbotham, Suncoast Chapter). Regarding partnerships, the committee has determined that FNPS needs to work with all entities and not deny any group, agency, corporation or non-profit the opportunity to learn from our organization. The more people that are aware of our existence, the better our ability to influence others with our mission. Actions in progress include: making FNPS a well known organization and the lead authority in the state; and promoting the use and conservation of Florida native plants. Future actions include initiating programs with other organizations, businesses and agencies to grow the organization and awareness of the importance of Florida native plants; and to use our knowledge base to solicit funding for larger programs and exposure.

Land Management Partners Committee (Chair: Danny Young, Pawpaw Chapter). LMP has a new schedule out for the 2015-2016 FDEP Land Management Reviews; it will be posted on the LMP web page in June. Please see announcement on page 3 for information on how to get involved.

Landscape Committee (New chair: Jenny Welch, Pinelily Chapter). Landscape awards were presented at the annual conference. The committee has a number of actions in progress including: HOA guidelines and landscape standards; Osceola County north ranch sector plan; "big box" store native plant sales and presentations using Marlene Rodak's model work with individual Lowe's store managers to create a relationship with the end goal of providing native plants and native plant education/advocacy to local residents; radio programs; and Arbor Day Foundation letter and follow up (the majority of trees in that program are non-native and some are invasive, so the committee will write a letter and follow up to request more native trees be used). Please see the extensive work of the landscape committee at www.forum.fnps.org/index.php/topic,1089.msg2122.html#msg2122.

Membership Committee (Chair: Jonnie Spitzer, Nature Coast Chapter). The committee solicited funds from chapters to finance the printing of their new membership brochure, which was available for distribution at the conference. The committee also held a class at the conference to demonstrate how to ask a potential new member to join. The committee has implemented a program to write monthly articles on increasing membership that will be distributed monthly through the chapter membership chairs. Their goal is to reach 6,000 FNPS members by the 2017 conference. See further details on page 3 of this issue.

Policy and Legislation Committee (Chair: Eugene Kelly, Hernando Chapter). During the 2015 regular legislative session, in coordination with FNPS lobbyist Sue Mullins, the committee closely tracked bills that were relevant to the FNPS mission. Weekly conference calls were conducted to receive updates on pending legislation and to develop a strategy to promote FNPS priorities. A series of alerts were issued to the membership calling for legislators to provide more funding for land acquisition under the Florida Forever program. An open letter to the entire legislature was submitted under President Anne Cox's signature and provided factual support for the FNPS position that lands currently under public ownership in Florida are well managed and that additional lands must be protected through public ownership to create a sustainable network of conservation lands. An alert was also issued providing information on several bills of interest, including water policy. All alerts were posted on the FNPS website and submitted for possible posting on the FNPS blog and Facebook page.

Updates from the Conservation and Science Advisory Committees, as well as Society Happenings, can be found on pages 3 and 5 of this issue.

FNPS has contracted **Andy Taylor** to help us develop our outreach program, develop more partnerships, raise awareness of FNPS, and raise funding and grant opportunities. Please see his note on page 3 of this issue.

Also, don't forget to mark your calendars for **November 15–22, 2015** for the **FNPS Cuba Botanical Trip**. For more information, see the ad on page 6 of this issue. Download the full itinerary and registration form at www.forum.fnps.org/index.php/topic,1045.15.html.

Proposed bylaws change passes (from the FNPS website)

The FNPS board of directors proposed a bylaws change that was voted on and passed by the membership at the 2015 annual meeting. This change is intended to facilitate officer continuity by adding the position of president-elect as a one-year term, after which the individual would run for a two-year term as president, and then serve as past president for one year.

The previous structure allowed a president to be elected for two years, and then serve a two-year term as past president. The new structure retains the total four-year commitment, but allows for a year of training prior to the two-year term as president and shortens the past president term to one year.

The board hopes that having the training period will also broaden the pool of people who would then be qualified to successfully fill the role of president and encourage more people to consider filling the role.

