

Sabal minor

A bi-monthly newsletter for the members of
THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

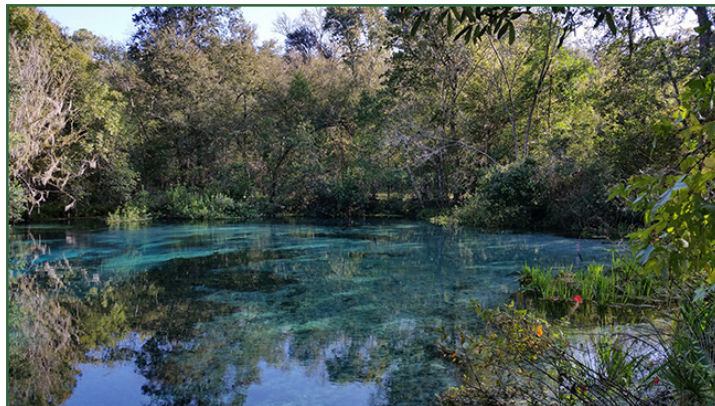


Volume 19, Number 6 • November–December 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT *by Catherine Bowman*

Happy fall, cool weather, and end of hurricane season. I hope you have recovered from the devastating hurricane season; I know our thoughts are with so many whose lives were severely affected and are still struggling to recover. For those of us who were fortunate to have only some vegetation damage, the season held an emergency eco-alert, land management reviews, "Florida Native Plant Month," and the annual budget deliberations.

In September, responses to an emergency call to action and fundraising campaign made the rescue of sandhill plants from a Clermont development site possible, with transportation, nursery space for hardening off plants and sorting seeds, supplies and forthcoming transportation to restoration sites where the plants will be critical to enhancement and restoration projects on nearby public lands. The Conservation Committee's notices and online fund drive brought out hardy volunteers who dug, potted, watered and carried plants and collected seeds, as well as generous support from members and non-members alike to assist with short and longterm costs. Some two dozen volunteers worked from early September until November 1 on the rescue opportunity. Many of these people had worked for years trying to arrange for some protection of the site from development; November 1 was a bittersweet day for them. I am sure you will hear about the final plant and seed lists, as well as the results of the plantings as they go into their new sites.



Ichetucknee Springs State Park

Hope you all enjoyed celebrating "Florida Native Plant Month" with your October festivities, gained new members, took your local representatives on a field trip, and had interesting opportunities to share your work on behalf of our increasingly important mission. Thanks especially to Andy Taylor, Anne Cox and your chapters for working together with various county and city representatives to present their official proclamations — the momentum is growing!

Land Management Review participation remains strong with Ray Jarrett getting out the lists of reviews and coordinating with our chapter volunteers to fill the FNPS seat on the eight-member team for each site's field and checklist review. I am anxious to hear how close we got to 100% attendance of the reviews this year. If you have not participated and would like to, ask your chapter representative about the PowerPoint presentation, "A Passion for Public Lands." As Juliet Rynear so nicely stated when she posted the this to the Forum, "As shareholders, taxpayers and stakeholders, we have an opportunity to provide input on various levels to the land managers (county land programs, water management districts, Fish & Wildlife, state parks, wildlife management areas and state

forests). That input can affect funding for resource management and recreation." During the past several years, I have participated in about a dozen LMRs in areas of the state where I live, or grew up, or occasionally for which not a local chapter member who was available. In October, Ron Blair and I (representing a conservation organization and as a local landowner, respectively) participated in the review of Ichetucknee Springs State Park management plan. I am sure that many of you know about this beautiful river fed by numerous springs, one of many Florida springs that are threatened by myriad human activities. As with all LMRs we have participated in, we were impressed with the staff's results in balancing the care of the natural habitats — in this case the fragile spring systems and diverse sandhills — with the public recreation use. I encourage you to join a review team as an observer, first, if you are not quite ready to be on your own. You will be richly rewarded by being able to participate in a critical process, meeting the outstanding public land managers, and always learning something new.

The November 4 Board of Directors and Council of Chapters meeting at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary in Titusville is our annual meeting at which the final Society budget will be approved. The budget and planning for 2018 continue to focus on strategic planning and how we can improve our basic Society structure and function as we work on our aspirational goals. The board and executive committee have tackled some difficult questions and issues, formed ad hoc committees, and held weekly (sometimes more than weekly) meetings. I am looking forward to our next steps as a strong, science-based organization. We have accomplished many things from our lists that resulted from our past intensive strategic planning events; we continue to evolve our processes for getting our basic functional tasks, as you will see this coming year. As our function becomes smoother, we will have better communication between the chapters and the state organization and will be able to bring to fruition some of those great project ideas that you have been suggesting. Perhaps the time will be right for you to participate in one of the state committees!

