

# Sabal minor

A bi-monthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



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## President's Message

Dear Fellow FNPS members,

2011 surely is breezing by — hurricane season is upon us and the winds of change continue. I wish to thank Ann for her dedicated year of service as president and many years of service on our Board of Directors. I believe our current BOD to be strong, with tireless volunteers who help make our organization exceptional. I also wish to acknowledge our contractors for their dedicated years of service including our Executive Director, Karina Veaudry; Administrative Services Director, Cammie Donaldson; *Palmetto* Editor, Marjorie Shropshire; and our new *Sabal minor* Editor, Stacey Matrazzo. All are doing a fantastic job performing the multitude of tasks, both in the foreground and background, that make us function smoothly.

In addition, we on the board were amazed and humbled by all of you who answered our financial call to arms last year. My experiences as VP for Finance — charged with both overseeing finances as well as raising funds — present me with an interesting perspective as President. You can be sure we will continue to find or implement creative ways to enhance our coffers, without overburdening our membership.

Despite these efforts, there is no doubt that we who speak for native plants and native plant ecosystems have found ourselves financially challenged during Florida's economic strife, and troubled as funds for protection of our environment dwindle. We can only hope that the pressures that threaten conservation in Florida will cause those concerned by debilitating change and destruction to our native plant heritage to rally.

Upon standing back, and thinking of the surest way to address these challenges and further our mission, to help fill the gap of our overworked volunteers, and provide ourselves with a stronger voice, the next phase for our organization became clear to me. We need to double our membership over the next year.

We on your board of directors and membership committee will take aim at this goal, but we will need your help. Although daunting, one way to look at it is if each member of the society were to take a non-member under their wing and encourage them to help us in our mission by joining FNPS, our task would be accomplished. (Now imagine if each current member recruited five new members.) I truly believe we can do this and that our cause is just. I look forward to our continued progress.

## News from the Florida Native Plant Partnership by Karina Veaudry

### Native Plant Marketing Strategy Underway

As reported in an earlier edition of the *Sabal minor*, in September of 2009, the Florida Native Plant Society formed an alliance with the Florida Wildflower Foundation, Florida Association of Native Nurseries and the Florida Wildflower Seed & Growers Co-op. This coalition — called Florida Native Plant Partnership (FNPP) — is coordinating resources and jointly pursuing grants, education and marketing opportunities that will expand the awareness of native plants.

FNPP was accepted into the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) marketing assistance program. In June, the FNPP sent representatives from each organization to a two-day workshop to outline the needs for a native plant marketing program. Representing the FNPS were Executive Director, Karina Veaudry, Connie Caldwell, Mia Requesens, Erick Smith, Don Spence, Sarah Thompson and Tracy Wyman.

Within a couple of months from now, FNPP representatives will receive a draft marketing plan from FDACS, to be reviewed and commented on by their respective organizations. FDACS will then assist with finding funding sources and professional assistance to implement the marketing plan which may consist of a television commercial, radio public service announcements and written/online material.

## News from the Florida Wildflower Foundation

### Taylor, St. Johns, Flagler, Lee and Duval counties adopt resolutions to conserve native wildflowers

Five counties recently passed resolutions to conserve and preserve Florida's native wildflowers. The county resolutions raise awareness of the environmental, historical and cultural significance of wildflowers. They also identify properties and roadsides as areas for wildflower planting and reduced mowing, which allows naturally occurring wildflowers to thrive while saving county resources and promoting ecotourism.

Besides being beautiful, Florida's native wildflowers are essential to healthy ecosystems and the support of crop pollinators. They also create civic pride while contributing to the sense of place that is unique to La Florida, "land of flowers."

Counties with an existing wildflower/mowing resolution are Lake, Volusia, Brevard, Marion, Leon, Wakulla, Putnam and. To learn more about Wildflower Resolutions being adopted across the state and how to gain support to adopt a resolution in your county, visit [www.flawildflowers.org/resolution.php](http://www.flawildflowers.org/resolution.php).