For more details on how this process will work, please read the letter submitted by our current president, Anne Cox, which is posted at www.fnps.org/assets/userfiles/files/FNPS_ByLaws_info_2015.pdf. To review the new bylaws language, go to [www.fnps.org/assets/userfiles/files/FNPSByLaws-amended%2005-2015\(1\).pdf](http://www.fnps.org/assets/userfiles/files/FNPSByLaws-amended%2005-2015(1).pdf). The new language is in blue. (The 2014 bylaws are posted at www.fnps.org/assets/docs/docs/fnpsbylaws2014-official.pdf for comparison.)

Conference photos wanted!

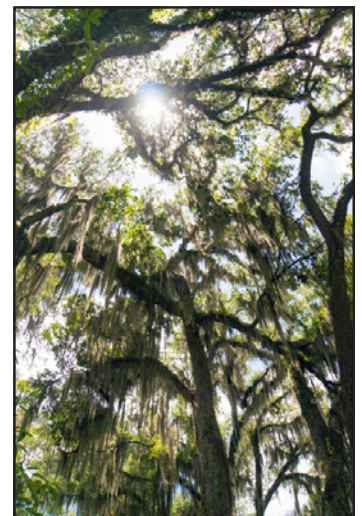
Did you take photos at the conference? If yes, please share your photos from conference sessions, socials, field trips and anything else conference related!

We are seeking a small number of photos that will be useful for the *Palmetto* and/or website and/or social media. Please send them to webteam@fnps.org. We are also seeking lots of photos potentially useful for the *Palmetto*, website and/or social media and to share with our members. Please send an email to webteam@fnps.org and we will send you a login for our FNPS Flickr account; this will let you upload them at reasonably high resolution.

Not sure what to share? Simply upload them to (or share them with) our FNPS facebook page (www.facebook.com/FNPSfans). You do not need to be a professional photographer! It is good memories that we seek to share and document. Check out our Flickr site (www.flickr.com/photos/fnps/), our 2015 Conference album (www.flickr.com/photos/fnps/sets/72157653899933922) and our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/FNPSfans) to see what others have already shared and **please consider sharing your photos today.**



Endemic and endangered white birds-in-a-nest (Macbridea alba), taken on Pitcher Plant Prairies of Apalachicola National Forest field trip.
(Photo by Stacey Matrazzo)



Sun peaking through Spanish moss, taken on field trip to Lake Hall at Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park
(Photo by Ken Gholston)

“Plant Roots With Us” campaign: FNPS goal of 6,000 members by 2017 conference

submitted by *Jonnie Spitler, Membership Committee*

Florida is now the third most populous state in the US. With so many people, we should have no trouble reaching our goal of doubling our membership by the 2017 conference. People do care, as shown by the 75 percent of citizens who voted for the Water and Land Legacy Amendment. This is the time to make contact with as many people as possible through chapter meetings, field trips, plant sales and outreach.

FNPS has a new membership brochure, which includes the new membership levels and an application to join FNPS. It is a tool which should be used to ASK individuals to join. One of the preferred levels is “Sustaining Member.” This level is easy and convenient for everyone, \$10 per month donated directly from your credit card. You will be surprised by the positive responses you will get. My own chapter, Nature Coast, has already added 20 people to our membership just by asking. Personal contact is very important.

The membership committee will be sending tips for successful recruiting to chapters. We will be interviewing chapters and noting their successes. We will also pass on the month by month results. The brochure is available to all chapters and should be used as a tool to double chapter membership. **Let’s be enthusiastic about our mission and spread the word!**

The committee would like to thank the following chapters for being part of the roll-out of our “Plant Roots With Us” membership campaign by sending in a donation to help with the creation and printing of the new membership brochure: Ixia, Nature Coast, Dade, Paynes Prairie, Conradina, Cuplet Fern, Magnolia, Sarracenia, Naples, Lake Beautyberry, Heartland, Mangrove, Citrus, Cocoplum, Palm Beach, Suncoast and Cocoloba.