Chapters, please keep documenting your accomplishments and activities for all of us to learn from; we will let you know to whom your articles and photos can be submitted for upcoming *Sabal minor* issues. As a final note, we are all sad to see Stacey Matrazzo leave us as *Sabal minor* editor. She has been generous with her time, patience, skill and professionalism in producing our newsletters for many years. Thank you, Stacey!

BUG OFF! *by Peg Urban, Lake Beautyberry Chapter*

After the fall bloom period is over and the plants begin to wither, our first instinct is to head out with the loppers, pruners and rakes to tidy up our gardens — but here is why we should say "Yes to the Mess."

Bees, butterflies and many other beneficial insects depend on these natural nurseries to protect them from the winter elements by providing nooks and crannies to hide in, such as dried, hanging leaves to curl up in like a snug blanket, mulch to burrow under for temperature regulation, native stems and grasses to nestle in, bark grooves and cracks to hunker down in, and sturdy plant structures to "hang out" on. Bumble

bees also need patches of undisturbed soil to overwinter in. Many of these insects enter a period called "diapause," which is a period of dormancy or a delay in development in response to recurring periods of adverse environmental conditions.

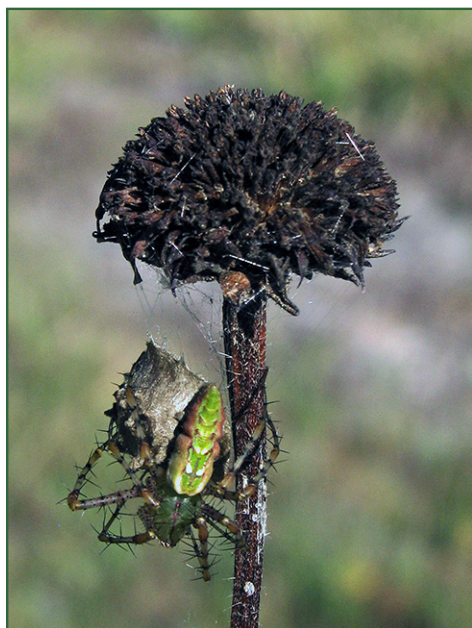
Several of our native Florida butterflies overwinter in various life stages, either as eggs, larva, pupa or adults. The caterpillars of some species, such as tawny emperor, viceroy and duskywing, wrap themselves in a leaf and then "sew" themselves to a branch where they will hang until spring when fresh leaves emerge for the caterpillars to munch on.

Other species, such as some swallowtails, whites and hairstreaks overwinter as a pupa, or chrysalis, hanging from branches and stems.

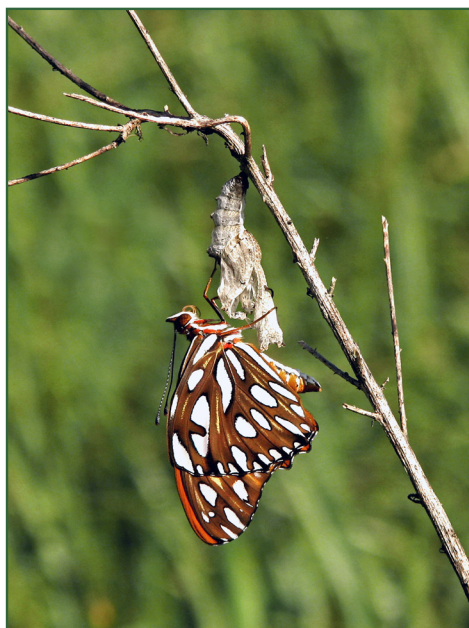
Insects are not the only creatures counting on us to "bug off" — many of our birds, both year-round residents and migrants, rely on dried seeds, fruits and other plant material during the winter months for food, shelter and cover. Come spring, they need to feed their chicks a protein-rich diet of insects, which your "untidy" garden can provide if you hold off tidying up until the warm weather coaxes the insects out of hiding. Even our native anoles and other herps will benefit from this bounty.

So hold back on that urge to purge and allow the cycle of life to come full circle in your yard. Even then, be watchful through all seasons and do a little at a time, only as necessary. The critters will thank you.

This article was inspired by our own Lake County naturalists, Wendy Poag and Lavon Silvernell, who helped me appreciate the "connections" in nature.



Green lynx spider on rayless sunflower (Helianthus radula).



Newly emerged gulf fritillary.