## Report on the 2011 FNPS Conference, "Patios, Preserves and Public Spaces: Making Connections," May 18-22, 2011 by Deborah Green, Cuplet Fern Chapter Representative

*This article was originally written for the Frond Forum, the Cuplet Fern Chapter's bimonthly newsletter.*

Plant enthusiasts from all over the state came to Maitland for the Florida Native Plant Society conference in May. Connecting Florida's natural values and conservation to our home landscapes and public environments was the theme of the 31st annual event, which included native plant sales from growers we ordinarily have to drive quite far to visit; field trips led by local experts to the best of our local preserves; speakers on conservation, preservation and restoration of Florida native plant communities; vendors of items from books to bird boxes; and social events.

As it is each year, the first day was filled with field trips, with nearly a dozen choices for attendees. Two of the most popular were the trip to the Tosohatchee State Reserve, led by Dr. Walter Taylor and Tarflower chapter president Catherine Bowman, and the Native Plant Home Landscapes tour, coordinated by Tarflower chapter board member and conference co-chair Phyllis Gray. The tour is always a popular one when it is offered as people enjoy seeing how native plant enthusiasts have put together exemplary landscapes.

The Thursday social event included author book signings, FNPS Jeopardy! and a performance by The Weeds, a talented rock and roll band composed of plant and ecology professionals. They are a staple at FNPS conferences. Amazingly, they come together and just play without any other practice.

Friday's keynote speaker was Rick Darke, a Pennsylvania author, designer and horticulturalist who has published several books on the use of ornamental grasses. Darke is a proponent of "aesthetic design with dynamic biological diversity and sustainable management practices." To make his talk locally relevant, Darke went on the Tosohatchee field trip and included photos of Florida natural environments in his talk. He spoke about a "lessening of control" in design of landscapes, and in creating landscapes that are "walkable and watchable." A YouTube video on his philosophy can be found at [www.rickdarke.com](http://www.rickdarke.com).

Following the keynote, Friday's breakout sessions included several for which landscape architects and other professionals could receive continuing education credits. Friday evening's social was poolside and included more book signings and the traditional Beginner and Advanced Native Plant Identification contests. Since this year's conference was held in conjunction with Florida Exotic Plant Pest Council (FLEPPC) ([www.fleppc.org](http://www.fleppc.org)), an additional Invasive Plant Identification contest was added. I helped collect for the contest, and it appears I stumped Dr. Taylor with pothos, a Category II invasive in Central and South Florida. He came in third, after Chris Lockhart, a South Florida ecological consultant, and Ray Jarrett, a new FNPS board member who works for the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in Volusia County. For the person just becoming interested in plant identification and who dares to take the challenge, the contests are fun and inspiring.

The Saturday morning keynote speaker was Rutherford H. Platt, who spoke on "Blooming Cities:



*Wekiwa Springs State Park Field offered plant ID challenges for everyone.*

*Photo by Deborah Green.*

Restoring Nature in Urban America." For more on Platt's message that positive changes are occurring in cities, see [www.humanmetropolis.org](http://www.humanmetropolis.org).

Saturday continued with more breakout sessions, as well as a chance to visit the exhibits and bid in the Silent Auction. It was also time to make final purchases from the diverse selection of native plants available. For the less commonly sold species, one had to set them aside early. Regular attendees of the annual conference know that this is the best way to purchase hard to find species of native plants each year.

The featured item of the conference's Silent Auction was a very special quilt made by Tarflower member Julie Becker that artistically illustrated the leaves of all of the tree species of Florida. Bidding

for this beautiful quilt was active, and Julie's quilt brought in \$1300 for FNPS. Attendees learned the outcome of the bidding war at Saturday's gala banquet — the winner was Loret Thatcher of the Pine Lily chapter.

On Sunday, I had the good fortune of leading the field trip to Wekiwa Springs State Park with Amy Clifton, a former park biologist. Wekiwa is well known to our chapter members for its beautiful spring and river, but it also offers a diversity of habitats and many rare plants. The field trip participants included professional botanists and nurserymen, and everyone, including Amy and myself, learned in this sharing of expertise.