Membership updates from our administrative services team, Cammie Donaldson and Chris Waltz: Special thanks to our conference, which brought us six new members; the inspirational Villages Chapter, which continues its upward climb; and most notably, our super Serenoa Chapter, which reeled in 25 new or rejoining members at a big, successful plant sale. In fact, Serenoa even reeled in members for neighboring chapters like Suncoast. Great news and a great way to celebrate spring. Please be thinking about how you are going to hold onto your members through the summer, typically one of our more challenging seasons. We must all work harder at retaining the members we have while gaining new ones.

Land Management Committee volunteer sign-up

submitted by *Danny Young*

Thanks so much to all who attended the Land Management Partners Committee meeting during the 2015 conference. If you signed up to join the committee and have NOT received the welcome email, or if you did not attend but are interested or would like to receive emails on the ongoing efforts of this committee, please visit our web page (www.fnps.org/committee/partners) and send Danny an email.

Drum roll, please...

FNPS exceeded 3,000 members in April.

Congratulations, everyone! FNPS has more members now than we have had since 2007, before the financial crisis that dealt a crippling blow to nonprofits nationwide.

Help us reach our goal of 6,000 members by the 2017 conference!

Welcome Andy Taylor, Development Director

FNPS is proud to welcome our new development director, Andy Taylor. Andy’s first day with the organization was day 1 of this year’s conference. He comes to us with a background in government and politics, and also serves on the board of his local Toastmasters club in the Tampa Bay area. Andy is a second generation Floridian and is excited to help FNPS grow. His focus will be on creating a corporate donor program, strategic partnerships with other organizations, and improving the name recognition of FNPS statewide, which will in turn grow membership. You can reach Andy at andy@fnps.org.



2015 Research Grant awards

submitted by *Paul Schmalzer*

FNPS gives annual awards to support research on native plants and native plant communities that support our mission. This year we received 11 application proposals that were reviewed by a committee consisting of Dr. Richard Wunderlin, Dr. Jon Moore, Dr. Paul Schmalzer, and Kim Zarillo. Funding for up to three awards at \$1500 each (\$4500 total) was available. The total includes earnings on the endowment (ca. \$2300), a donation from the Tarflower Chapter of \$1500 in honor of Sam Hopkins, a donation of \$500 from the Paynes Prairie Chapter, a donation of \$500 from the Sea Rocket Chapter, and a donation of \$250 from the Conradina Chapter.

The board of directors approved funding three proposals recommended by the review committee, and these grants were announced at the FNPS conference. The 2015 FNPS Endowment Research Grants go to:

- Natali Miller, Florida State University, Department of Biological Science. “Population viability analysis for three populations of the threatened Florida endemic, *Euphorbia telephioides*.”
- Sebastian Palmas-Perez, University of Florida, School of Forest Resources and Conservation. “Growth rings in Florida’s hardwood hammocks: Can X-rays precisely estimate the age and growth rates of trees in South Florida?”
- Barbara Whitlock, University of Miami, Department of Biology. “A DNA barcode to identify native species of air plants.” (This award was given in honor of Sam Hopkins and funded by a contribution from the Tarflower Chapter.)

We expect to hear results of these research projects at future FNPS conferences.

Conservation Committee news

submitted by *Juliet Rynear*

The board of directors and the Conservation Committee wish to thank the following FNPS members for their generous donations to the 2015 Conservation Grant awards:

- Nature Coast Chapter
- Sea Rocket Chapter
- Tarflower Chapter (in honor of Dick Deuerling)
- Annie Schmidt
- Dade Chapter (in honor of Joyce and Don Gann)

Your donations will fund the following two projects in 2015:

- Controlled burn of one acre of sandhill community at Oakland Nature Preserve
- Pine rockland post-burn restoration and community education at FIU Nature Preserve

Silent auction success!