FNPS 2018 ENDOWMENT GRANT RESEARCH AWARDS, CONSERVATION GRANT AWARDS AND DAN AUSTIN AWARD FOR ETHNOBOTANY

The Florida Native Plant Society maintains an endowment research grant program for the purpose of funding research on native plants. These are small grants (\$1,500 or less), awarded for a one-year period, and intended to support research that forwards the mission of FNPS, which is "to promote the preservation, conservation and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida."

FNPS conservation grants support applied native plant conservation projects in Florida. These grants (\$5,000 or less) are awarded for a one-year period. These projects promote the preservation, conservation or restoration of rare or imperiled native plant taxa or native plant communities. To qualify for a conservation grant, the proposed project must be sponsored by an FNPS chapter.

The Dan Austin Award for Ethnobotany will provide up to \$1,500 to graduate or undergraduate students who are studying Florida ethnobotany (i.e., the study of the relationship between peoples or cultures with plants native to Florida or Florida ecosystems. These can be current uses or historic uses).

Application guidelines and details can be found at www.fnps.org under "What We Do/Grants and Awards." Questions regarding the grant programs should be sent to info@fnps.org.

Application deadline for the 2018 Awards is March 2, 2018. Awards will be announced at the May 2018 annual conference.

2018 FNPS CONFERENCE: CALL FOR RESEARCH TRACK PAPERS AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

The Florida Native Plant Society Annual Conference will be held May 17-20, 2018 at the Miccosukee Resort, located at 500 SW 177 Avenue in Miami. The conference research track will include presented papers and a poster session on Friday, May 18 and Saturday, May 19.

Researchers are invited to submit abstracts on research related to native plants and plant communities of Florida including preservation, conservation and restoration. Presentations are planned to be 20 minutes in total length (15 min. presentation, 5 min. questions).

Abstracts of not more than 200 words should be submitted as a MS Word file by email to Paul A. Schmalzer at paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov by February 1, 2018. Include title, affiliation, and address. Indicate whether you will be presenting a paper or poster.

RAIN FORESTS AND WATERFALLS TOUR RE-SCHEDULED FOR MAY 6–11, 2018

Three days before we were set to depart, it became clear that Hurricane Irma was determined to make landfall in Florida... somewhere! As safety was our primary concern, the tour was cancelled and everyone received a full refund.

We are beginning anew and now taking applications for our rescheduled tour date of May 6–11, 2018, which will be an incredible time to tour the Appalachians. Springtime is when the ephemeral blooms rush to beat the flush of trees in nature's grand design to flower and set seed before the arboreal forest shades them out.

Last May, we found *Phacelia* (pictured), purple wakerobin (*Trillium erectum*), violets (*Viola* spp.), red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*), fire pink (*Silene virginica*), sweet shrub (*Calycanthus floridus*), dog hobble (*Leucothoe fontanesiana*, related to the fetterbush), stonecrop (*Sedum ternatum*), Anemone (*Anemone quinquefolia*), Catesby's trillium (*Trillium catesbaei*), bluets (*Houstonia* spp., those harbingers of spring), flame azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*), small's ragwort (*Packera anomyma*) and cinquefoil (*Potentilla canadensis*) all on show.

Even the lowly chickweed (*Stellaria pubera*) was spectacular, with its 10 petals that are really only 5 deeply clefted ones.

The unique advantage of the mountains is the change of altitude. A plant that has already gone to seed at 1,500 feet is probably just emerging at 5,000 feet. You can spend the morning in summer only to move to early spring in the afternoon. Craggy Gardens, at 6,000 feet on the

Blue Ridge, was still in the throes of winter last May with misty clouds scuttling past, obscuring views and making one long for the wood fire in the visitor center. Yet Clingman's Dome, at about the same altitude, was in glorious sunshine with parades of bluets nodding in the winds.

This is the time of year when all of nature wakes from its winter slumber — something we miss in Florida. Pausing to take a closer look at stonecrop growing on Brasstown Bald, I inadvertently spooked a nesting bird, revealing her eggs nestled in the stones for me to see.

Discover for yourself what a temperate rainforest looks and feels like, and learn what native plants the American Indians used for food and medicine. We have a specialist on the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians as one of our guides.

We also have lichenologists, naturalists and botanists, all local, incredible guides anxious to share their knowledge of plant and animal life in the Appalachians.

Come with us when we tour Brasstown Bald, the Blue Ridge, Mt.

Mitchell and the Smoky Mountains and discover along with us “The Wildflower National Park.”

The forecast is for clear skies, cool weather, an incredible time — and NO hurricanes!

For more information, visit www.indigotravelcompany.com or contact Devon Higginbotham at 813-478-1183 or email at indigotravelcompany@gmail.com.