Conference attendee Samantha Johnson, a Valencia College student and FNPS member, had this to say:

*My mother instilled in me an appreciation and respect for nature at a very young age... FNPS seemed like an excellent way to delve deeper into my interest in native plant species, to share and learn from others with similar interests. The conference sounded like a great way to both learn from experts and network with plant enthusiasts of all levels. The variety of topics was wonderful, making it a challenge to choose which lectures to attend at times. Each and every lecture I attended was outstanding. From the effects of the oil spill on the pelagic Sargassum habitat, to detailed information on pollinator species, there was an obvious passion for the knowledge being shared with all of the conference-goers. Each speaker was able to articulate his or her topic in a manner that was both accurate and understandable to the amateur scientist like myself.*

Representatives from Cuplet Fern, Lake Beautyberry (Lake County), Pine Lily (Osceola County) and Tarflower (Orange County) chapters started planning this conference immediately following the 2010 conference in Tallahassee. Conference Chair Jenny Welch and FNPS Executive Director Karina Veaudry deserve particular credit, along with the many volunteers. Next year's 32nd Annual Conference will be May 17-20, 2012 in Plant City, hosted by the Hernando and Suncoast Chapters. In my view, the conference is the heart of our society, and if you missed this year, put Plant City on your calendar.

For more conference experiences and reports, visit the FNPS blog at [FNPSblog.org](http://FNPSblog.org).



### News from the FNPS Blog...

A raucous report from FNPS member Jan Allyn earned our blog wide circulation among key conservation groups in July. Many Florida residents were unaware of Rick Scott's plan to put private campgrounds in our state parks, which is no wonder — even the park managers learned of it only two weeks before public hearings were set to start. Jan attended and spoke at the first meeting, and then blogged about it for us. **We learned that many folks first heard about the situation from our blog.**

We still get asked sometimes, "What is a blog, anyway?" Short answer: the word 'blog' was created from the two words WEB and LOG. So it's a kind of log, or journal, kept not on paper, but on the web. On our FNPS blog, we post articles on plants, breaking news, books, trends, chapter success stories, field trips, research and lots of other things that are of interest to FNPS members of many stripes. Please visit us on the blog at: [FNPSblog.org](http://FNPSblog.org) and send your posts to [sue@dingwell.net](mailto:sue@dingwell.net).

**And remember, you don't have to be a blogger to write for one!**



## Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*) by Linda Cooper

The first butterfly most people think of when butterflies are mentioned is Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*). It is our only butterfly that migrates in huge numbers into another country — Mexico —



where it winters in Oyamel firs in high altitudes in the state of Michoacan. This migration happens between August and November when millions of eastern Monarchs make the journey south of the border. We have been in Mexico in October when the skies are filled with them on their way to their wintering sites.

Many think that any large orange-colored butterfly is a Monarch. Monarch can be distinguished from other orange-colored butterflies by noting its large size and the heavy black veins visible on the dorsal and ventral wings. At the wingtips, there are also orange-colored oval-shaped cells. The ventral hindwings are a paler orange than the forewings, often appearing a rich, buttery yellow. Monarch has a lilting flight on wings held in a V-shape and often glides. Males have black scent patches on the hindwings; these are absent in females. Queen, another milkweed-dependent butterfly, may be confused with Monarch, but Queen does not have heavy black veins on its dorsal wings and is all the same color ventrally.

In northern Florida, Monarchs are seasonal, while in central and southern Florida, they have several generations. Florida also



has a small population that does not migrate. The pale eggs are laid on the leaves and flower buds of milkweeds. The caterpillar can grow to 2 inches in length. Its head is whitish with dark stripes and the body is banded with yellow, white and black. It has two pairs of black fleshy filaments — one pair near its head and one pair near

its back end. Caterpillars sequester toxic chemicals from the plants and become poisonous to birds and other predators. The chrysalis is green with gold beading near the top and scattered near the bottom, very similar to Queen chrysalis. ([More Monarch info on Wikipedia.](#))

Fortunately, Florida is home to 21 species of its host plant — the milkweeds. Milkweeds are in the Apocynaceae or Dogbane family and found in widespread and varied habitats. All of the *Asclepias* species are native except for Tropical Milkweed (*A. curassavica*). Florida milkweeds are not considered a weedy species and are not usually found along our roadsides where they are subject to continuous mowing. In many other states, they are considered weedy and invasive and habitually eliminated, though a native plant. This becomes a problem when Monarchs return in the springtime to lay eggs for the next generation to continue on its way north. Native plant enthusiasts may be able to grow native milkweeds in their garden and, if not, give Tropical Milkweed a try. You will have aphids and milkweed bugs but you can also increase the Monarch population.