Donna Bollenbach, chair of the 2015 FNPS silent auction and Suncoast Chapter member, wishes to thank all the Suncoast members who stepped up to help run the silent auction and raffle at the FNPS conference this year. Of the 13 Suncoast members attending the conference, nearly all sacrificed all or some of their day to assist her in setting up, monitoring and closing out the auction. As a result of their help, and our generous donors and bidders, the silent auction and raffle earned nearly \$4,500 for FNPS!

- **Devon Higginbotham**, in her usual persuasive style, sold over \$350 in raffle tickets. She spent all day Saturday helping out wherever needed.
- **Daphne Lambright** also spent many hours assisting with the auction. Her calm and easygoing manner was so welcome in the fray of setting-up and closing out the auction.
- **Carmel vanHoek**, who literally saluted and asked what she could do next, had to be tricked into leaving her “post” at the auction so she would not miss the session where she received the FNPS mentor award.
- **Janet Bowers** also chipped in for many hours of the day. Her logical thought process was so helpful when setting up the auction.
- **Bunny Worth, Steve Dickman** and **Cliff Brown** were instrumental in moving all the auction items from the hotel to the Challenger Learning Center and they continued to lend their support in so many ways throughout the day.

Other FNPS members also helped throughout the day and the assistance was much appreciated, as was the encouragement and praise given throughout the day. And as karma would have it, Donna won the raffle for the most coveted hand-sewn *Quercus* quilt by **Jeannie Brodhead**.



Donna Bollenbach poses with raffle prize, the Quercus quilt, hand sewn by Jeannie Brodhead

In Donna’s words: “It is easy to love an organization for all the fun things we do, like meetings, field trips, conferences and socials. But I love FNPS and my Suncoast Chapter for the way we WORK together for the common good of FNPS. So the next time you are participating in a fun society event or meeting, keep in mind the WORK that was done behind the scenes to make it happen. Consider volunteering yourself, and good karma will come your way.”

Thank you to the following for their donations to the 2015 FNPS silent auction and raffle. Your donations helped us raise nearly \$4500 for FNPS.

- Lois & Bruce Selfon
- Paula Russo
- Carol Mahler
- Nancy Blisset
- Sandra Gail Lambert
- Tall Timbers Research Station
- Sid Taylor
- Florida Master Naturalist Program
- Total Wine & More
- Tallahassee Nurseries
- The City of Tallahassee
- Momo’s Pizza
- Al Squires
- Creative Fusion Photography
- Christy Northfield
- Joy Green
- Lee Bee Botanicals
- Susan Drake and Charles Futch
- Florida Wildlife Corridor
- Paul Austin
- Daphne Lambright

- Patti Phares
- Devon Higginbotham
- Donna Bollenbach
- Suncoast Chapter
- Chris Lockhart
- Shirley Denton
- Debra Arant
- Jeannie Brodhead
- Fran Palmeri
- Tierra Art & Bamboo
- Joy Williams
- Aydelette Kelsey
- Linda Stump
- Susan Gallagher
- Jenny Welch
- Native Nurseries
- FANN
- Rosalyn F. Kilcollins
- Eliane Norman
- And anyone who may have been inadvertently missed.**

What I learned at the 35th Annual FNPS Conference in Tallahassee *submitted by Sid Taylor*

Travis and Karen MacClendon have their Calhoun County herbarium online. Check your plant IDs from the field trips at www.calhouncountyherbarium.org.

I learned there is a “dog fly” as well as deer flies (yellow wings) and horse flies. Check them out at www.calhouncountywaspsandflies.org.

Dr. Loren Anderson baffled us by saying some plants are giving up sex. Plants are developing an embryo that is an exact clone of the parent. When I asked for an example, he said dandelion. We need to get him to write for us on this topic.