Phacelia dubia

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT NEWS *by Juliet Rynear*

The volunteer and education hours are really adding up this year! Our chapters are reporting amazing work! Across the state, our members have rescued endangered plants, milkweed species and entire plant communities from numerous development sites including roadways, easements and commercial properties. Endangered plants and milkweed species are being monitored and mapped and our plant survey lists are growing. One chapter is even studying the phenology of flowering and seed set in a list of species that they have been monitoring for a number of years.

As of October 1, 20 chapters have reported over 33,000 volunteer and education hours. That means that our other 17 chapters are probably doing some really cool things that we don't yet know about. Communication is so important! By attending our in-person meetings, Council of Chapters GoToMeetings, and submitting volunteer hours, we can all leverage our talents and work together as a Society to fulfill our mission. If you need assistance or advice in documenting and entering hours, please contact fnps.executive.assistant@gmail.com.

This year's educational events, presentations and classes have covered a wealth of important topics, including restoration practices, control of invasive species, Florida ecosystems, plant communities, prescribed fire, public land review training, and much more. Some of our chapters are

hosting events and presentations in partnership with their local Sierra Club and Audubon chapters. These joint events are a great way for us all to work together to attain our common goals and share our conservation missions with a wider audience.

The new Regional Landscape Brochures are proving to be very helpful tools for new Florida residents and people who want to transition to native landscapes. Don't forget that we also have a PowerPoint presentation template to accompany the brochures. The template is set up for Central Florida, but you can easily change the plant photos for your specific region. It is available for download on the Forum in the landscape section.

2017–18 BOD AND EXCOM MEETINGS

NOV 4 BOD/COC meeting, Enchanted Forest, Titusville
JAN 21 COC meeting, GoToMeeting

Check the Society calendar at fnps.org/society/calendar for details, updates, directions and meeting instructions. All dates subject to change.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT *by Juliet Rynear*

We have sure been busy this hurricane season, rescuing Florida native plant communities — some from the hurricanes, but mostly from the bulldozers! From the Panhandle to south Florida, FNPS and our partners have been racing to rescue native plants and plant communities.

As of October 9, we have rescued thousands of plants in the Panhandle, countless rare *Tillandsias* in south Florida, and in Central Florida, more than 2,000 plants from a rare sandhill parcel, with many more collection days still ahead of us.

Words cannot adequately express how grateful we are for the outpouring of financial and volunteer support from our members, concerned citizens and conservation partners.

There are so many to thank and not enough room in this newsletter! But here is a start: our 81 generous financial donors, our 100+ volunteers, and our partners from St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, Koreshan State Historic Site, Green Isle Gardens Nursery, Florida State Parks, Lake County Water Authority, St. Johns River Water Management District, Lake County Parks and Trails, and Oakland Nature Preserve.

Thank you all for supporting our mission in action and helping to conserve our native plant communities for future generations!



Thousands of endangered plants were rescued from a roadside trail development in the Panhandle. Among the species rescued were night-flowering wild petunia (*Ruellia noctiflora*) and fewflower milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*, pictured above).



The Koreshan State Historic Site, located just north of Hurricane Irma's peninsular Florida landfall, took quite a hit. Many trees covered in endangered *Tillandsias* (air plants) were toppled. As soon as they could, volunteers from the Coccoloba Chapter joined park staff to rescue endangered *Tillandsias* from the downed trees.



Before being rescued from their sandhill home, seeds were collected from the endangered Florida Bonamia (*Bonamia grandiflora*). Other endangered plants seen in this photo are Lewton's Polygala (*Polygala lewtonii*) and showy dawnflower (*Stylisma abdita*). All plants and seeds will be used for restoration projects on nearby public lands.

SAVE THE DATE!

The 2018 FNPS Annual Conference will be held May 17–20, 2018 at the Miccosukee Resort in Miami.

Make your reservation today to secure your discounted rate. For more information, visit www.fnps.org/conference.

EDITOR/PUBLISHER WANTED

The Florida Native Plant Society seeks a skilled individual as an independent contractor to develop and electronically publish the *Sabal minor*, the FNPS bi-monthly (six times a year) publication. Content for the newsletter will come from the contractor's coordination with FNPS chapters, individual members and the FNPS Board of Directors.

The independent contractor will use contemporary desktop publishing software that meets industry standards for the development of a professional-looking document. The contractor shall work from their own location and use their own software. The contractor will submit invoices upon the publication of the each document which will typically be 4 pages. The length of the contract is for 12 months with the opportunity to renew the contract upon the approval of the FNPS board of directors. The independent contractor will supply FNPS with a W9 for tax reporting purposes.

For more information, contact Don Spence, PhD at fnps.vp@gmail.com for more information.