## FloraGator : a new multiple-entry key to the flowering plant families of Florida

### Attention Florida native plant lovers: Can you help us test a new key?



The Environmental Horticulture department at the University of Florida is developing a web-based, multiple-entry key to all 189 flowering plant families found in the natural areas of the state. Our key — called FloraGator — is “multiple-entry” because, unlike a traditional written key, it doesn’t have any predetermined starting point. You can enter whatever information you happen to have at hand.

FloraGator is primarily intended to be a teaching tool for students of botany and plant systematics. It gives users an active role in collecting information and applying terminology. But, to be sure it works, we need to do some testing.

To help us out, please visit <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/floragator/> and key out a plant (or two). Then send us your results. We would love to hear how the key worked and get any suggestions you have for improvements. Comments and feedback should be directed to Niels Proctor at [noproctor@ufl.edu](mailto:noproctor@ufl.edu).

Thank you!

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## WHAT'S BLOOMING?

### Florida elephant's foot (*Elephantopus elatus*)

*In the garden or along roadsides and trails, now is the time to see elephant's foot putting on its show of flowers.*

**Habit:** Florida elephant's foot is an herbaceous perennial that grows to about 4 ft tall.

**Leaves:** The leaves are pubescent, broad and alternately arranged.

They are mostly basal, which accounts for the plant's common nam (although perhaps elephant's footprints would be more accurate).

**Flowers:** Florida' elephant's foot blooms in late summer through early fall. The flowers are found at the top of tall, hairy stems, often a foot or more in height. They are pink or pale purple disk florets and grow in a cluster surrounded by 3 leaf-like bracts, which gives the suggestion of a triangular flower. Like many Florida wildflowers, a hand lens or close up picture best reveals the complexity and beauty of the flowers.

**Habitat:** This plant can be found in open or shaded, dry to wet places, in pine forests and mixed forests, usually in sandy soils. It is attractive to bees, butterflies, and lovebugs and is easy to grow in the garden. It can be a prolific self seeder.

**Range:** Florida elephant's foot grows throughout Florida.

**Family:** Asteraceae

*This month's "What's Blooming" was contributed by Jane Wallace.*



*Photo by Shirley Denton*

## Chapter Happenings

- **Ixia Chapter:** The Ixia Chapter hosted a hugely successful event in June to raise awareness about the importance of native plants, increase goodwill in their community and raise funds for its upcoming projects. Eighty guests paid to attend the event that began with drinks, hors d'oeuvres and a native plant sale at a private residence located on the banks of the St. Johns River. The evening culminated in a buffet dinner at a nearby community center and a presentation by Dr. Craig Huegel on "Native Plant Landscaping for Florida's Wildlife." Proceeds from the plant sale (over \$1,000) will go toward restoring a 1923 "Native Park" in Jacksonville, assisting another Jacksonville park with the removal of many invasive species, and planning a two-acre wildflower garden on the St. Johns River in downtown Jacksonville. The Ixia Chapter attribute their continued successes to long-range planning, organization, heavy advertisement and sufficient volunteer help. To see photos and read more about their successful event, visit the FNPS blog (<http://fnpsblog.blogspot.com/2011/06/lesson-in-outreach-by-fnps-ixia-chapter.html>).

**Tell us what YOUR chapter is up to!  
Send your Chapter Happenings to  
[stacey@impactpress.com](mailto:stacey@impactpress.com).**

## Want your publications in digital form?

**We hear you!** Each year a few more members request the option to go green and get their publications in digital form. So far, FNPS has responded to this desire 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 wish to have it mailed.

We would eventually like to offer a digital option for the *Palmetto* as well, and we are exploring ways to provide the *Palmetto* in print and online in a quality format valued by members. While we're not ready to implement any options today, we're interested in hearing from members who would be interested in a digital option.

FNPS is now actively collecting responses from members who wish to receive any of their publications in digital form via email, rather than mailed paper. You can now specify whether you want to receive your chapter newsletter, your *Sabal minor* and/or your *Palmetto* in digital form. Just let us know by sending an email to [info@fnps.org](mailto: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.**

## Next Board of Directors Meeting

August 13, 2011  
10:00am

Orlando Public Library  
101 East Central Boulevard  
Orlando, FL 32801

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