Make sure you see **Gail Fishman’s tribute to Angus Gholson** on the last page of the conference program. And then read about him in her 2001 book, *Journeys through Paradise: Pioneering Naturalists in the Southeast*. I asked her if beaver are present at St. Mark’s as I know there have been at Lake Talquin. She said one was found dead in a pond. From our tram ride, we watched two bucks with velvety antlers swim across two diked canals.

In keeping with our theme, “Born to Burn,” **Greg Kaufman** with the Florida Park Service declared, “Prescribed burning is a safe way to apply a natural process to ensure ecosystem health and to reduce wildfire risk (by removing the fuel). Fire maintained lands are cultural landscapes.”

Dr. Bruce Means was the director of Tall Timbers from 1976 to 1984, when he founded the Coastal Plains Institute and Land Conservancy, which purchased an inholding in the Apalachicola National Forest. He has since secured 80 adjacent acres where he is restoring with fire and replanting old cotton fields with longleaf pine. He teased us with this presentation title, “The Wild, Wild World of the Florida Panhandle, an Amazing Cradle of Life,” with 27 species of frogs, 18 species of turtle (third largest number in the world) and 29 species of salamanders (representing six of the 18 families in the world). As for plants, six species of pitcher plants, five species of sundews, six species of butterworts and a high number (35) of trees in its southern temperate hardwood forest, sometimes called beech/magnolia forest. There are 2,852 native species of plants in Florida and 76 percent occur in the panhandle from the Suwanee River to the Escambia River drainage basin.

Early growing season burning produces viable seed and this early growing season is May through July, sometimes August mimicking lightning strike burns.

Dr. Jim Cox shared his admiration for Herbert Stoddard, who he quoted liberally: “Land management is an art that builds on history and is based in science.” Read about Stoddard, who campaigned for prescribed burning and developed quantitative methods of studying birds in three books: Burt Way’s *Conserving Southern Longleaf*, Leon Neel’s *Art of Managing Longleaf*, and Robert L. Crawford and William R. Brueckheimer’s *The Legacy of a Red Hill’s Plantation: Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy*. Also look for Stoddard’s own autobiography, *Memoirs of a Naturalist*.

Have you visited the FNPS blog lately?

The latest post from member Donna Legare covers the **native yard tour**, one of the many field trips offered at last month’s annual conference. Read all about it here: fnpsblog.blogspot.com.

Did you know you can receive updates from the FNPS blog right in your email inbox? Simply visit the FNPS blog at fnpsblog.blogspot.com and choose your delivery method on the righthand side of the webpage. Subscribe today to stay informed and inspired!

Chapter Happenings

Conradina Chapter did another outstanding job coordinating the 3rd Annual Central Florida Native Plant Sale in partnership with Pine Lily, Cuplet Fern and Tarflower Chapters and the Florida Association of Native Nurseries (FANN) at Osceola Heritage Park in Kissimmee. They sold hundreds of plants — including native milkweed for monarch butterflies — educated dozens of Central Florida residents eager to use native plants in their yard, and got some great promotion for native plants on regional radio and in the *Florida Today* newspaper. This annual fundraiser enables Conradina Chapter to support the planting of natives at public schools and parks. Thanks to **Martha Stuart, Kathryn Merry, Sharon Dolan, Brent Dolan, Chris Waltz, Tim and Anna Harrison and their youngsters, Jane Higgins, Will Comment, Cammie Donaldson, Spence Guerin, and Suzanne Valencia.**

A huge thanks to these Conradina members who assisted in the following events:

- WFIT's 40th anniversary celebration on April 18: **Martha Stuart, Kathryn Merry, Eric Anderson, John Boltz, and Suzanne Valencia.**
- Earth Day celebration at Northrup Gruman on April: **Martha Stuart.**
- Earth Day celebration at Florida Air Academy on April 24: **Suzanne Valencia.**
- Surfrider Foundation beach restoration planting on May 9: **John Boltz, Suzanne Valencia.**
- Native Plant Garden at Imagine Charter School on May 19: **Tim Harrison, Suzanne Valencia.**
- Plant inventory at Malabar Scrub Sanctuary throughout May and ongoing: **Wayne Matchett, Martha Stuart, Carol Hebert, Suzanne Valencia.**

Pawpaw Chapter maintains a lending library that continues to grow! Members are able to check out top-rated professional books every month. Currently, they have over 25 titles. The chapter lets prospective members know that in addition to all the benefits FNPS offers, their dues allow them full access to this library. This enticement is worth the membership alone! After perusing the books for a month, many wish to purchase a copy to keep in their home libraries. Dr. David Hall spoke to the chapter in June on forensic botany, plants and crime. Members were able to purchase his new book, *Wildflowers of Florida and the Southeast*, and the chapter added it to their collection.

The Pawpaw Chapter does not take the summer off! They continue with activities all summer long, including field trips and participation in local activities such as Tomoka State Park's Pollinator Day on June 20, where members were present to share FNPS information, help with a children's craft and lead nature groups. Their July field trip will be a kayak or canoe trip on the waters of Spruce Creek where they will also explore the famous historic Gamble place.

All are invited to a Plant Exchange in August. The chapter extends the invitation to the public because members usually have plenty of native plants they are willing to share. As they exchange the plants, they explain the growing conditions and other aspects which enhance our gardens. This comes as a great help to new-comers.

Suncoast Chapter has been traveling Central Florida, attending other chapter meetings to meet fellow members and gain insight into their success. They recently traveled to Sarasota to attend the Serenoa Chapter meeting to see how their chapter operates. They have a beautiful location at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, right on the Gulf of Mexico. They watched the sun set while listening to an excellent presentation.

Plant City's local newspaper, *The Observer*, recently asked the chapter to write an article for their spring fling edition. They liked it so much (special thanks to Cammie Donaldson for her help), they printed it on page 2A and asked for a monthly article. The chapter agreed. It's a commitment but with cutbacks in the funding of many newspapers, they are looking to their readership to fill gaps. It's an excellent outreach opportunity and reaches a broader audience with which to share the FNPS mission. The articles are posted on their website as well. **Reach out to your local paper and see if you can help them with articles on Florida native plants.**

After their spring plant sale at USF, the Suncoast Chapter board is considering new sources of revenue for the chapter. Members are becoming burned out with the bi-annual plant sales, and the chapter wants to keep it fun and interesting. One thought is to host a fall garden tour with dinner and drinks, starting small with 30-50 guests, a chili dinner, and choosing a date when the wildflowers are blooming and the evenings are cool. **If your chapter has experience with an evening dinner with wildflowers, please share what you have learned.**

The Suncoast chapter is thrilled to report that 16 of their members attend the conference in Tallahassee last month. Please extend a special "THANK YOU" to chapter member **Donna Bollenbach** who chaired the very successful silent auction. **Carmel vanHoek** won the coveted Mentor Award, the highest honor FNPS bestows. **Steve Dickman** won the amateur plant ID contest and is forever banished to the professional ranks because of his high score. **Suncoast chapter is very proud of all their members. Thanks for a fantastic conference!**

Tarflower Chapter is excited to welcome its new board members, **Nancy Tyree** as VP of programs and **Keith Carlton** as secretary, and for the announcement of their very own **Catherine Bowman** as FNPS president-elect.

The chapter provided two \$1500 grants that were awarded at the 2015 conference. One, in Dick Deuerling's honor, will fund a prescribed burn at Oakland Nature Preserve in Winter Garden. The other, in honor of Sam Hopkins, will fund DNA barcoding research on Florida *Tillandsia* species for better identification in juvenile stages. The chapter is proud of its membership support for these annual grants.

Tarflower Chapter will also be providing member-grown plants to sell at the Orange County master gardener plant sale on October 10, followed by their **3rd Annual Backyard Biodiversity Day and Native Plant Sale** at Mead Garden on October 24. Be on the lookout for further details! BBD is an event for all to attend.

**Tell us what YOUR chapter is up to!
Send your "Chapter Happenings" to
fnps.sabalminor@gmail.com.**

The deadline for the September–October, 2015 issue is August 1, 2015.

Society Happenings

FNPS president Anne Cox will be visiting all chapters in the coming year. Chapters visited so far in 2015 include Palm Beach, Cocoplum, Pawpaw, Sparkleberry, Paynes Prairie, Suncoast, and The Villages. Chapters scheduled so far include Mangrove chapter in April 2016. **Please contact Anne to schedule a visit and give a powerpoint presentation about the society.**

FNPS board and Council of Chapters are updating the Handbook Wiki, our policy handbook, on the FNPS web page at fnps handbook.wikispaces.com. All policies and updates will need board approval before posting. All members can access the Handbook Wiki to read the policies of the society. Please note that policies on the FNPS website (under Downloadable Resources) are white paper/organizational stands, not operational policy and are available to all FNPS members and guests that surf the FNPS website.

The society is scheduling all meetings for BOD, Council of Chapters, retreats, and conferences through 2016 and posting them on the FNPS calendar. **The schedule is completed through August 2016. See schedule this issue.**

The society is organizing a training workshop for all officers in July or August and is looking for a chair to organize the training. Recommendations and volunteers to help are welcome.

FNPS in partnership with the Florida Keys TREE Institute present

The Plants of Central and Northwest Cuba

November 15–22, 2015

\$3499.00 per person double occupancy, limited rooms available

Cuba has over 6,000 species of plants, with about half being endemic to Cuba. Raul Verdecia Perez, lead scientist and botanist at Las Tunas Botanical Garden and one of Cuba's leading authorities on plants, will lead participants to see plants in the wild. There will also be local specialists involved along this magnificent journey to some of Cuba's richest plant communities.



Download the full itinerary and registration form via the FNPS forum at www.forum.fnps.org/index.php/topic,1045.15.html.

2015 BOD and ExCom Meetings

- JUN 25 FNPS board meeting, 7 p.m., teleconference
- JUL 11 FNPS working group for board and council; face-to-face meeting in Thonotosassa
- JUL 23 FNPS board meeting, 7 p.m., teleconference
- AUG 15 FNPS board & Council of Chapters meeting, Turkey Lake Park, Orlando
- SEP 24 FNPS board meeting, 7 p.m., teleconference
- OCT 22 FNPS board meeting, 7 p.m., teleconference
- NOV 7 FNPS board and Council of Chapters meeting, 10 a.m.–5p.m., Florida Forestry Training Center, Brooksville

All dates subject to change. Check the Society Calendar at fnps.org/events/eventlist for details and updates.

Florida Native Plant Society
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Meet the Florida Natural Areas Inventory *submitted by Gary Knight, FNAI Director*

Longtime FNPS members probably already know something about the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). The program has, after all, been busily using science to inform conservation for some 34 years.

FNAI has always had a special connection with FNPS because of our role in the conservation of plants. We currently maintain information about the status, ecology, locations and distribution of 493 rare plant species (as well as 237 vertebrates, 573 invertebrates, and 81 natural community types). FNAI in recent years has also developed data for invasive species. (Did you know that FNAI maintains an invasive plant database with more than 209,000 occurrences of 150 invasive, exotic plants?) And over the last 15 years, FNAI has conducted extensive natural community surveys, mapping more than 3 million acres and collecting more than 60,000 groundtruth points, helping to develop an ecologically based land cover map for Florida.

FNAI's 21-person staff include some of the foremost experts in the state across many conservation disciplines: botany, zoology, community ecology, conservation planning, Geographic Information Systems, and data management. FNAI is a non-profit program administered by Florida State University and a leading member of the NatureServe international network of Natural Heritage Programs. The program is funded almost entirely through contracts and grants, which are often challenging to secure, making support and encouragement from FNPS deeply appreciated.

FNAI has recently joined the world of social media. Follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/fnaipublic) to see regular updates on the program's activities.



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